

# THE COMPASS GUIDE TO COLLEGE ADMISSION TESTING

— 2017–18 —



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# Frequently Asked Questions

We've listed some of the most common questions and the pages where you can find the answers. Of course, we welcome the chance to talk directly to you about these or other college admission testing questions.

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## About Compass Education Group

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Compass is one of the world's leading providers of in-home, one-on-one tutoring for high school students aspiring to attend selective colleges. We provide individualized, comprehensive test preparation to thousands of students annually, either in their homes in the greater Los Angeles and San Francisco areas or online anywhere in the world.

We are best known within highly regarded, competitive high schools for our private tutoring, and we partner with schools to offer affordable on-campus classes as well. We also have a proud tradition of partnering with schools and nonprofit organizations such as Juma Ventures, 10,000 Degrees, Breakthrough, Summerbridge, The Alliance for Minority Affairs, Constitutional Rights Foundation, and Step Up Women's Network to help more students attend four-year colleges.

Compass has earned an unmatched level of trust by schools and counselors over our founders' history in the test prep field dating back to 1989. We are regularly invited to provide advising seminars for parents, diagnostic assessments for students, and professional development events for faculty and counselors at high schools and colleges. Our reputation in the education community is due to the consistently outstanding successes our students achieve.

## Founders



**Adam Ingersoll**  
*Principal*

Adam began his career in test prep in 1993 while at the University of Southern California, where he was a student-athlete on the basketball team, worked in the admission office, and graduated *magna cum laude*. Over the last two decades he has guided thousands of families to successful experiences with standardized tests and has mentored hundreds of the industry's most sought-after tutors. Adam is known nationally as a leading expert on college admission testing and is a frequent presenter at higher education conferences, faculty development workshops, and school seminars.



**Art Sawyer**  
*Principal*

Art graduated *magna cum laude* from Harvard University, where he was the top-ranked liberal arts student in his class. Art pioneered the one-on-one approach to test prep in California in 1989 and has written more than a dozen test prep books. Although he has routinely attained perfect scores on the SAT and ACT, Art is far prouder of the thousands of students he has helped over the past 25 years. Nobody knows more about standardized tests and tutoring than Art, and we make sure all Compass students benefit from his wisdom.



**Bruce Reed**  
*Executive Director*

Bruce graduated from Colby College and has served in leadership roles in education for more than 20 years. In 2004, Bruce founded our Northern California office, where he continues to serve as its hands-on leader while also guiding our Southern California team as Compass' Executive Director. Bruce is recognized throughout the Bay Area and beyond as a visionary and passionate voice in the realm of teaching, testing, and educational development. He speaks regularly at higher education conferences and has written about college admission testing for *TIME* magazine.

# Introduction

The last several years have seen a great deal of change in the arena of college admission testing, but the good news for families of juniors and sophomores is that the testing world seems to be stabilizing. The redesigned SAT and new ACT Writing Test have been implemented for two years. Early controversies seemed to be driving more students to select the ACT, but we're seeing increasing numbers of students returning to a preference for the SAT. We expect a return this year to a natural equilibrium in popularity between the two tests as the controversies die down.

The good news for the 2017–2018 school year is the start of expanded summer testing. 2017 marks the end of the January SAT and the beginning of the August SAT; likewise, 2018 will see the start of the July ACT. For those students looking to prepare for the exams outside of the impacted school year, these additions are a boon!

Before students prep, however, they face the decision of whether to take the SAT or ACT. As both tests are equally acceptable at institutions that require standardized testing, the choice should be based first on a comparison of a student's performance on each test and then on additional logistical and practical concerns.

Compass directors are experts at helping each family develop an optimal testing plan, which includes the selection of a test and test date and the structure and goals of a tutoring program. Our directors have helped thousands of families tailor programs to fit their individual needs. Each student's testing plan is unique; Compass guides every student to a successful outcome and a positive experience.

*The Compass Guide* is designed to help students, families, and counselors begin to make informed college admission testing decisions, but you may want to think of this as a foundation and starting point for a specific conversation about your student. Compass recognizes that families are often exposed to a great deal of misinformation and rumors when it comes to applying to colleges. Our goal is to provide you with a reference that is both comprehensive and authoritative.

We regularly update PDF and iBook versions of this guide at [compassprep.com/guide](http://compassprep.com/guide). We also write extensively about new and evolving issues in admission testing at [compassprep.com/blog](http://compassprep.com/blog), where you can subscribe to receive a monthly digest of new posts. A quick search of our website will take you to our popular posts:

## Competitive Scores

- ▶ *Our searchable table of concorded SAT and ACT score ranges at 360 popular colleges*

## Subject Tests

- ▶ *Our searchable table of which colleges require or recommend Subject Tests*
- ▶ *FAQ and popular Subject Tests*
- ▶ *What's a good Subject Test Score*

## The SAT vs. ACT Choice

- ▶ *How to compare scores using concordance data*
- ▶ *How the SAT and ACT are scaled*
- ▶ *How to use PSAT scores to choose a test*
- ▶ *Why ACT is more popular than SAT among high scorers*
- ▶ *Why students choose the SAT*
- ▶ *How to interpret score reports*
- ▶ *How to handle pacing, reading, and science*

## Testing Accommodations

- ▶ *Overview from a neuropsychologist's perspective*
- ▶ *Updated process for applying for SAT or ACT testing accommodations*

