

ACT OR SAT?

Summary Overview

| | SAT | ACT |
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| Purpose | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> For college admissions and merit-based scholarships | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> For college admissions and merit-based scholarships |
| Test Content | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reading Writing & Language Math Essay (Optional) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> English Math Reading Science Reasoning |
| Math Content | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Arithmetic Algebra I & II Geometry, Trigonometry and Data Analysis | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Arithmetic Algebra I & II Geometry & Trigonometry |
| Science | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> No Science Content | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1 science section testing critical thinking skills (not specific science knowledge) |
| Reading | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Five Reading passages | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Four Reading Passages |
| Calculator Use | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Some math questions don't allow you to use a calculator | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A calculator is allowed on all math questions. |
| Duration | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 3 hours (without essay) 3 hours, 50 minutes (with essay) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2 hours, 55 minutes (without essay) 3 hours, 40 minutes (with essay) |
| Scoring | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Scored on a scale of 400-1600 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Scored on a scale of 1-36 |

On which test will I do better?

The ACT is designed to evaluate overall educational development whereas the SAT is designed to evaluate a student's general thinking and problem-solving abilities. The ACT may include more grammar and punctuation, whereas the SAT includes more vocabulary. Both tests are approximately the same duration and neither test penalizes a test-taker for incorrect answers.

Each test has a somewhat different structure, so the very best way to determine which test is better suited for you is to take a practice test of each. That way you can receive an actual score and compare the results on both tests to make a determination regarding which is most appropriate for you. Practice tests are widely available online.