## The Optional Essay

- ▶ *Updated list of which colleges require or recommend the SAT or ACT essay*
- ▶ *Comparisons of writing tasks*
- ▶ *SAT and ACT essay strategies*

## National Merit

- ▶ *How the National Merit process works*
- ▶ *Updated semifinalist cutoffs for each state*

## Score Policies and Repeat Testing

- ▶ *Super-scoring and Score Choice policies for 360 popular colleges*
- ▶ *How to evaluate repeat testing decisions*

## Compass Services

- ▶ *Complimentary, no-obligation diagnostic testing and consultations*
- ▶ *In-person and online tutoring*

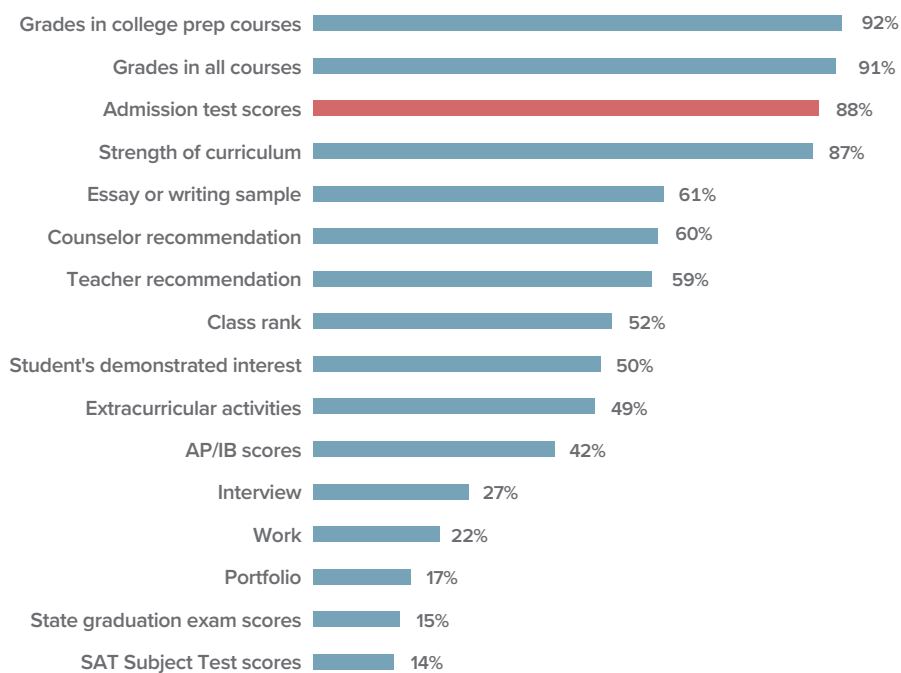
# Standardized Testing and Admission

There are approximately 2,300 accredited, non-profit four-year colleges and universities in the United States. Their admission protocols have never been uniform, and in recent years the range of requirements has only increased. The debate is now especially high-pitched over how significant a role standardized tests should play in admission decisions.

Paradoxically, the trend at selective colleges is toward more flexible testing requirements for students while the competition to gain admission intensifies. Fewer colleges now require SAT Subject Tests, the essay component of the SAT or ACT, or standardized tests at all. Grades, especially in college prep courses, continue to be the most important factor in a student’s application. Yet despite the trend toward flexible requirements, test scores remain a highly significant factor at selective colleges. Students are well-advised to go beyond the minimum requirements when applying to such schools.

## Admission Factors

Percentage of Colleges Reporting “Considerable or Moderate Importance”



Source: 2015 NACAC State of College Admissions

## Holistic Versus Formulaic Admission Decisions

Some admission offices—at large public universities in particular—are all but forced to “admit by the numbers” in a formulaic process. Large applicant pools may mean less time for individual review of prospective students. State-mandated policies or standards may also play a role.

At the most highly selective colleges, even perfect grades and test scores cannot guarantee admission. The applicant pool at these schools is so broad and deep that grades and test scores are only the opening gambit.

At moderately selective schools, as well, scores are only a part of the holistic review. More qualitative measures of an applicant’s fit take on added importance, and not all well-qualified candidates are admitted. Essays and recommendations are more likely to be read and considered carefully, the personal interview may carry more weight, and the entire application is considered from the perspective of whether the college will be a good fit for the student.

In all cases, students will maximize their admission opportunities if they realize their full potential on standardized tests and submit scores that enhance their competitiveness within each college’s applicant pool.

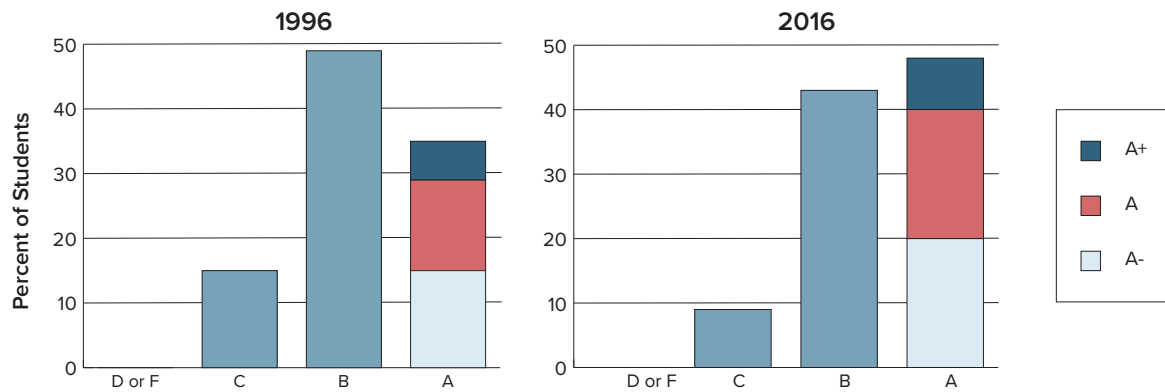
## GPA and Standardized Tests

Performance in a rigorous high school curriculum is the best predictor of performance in college and is the most heavily weighted factor at almost all selective colleges. However, two flaws make GPA imperfect as the sole criterion for admission. First, course difficulty and grading policies vary from teacher to teacher, school to school, and state to state. Second, grade inflation has compressed the GPA scale. As more students earn As, it becomes harder to distinguish among applicants.

The proper role of standardized tests is to complement the use of GPA and other factors in the admission process. The SAT and ACT address the two primary problems with grades. They provide a common baseline for all students, and they are designed to provide a useful and consistent distribution of scores.

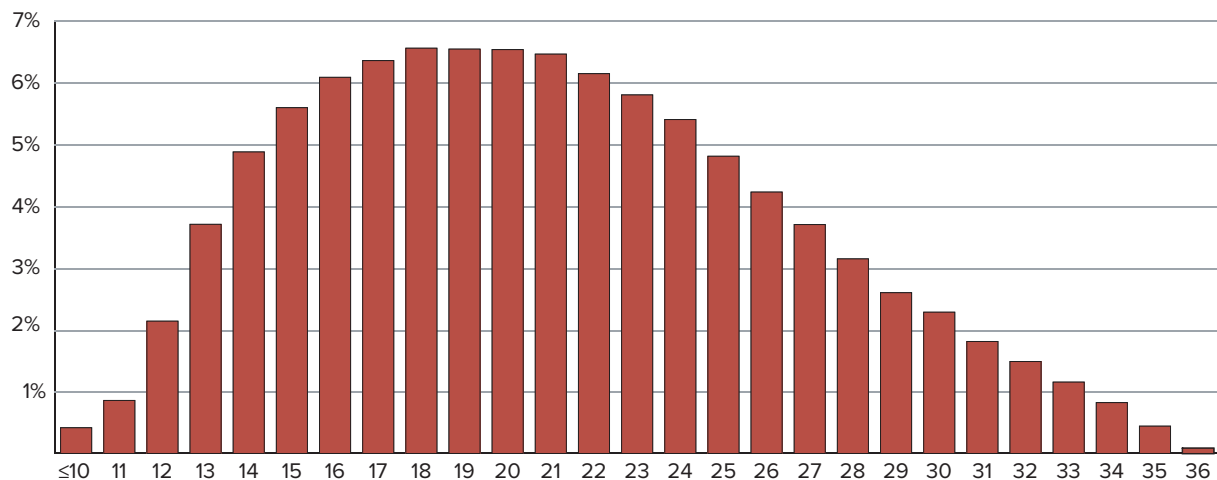
The GPA charts below illustrate the trend toward higher grades, which bunches more students at the top of the scale. The ACT distribution, on the other hand, shows how scores are spread out—particularly above the mean.

### GPA Reported by College Bound Seniors



Source: College Board

### ACT Composite Score Distribution—Class of 2016



Source: ACT Profile Report—National, Graduating Class of 2016

# Pathways to College Admission

A generation ago, most high school students took the SAT or ACT with little or no awareness of the other test, despite the fact that colleges have long accepted the SAT and ACT interchangeably. Today’s widespread acceptance of both tests and an array of additional testing-related options have allowed students greater choice but have also caused confusion for families not accustomed to the decisions involved.

The College Board oversees the PSAT, SAT, and SAT Subject Tests. While more than 2,000 schools accept the SAT or ACT for admission, less than 2% require or recommend the addition of Subject Tests. However, this 2% of schools are among the most popular and selective colleges. There are additionally a significant number of schools that will consider Subject Tests if submitted or will accept Subject Tests in lieu of the SAT or ACT.

ACT offers the eponymous ACT. The ACT is accepted as an equal to the SAT and has, in fact, been the more popular of the two tests since 2010, and by a growing margin. A close comparison of these exams is provided later in the *Guide*.

Students also have the opportunity to apply to many colleges without providing standardized test scores. This option is offered by a minority of the most competitive institutions but does represent an increasingly compelling and viable alternative pathway for many students.

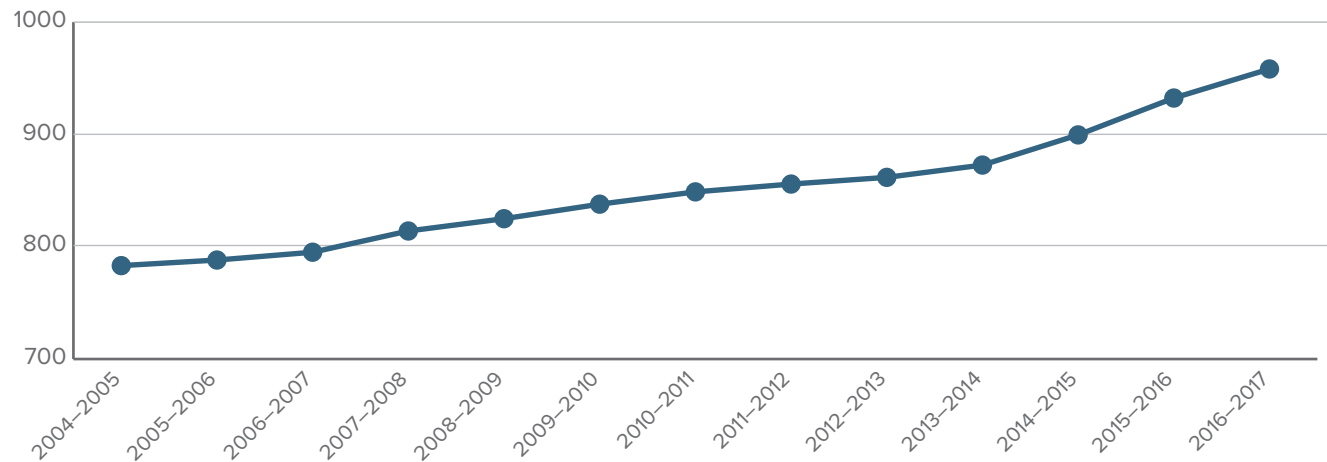
Test Optional	SAT or ACT Required	SAT Subject Tests Required or Recommended
Approximately 900 Colleges	Approximately 1,450 Colleges	Approximately 9 Colleges Require, 15 Colleges Recommend
While most of these schools are essentially open enrollment or have minimal admission requirements, a growing subset do operate in a competitive admission environment. See the following page for a discussion of this trend.	All colleges accept the ACT and SAT interchangeably. Each student can take the test that works better for him or her.	While only a small number of colleges require or recommend Subject Tests, these colleges are among the most popular and selective schools.
At competitive test optional schools, approximately 30% of students choose not to be evaluated on test scores.	Students should use practice tests to see which test is the better fit. Some students take both tests officially.	Some schools accept the ACT in lieu of both the SAT and Subject Tests. Students should generally consider this option only if Subject Test scores are significantly lower than their SAT or ACT scores.
<p>Examples:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Bates College</li> <li>Bowdoin College</li> <li>Pitzer College</li> <li>Wake Forest University</li> <li>Wesleyan University</li> </ul> <p>A complete list can be found at <a href="http://fairtest.org">fairtest.org</a>.</p>	<p>Examples:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Boston College</li> <li>Claremont McKenna College</li> <li>Oberlin College</li> <li>UC Santa Cruz</li> <li>University of Chicago</li> </ul> <p>A complete list can be found via College Search at <a href="http://collegeboard.org">collegeboard.org</a>.</p>	<p>Required, no exceptions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>California Institute of Technology</li> <li>Cornell University</li> <li>Harvey Mudd College</li> <li>Massachusetts Institute of Technology</li> <li>Webb Institute</li> </ul> <p>A complete list is on pages 58–61 and is regularly updated at <a href="http://compassprep.com/subject-test-requirements">compassprep.com/subject-test-requirements</a>.</p>



## Test Optional Schools

More than 900 of the nearly 2,300 four-year colleges and universities in the United States do not require SAT or ACT scores. These 900+ institutions fall into a category defined by FairTest.org as “Schools That Do Not Use SAT or ACT Scores for Admitting Substantial Numbers of Students Into Bachelor Degree Programs.”

### Number of College and Universities with Test Optional or Test Flexible Admission Policies



Source: Fairtest.org

For most of these test optional schools, the decision to not require scores is a practical necessity to ensure adequate volume, diversity, or specialty of applicants. Many are essentially “open-enrollment” in their admission decisions. Others provide religious instruction or technical training, are schools for the performing or creative arts with admission largely based on an audition or a portfolio, appeal only to students in a small geographic area, or are state schools with formulas for admitting a percentage of in-state applicants based on class rank and GPA.

### Selective Test Optional Schools

A fast-growing subset of the 900 schools operate in a different context. They are moderately to highly selective, admitting fewer than half of their applicants. In fact, according to *U.S. News*’ controversial ranking methodology, more than half of the “top 100” Liberal Arts Colleges (LACs) are now test optional. This is quite a different reality from that of a decade ago; students interested in high-profile LACs now have a diverse range of colleges willing to consider them without scores. Among the top 100 National Universities (NUs), test optional policies remain rare. Paraphrasing the Dean of Admission at USC: *We receive 55,000 applications from students at more than 10,000 different high schools and from more than 140 countries. We use scores responsibly and we don’t rely on scores as much as students think, but they still play a useful role in our decisions.* Note that within this group of top-ranked LACs and NUs, the majority of successful applicants still choose to submit scores, and the average scores of those who submit are trending upwards.

The rationales offered for test optional policies are varied but have two dominant themes: (1) The school’s institutional research has found that test scores offer minimal additional utility above and beyond the high school transcript in making admission decisions, and (2) Not requiring tests encourages more applications from under-represented and under-resourced students. Skeptics—including College Board and ACT—challenge both of these claims, but most inhabitants of the college admission ecosystem (including Compass) subscribe to the notion that test optional policies have been a force for good in expanding access to higher education opportunities while also making a statement that test scores are problematic in what they say about—and demand of—16 to 17 year olds.

Many counselors advise that applicants (especially those from over-represented backgrounds) who withhold scores are generally presumed to have scores that would not be competitive. Whether that presumption is accurate and what its implications might be are controversial issues, but conventional wisdom holds that in most cases it is better to not reveal low scores and leave open the possibility that tests were skipped altogether. Most students still find value in submitting scores, especially when they have dedicated time to efforts to improve those scores.

# Test Optional Schools

Selective, Test Optional Schools	Admit Rate	% Submitting		25th–75th Percentiles		Selective, Test Optional Schools	Admit Rate	% Submitting		25th–75th Percentiles	
		SAT	ACT	SAT Total*	ACT Composite			SAT	ACT	SAT Total*	ACT Composite
Agnes Scott College	62	52	33	1150–1380	24–29	Knox College	64	26	74	1250–1370	23–29
Allegheny College	68	76	49	1090–1320	22–29	Lawrence University	68	29	68	1210–1470	25–31
American University	35	60	35	1220–1390	26–30	Lewis & Clark College	63	51	42	1260–1410	27–31
Arizona State University	83	55	57	1110–1340	23–28	Mills College	76	65	35	1120–1340	24–30
Augustana College	49	7	88	1120–1410	23–28	Mount Holyoke College	50	53	24	1310–1510	29–32
Bard College	32	54	N/A	1230–1450	N/A	Muhlenberg College	48	66	25	1200–1410	25–31
Bates College	22	54	27	1270–1470	28–32	New School (NY)	67	53	18	1090–1320	22–27
Beloit College	69	28	48	1150–1410	24–30	Ohio Wesleyan University	75	32	57	1090–1310	22–28
Bennington College	63	38	6	1210–1440	26–31	Pitzer College	13	32	21	1310–1510	29–32
Bowdoin College	15	42	36	1450–1560	31–34	Sarah Lawrence College	53	44	24	1230–1450	27–31
Brandeis University	34	62	30	1340–1520	29–32	Sewanee—The University of the South	41	40	53	1210–1380	26–30
Bryn Mawr College	39	64	38	1320–1510	28–32	Skidmore College	37	74	37	1190–1410	26–30
Clark University	63	51	42	1260–1410	27–31	Smith College	38	54	25	1320–1500	28–32
College of the Holy Cross	37	44	22	1300–1450	28–31	St. John's College (MD)	78	64	18	1290–1480	26–31
Connecticut College	40	24	17	1290–1460	28–31	St. John's University	65	81	17	1030–1240	22–27
Cornell College (IA)	71	29	82	1090–1350	23–29	St. Lawrence University	46	49	26	1170–1380	26–30
Denison University	48	28	41	1220–1430	26–31	Temple University	56	73	20	1130–1320	23–29
DePaul University	72	21	85	1080–1290	22–28	Texas A & M, College Station	66	61	39	1130–1380	25–30
Dickinson College	47	52	25	1270–1450	27–30	Trinity College (CT)	33	60	39	1230–1410	27–30
Duquesne University	76	60	30	1120–1280	23–28	Union College (NY)	38	49	26	1310–1470	29–32
Earlham College	62	46	34	1180–1450	25–31	University of Arizona	76	56	55	1040–1290	21–27
Franklin & Marshall College	32	49	20	1270–1480	28–31	University of Delaware	66	98	32	1180–1380	24–29
Furman University	64	60	53	1210–1410	25–30	University of Puget Sound	79	62	55	1180–1400	25–30
George Mason University	69	73	14	1120–1310	23–28	Ursinus College	83	64	22	1120–1320	23–30
George Washington University	46	70	44	1270–1460	27–31	Wake Forest University	29	53	44	1280–1480	27–33
Gettysburg College	40	82	9	1270–1430	27–29	Washington and Jefferson College	43	49	25	1130–1310	23–28
Gustavus Adolphus College	67	6	61	1170–1430	24–30	Wesleyan University	22	61	38	1330–1520	29–33
Hobart and William Smith Colleges	57	31	5	1200–1390	26–30	Whitman College	43	59	51	1280–1470	27–32
Hofstra University	61	76	29	1120–1300	23–28	Willamette University	78	79	43	1170–1370	24–30
Ithaca College	67	61	N/A	1170–1360	N/A	Wofford College	72	47	53	1140–1330	23–29
James Madison University	73	91	35	1120–1300	25–27	Worcester Polytechnic Institute	49	80	30	1290–1470	28–32
Kalamazoo College	72	29	84	1150–1420	26–30						

\* New SAT Total scores are derived from college reported data, College Board concordance tables and Compass research.

## Test Flexible Schools

There are also colleges self-described as “test flexible.” These schools typically accept the results of AP exams, higher-level International Baccalaureate (IB) exams, and SAT Subject Tests in lieu of SAT or ACT scores.

For example, Colby College and Middlebury College accept three SAT Subject Test scores in three different disciplines (e.g. Literature, U.S. History, and Chemistry). Similarly, NYU accepts the results of three Subject Tests, three AP exams, three higher-level IB exams, or the IB diploma. By accepting a variety of test scores, test flexible schools allow applicants to submit results that place them in the best possible light.

There are caveats, however. First, apples-to-oranges comparisons can make it difficult for students to know what their best scores are. For example, is a 4 on the AP U.S. History Exam better or worse than a 630 on the U.S. History Subject Test? There is no official concordance table to refer to in addressing this type of question. This is why some test flexible schools encourage applicants to submit their full testing records, thereby allowing admission officers to select their best scores for them. Second, although AP exams, IB exams, and SAT Subject Tests are commonly considered more “content-based,” in that they test specific subject matter, they share with the SAT and ACT some inevitable features of standardized tests. Students who struggle with pacing and multiple choice questions may find the Literature Subject Test just as challenging as the SAT Reading Test, if not more so.

Finally, as at test optional schools, many successful applicants to test flexible schools opt to submit SAT or ACT scores.

Selective, Test Flexible Schools	Admit Rate %	% Submitting SAT	% Submitting ACT	SAT Total* 25th–75th Percentile	ACT Composite 25th–75th Percentile
Colby College	23	67	45	1340–1510	29–32
Colorado College	17	44	56	1320–1480	28–32
Drexel University	76	88	31	1170–1390	25–30
Hamilton College	25	53	32	1370–1520	31–33
Middlebury College	17	64	44	1350–1540	29–33
New York University	33	77	23	1320–1500	28–32
University of Rochester	36	60	37	1320–1520	29–33

\* New SAT Total scores are derived from college reported data, College Board concordance tables and Compass research.

### Quirky Outliers

Some schools resist the Required/Optional/Flexible taxonomy.

Hampshire College in Massachusetts proudly refuses to even consider test scores in its admission decisions. Test scores at Hampshire are ignored and unseen, not optional.

The University of Nebraska—quite a different context—takes the opposite tack, not even bothering to calculate an applicant’s GPA if SAT or ACT scores are high enough.

These should be regarded as unique exceptions, but they bookend the diversity, debate, and confusion around the role of test scores in college admission.

# The Competitive Landscape

The following is a sampling of admission statistics at well-known colleges. The test scores represent the range in the middle half of the freshman class entering in 2015. Because new SAT scores will not be available from colleges until 2018, we have taken old SAT scores and translated them into estimated new SAT scores via the College Board's concordance tables. These scores should not be viewed as cutoffs or qualifying scores.

The Acceptance Rate and Yield columns remind students and parents that college admission is a two-way street. Students want to gain admission to their top choice schools, and colleges want to entice their admitted candidates to attend. Even very competitive schools such as Northwestern University and Pomona enroll fewer than 50% of their admitted candidates.

The % Submitting SAT and ACT columns provide a sense of how popular the use of SAT scores versus ACT scores is at a particular institution (compare the University of Michigan to the UC system, for example). Items marked N/A are not available at this time.

College Profiles: New England	Acceptance Rate	Yield	NEW SAT			ACT	% Submitting		Test Optional or Test Flexible
			EBRW 25th-75th Percentile	Math 25th-75th Percentile	Total 25th-75th Percentile	Composite 25th-75th Percentile	SAT	ACT	
Amherst College	14	39	720-780	710-790	1430-1570	31-34	53	49	
Babson College	26	27	640-730	640-750	1280-1480	27-30	76	34	
Bates College	22	42	650-740	620-730	1270-1470	28-32	54	27	TO
Bennington College	63	31	640-740	570-700	1210-1440	26-31	38	6	TO
Bentley University	42	26	600-690	620-720	1220-1410	26-30	83	33	
Boston College	34	26	680-750	660-770	1340-1520	30-33	67	49	
Boston University	33	20	650-720	640-760	1290-1480	27-31	77	38	
Bowdoin College	15	50	730-780	720-780	1450-1560	31-34	42	36	TO
Brandeis University	34	22	670-740	670-780	1340-1520	29-32	62	30	TO
Brown University	9	56	720-790	720-790	1440-1580	31-34	71	44	
Clark University	63	14	650-710	610-700	1260-1410	27-31	51	42	TO
Colby College	23	30	680-750	660-760	1340-1510	29-32	67	45	TF
College of the Holy Cross	37	30	660-730	640-720	1300-1450	28-31	44	22	TO
Connecticut College	40	23	660-730	630-730	1290-1460	28-31	24	17	TO
Dartmouth College	11	50	710-790	700-790	1410-1580	30-34	59	41	
Emerson College	49	22	620-710	570-660	1190-1370	25-29	81	34	TO
Fairfield University	65	14	610-680	570-660	1180-1340	24-28	82	30	TO
Harvard University	6	80	740-800	730-800	1470-1600	32-35	99	38	
Massachusetts Institute of Technology	8	73	720-790	770-800	1490-1590	33-35	80	47	
Middlebury College	17	38	690-770	660-770	1350-1540	29-33	64	44	TF
Mount Holyoke College	50	27	680-750	630-760	1310-1510	29-32	53	24	TO
Northeastern University	28	19	700-760	710-780	1410-1540	31-34	42	43	
Providence College	57	18	580-680	560-650	1140-1330	23-28	77	34	TO
Quinnipiac University	74	11	550-640	530-620	1080-1260	22-27	86	31	TO
Rhode Island School of Design	36	51	630-720	600-750	1230-1470	25-32	80	19	
Simmons College	58	18	590-680	550-630	1140-1310	24-29	87	27	
Smith College	38	32	680-750	640-750	1320-1500	28-32	54	25	TO
St. Michael's College	76	13	590-680	560-650	1150-1330	24-28	73	23	TO
Stonehill College	75	15	560-660	540-640	1100-1300	23-28	81	20	TO
Trinity College (Hartford)	33	22	630-710	600-700	1230-1410	27-30	60	39	TO
Tufts University	16	44	720-770	720-780	1440-1550	30-33	54	46	
United States Coast Guard Academy	18	100	620-700	630-720	1250-1420	26-31	76	63	
University of Connecticut	53	20	610-700	600-720	1210-1420	26-31	83	36	
University of Massachusetts, Amherst	58	20	600-680	600-700	1200-1380	25-30	87	27	
University of New Hampshire	79	21	550-650	540-630	1090-1280	22-27	90	19	
University of Vermont	71	13	600-700	570-660	1170-1360	25-30	79	38	
Wellesley College	30	43	690-760	670-770	1360-1530	29-33	67	49	
Wesleyan University	22	35	680-760	650-760	1330-1520	29-33	61	38	TO
Williams College	18	45	710-790	700-780	1410-1570	31-34	75	45	
Worcester Polytechnic Institute	49	22	630-710	660-760	1290-1470	28-32	80	30	TO
Yale University	7	67	740-800	740-800	1480-1600	31-35	74	45	

\* New SAT Total scores are derived from college reported data, College Board concordance tables and Compass research.

## College Profiles: Mid-Atlantic

	Acceptance Rate	Yield	NEW SAT			ACT	% Submitting		Test Optional or Test Flexible
			EBRW 25th–75th Percentile	Math 25th–75th Percentile	Total 25th–75th Percentile	Composite 25th–75th Percentile	SAT	ACT	
Adelphi University	72	13	560–660	540–640	1100–1300	19–25	73	23	
Allegheny College	68	17	550–680	540–640	1090–1320	22–29	76	49	TO
American University	35	30	640–720	580–670	1220–1390	26–30	60	35	TO
Bard College	32	20	640–740	590–710	1230–1450	N/A	54	N/A	TO
Barnard College	20	49	690–760	640–750	1330–1510	29–32	67	47	
Binghamton University, SUNY	42	20	650–710	650–730	1300–1440	27–31	96	42	
Bryn Mawr College	39	35	680–750	640–760	1320–1510	28–32	64	38	TO
Bucknell University	25	35	650–720	640–740	1290–1460	28–32	70	43	
Carnegie Mellon University	24	32	700–770	740–800	1440–1570	31–34	84	37	
Clarkson University	68	17	570–660	590–700	1160–1360	24–29	88	42	
Colgate University	27	32	660–760	650–760	1310–1520	30–33	53	47	
College of New Jersey	49	26	610–700	590–700	1200–1400	24–29	93	23	
Columbia University	7	63	730–800	730–800	1460–1600	32–35	73	39	
The Cooper Union	13	61	660–750	650–800	1310–1550	30–34	87	13	
Cornell University	15	50	700–780	710–790	1410–1570	30–34	75	45	
CUNY, Baruch College	32	23	560–680	600–720	1160–1400	N/A	99	N/A	
Dickinson College	47	26	650–720	620–730	1270–1450	27–30	52	25	TO
Drew University	70	17	550–670	520–640	1070–1310	22–29	78	24	TO
Drexel University	76	8	580–680	590–710	1170–1390	25–30	88	31	TF
Duquesne University	76	26	570–650	550–630	1120–1280	23–28	60	30	TO
Fordham University	48	11	640–710	610–710	1250–1420	27–31	77	37	
Franklin and Marshall College	32	26	620–720	650–760	1270–1480	28–31	49	20	TO
Gallaudet University	62	71	420–520	450–520	870–1040	15–20	13	93	
George Washington University	46	28	650–730	620–730	1270–1460	27–31	70	44	TO
Georgetown University	17	47	700–780	690–770	1390–1550	30–34	78	47	
Gettysburg College	40	28	640–720	630–710	1270–1430	27–29	82	9	TO
Goucher College	78	14	560–670	510–610	1070–1280	23–28	70	33	TO
Hamilton College	25	35	700–760	670–760	1370–1520	31–33	53	32	TF
Haverford College	25	41	710–780	690–780	1400–1560	31–34	69	43	
Hobart and William Smith Colleges	57	25	600–700	600–690	1200–1390	26–30	31	5	TO
Hofstra University	61	10	560–660	560–640	1120–1300	23–28	76	29	TO
Howard University	48	23	560–660	520–630	1080–1290	21–27	71	50	
Ithaca College	67	16	600–690	570–670	1170–1360	N/A	61	N/A	TO
Johns Hopkins University	13	40	730–780	740–800	1470–1580	32–34	58	42	
Lafayette College	30	30	640–720	640–740	1280–1460	27–31	71	45	
Lehigh University	30	32	640–720	660–760	1300–1480	29–32	63	37	
Loyola University Maryland	61	12	600–700	580–660	1180–1360	25–29	55	24	TO
Marist College	45	29	580–680	560–650	1140–1330	23–28	55	27	TO
Muhlenberg College	48	24	620–710	580–700	1200–1410	25–31	66	25	TO
New Jersey Institute of Technology	61	30	570–680	610–710	1180–1390	23–29	89	22	
New School	67	26	560–670	530–650	1090–1320	22–27	53	18	TO
New York University	33	32	670–740	650–760	1320–1500	28–32	77	23	TF
Penn State University, University Park	51	28	590–680	580–700	1170–1380	25–29	72	20	
Pratt Institute	67	21	590–680	560–690	1150–1370	24–28	75	22	
Princeton University	7	68	730–800	730–800	1460–1600	32–35	80	36	
Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute	42	19	660–760	710–780	1370–1540	28–32	63	37	
Rochester Institute of Technology	57	27	590–690	600–720	1190–1410	26–31	68	32	
Rutgers University, New Brunswick	61	33	610–710	570–690	1180–1400	N/A	94	N/A	
Rutgers University, Newark	65	16	510–610	510–600	1020–1210	N/A	94	N/A	
Sarah Lawrence College	53	24	660–740	570–710	1230–1450	27–31	44	24	TO
Seton Hall University	76	13	570–660	570–640	1140–1300	23–27	87	29	
Siena College	59	14	550–650	550–640	1100–1290	23–27	91	35	TO
Skidmore College	37	22	610–710	580–700	1190–1410	26–30	74	37	TO
St. John Fisher College	62	19	540–620	540–620	1080–1240	21–26	86	55	
St. John's College Annapolis	78	41	670–750	620–730	1290–1480	26–31	64	18	TO
St. John's University (NY)	65	14	520–620	510–620	1030–1240	22–27	81	17	
St. Lawrence University	46	25	600–690	570–690	1170–1380	26–30	49	26	TO

### College Profiles: Mid-Atlantic

	Acceptance Rate	Yield	NEW SAT			ACT	Submitting		Test Optional or Test Flexible
			EBRW 25th–75th Percentile	Math 25th–75th Percentile	Total 25th–75th Percentile	Composite 25th–75th Percentile	SAT	ACT	
St. Mary's College of Maryland	79	30	580–680	530–640	1110–1320	22–28	87	29	
Stevens Institute of Technology	44	24	640–720	670–760	1310–1480	29–32	72	28	
Stony Brook University, SUNY	41	20	600–700	620–750	1220–1450	26–31	82	33	
SUNY, ESF	52	38	600–680	580–690	1180–1370	25–29	65	35	
SUNY, Geneseo	73	20	600–680	570–670	1170–1350	25–29	62	38	
Susquehanna University	76	17	550–660	540–630	1090–1290	23–27	75	13	TO
Swarthmore College	13	41	710–780	710–780	1420–1560	29–34	77	44	
Syracuse University	48	22	590–680	580–690	1170–1370	24–29	74	39	
Temple University	56	31	570–670	560–650	1130–1320	23–29	73	20	TO
The Catholic University of America	79	19	560–660	540–630	1100–1290	22–28	83	34	TO
Union College (NY)	38	25	660–720	650–750	1310–1470	29–32	49	26	
United States Military Academy	9	85	620–720	620–720	1240–1440	27–32	85	80	
United States Naval Academy	8	87	620–720	630–730	1250–1450	N/A	77	N/A	
University at Albany, SUNY	56	21	540–620	550–620	1090–1240	22–26	88	24	
University at Buffalo, SUNY	60	26	540–640	570–670	1110–1310	24–29	83	32	
University of Delaware	66	25	600–690	580–690	1180–1380	24–29	98	32	TO
University of Maryland, College Park	45	31	640–740	640–760	1280–1500	N/A	84	N/A	
University of Pennsylvania	10	64	720–780	730–800	1450–1580	31–34	58	42	
University of Pittsburgh	54	24	630–710	620–720	1250–1430	26–31	85	47	
University of Rochester	36	23	660–740	660–780	1320–1520	29–33	60	37	TF
Ursinus College	83	20	570–670	550–650	1120–1320	23–30	64	22	TO
Vassar College	26	34	710–770	690–760	1400–1530	30–33	59	57	
Villanova University	48	22	650–730	630–740	1280–1470	29–32	57	43	
Virginia Tech	73	39	590–680	590–710	1180–1390	N/A	91	N/A	
Washington and Jefferson College	43	13	560–660	570–650	1130–1310	23–28	49	25	TO
Washington College	56	13	570–680	550–660	1120–1340	25–29	84	20	TO
Yeshiva University	80	62	610–710	580–710	1190–1420	24–29	54	48	

### College Profiles: South

	Acceptance Rate	Yield	NEW SAT			ACT	% Submitting		Test Optional or Test Flexible
			EBRW 25th–75th Percentile	Math 25th–75th Percentile	Total 25th–75th Percentile	Composite 25th–75th Percentile	SAT	ACT	
Abilene Christian University	50	20	510–640	510–610	1020–1250	22–27	56	44	
Agnes Scott College	62	30	610–720	540–660	1150–1380	24–29	52	33	TO
Appalachian State University	66	35	570–660	560–640	1130–1300	23–28	79	75	
Auburn University	78	33	580–690	570–670	1150–1360	24–30	14	85	
Austin College	54	20	580–690	570–660	1150–1350	22–28	54	54	TO
Baylor University	44	24	600–690	600–700	1200–1390	25–30	41	59	
Berea College	37	72	580–670	550–640	1130–1310	22–26	14	83	
Berry College	55	24	580–670	550–630	1130–1300	24–29	44	56	
Birmingham-Southern College	53	24	520–640	510–640	1030–1280	21–25	25	87	TO
Centre College	71	19	580–700	590–760	1170–1460	26–31	19	82	
Christopher Newport University	60	28	580–680	560–640	1140–1320	23–27	72	34	TO
Clemson University	51	30	620–700	610–720	1230–1420	27–31	55	45	
College of Charleston	69	28	560–660	540–630	1100–1290	23–27	56	46	
College of William & Mary	34	29	680–750	650–760	1330–1510	28–32	80	44	
Davidson College	22	43	670–750	650–750	1320–1500	29–32	64	62	
Duke University	11	49	720–780	720–800	1440–1580	31–34	67	56	
Elon University	57	26	620–700	590–690	1210–1390	25–29	73	50	
Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University	69	40	540–650	550–660	1090–1310	22–28	68	52	TO
Emory University	27	28	680–750	670–780	1350–1530	29–33	65	51	
Florida Institute of Technology	57	12	560–660	580–700	1140–1360	24–29	47	35	
Florida State University	56	37	620–690	580–660	1200–1350	26–29	42	58	
Furman University	64	21	620–710	590–700	1210–1410	25–30	60	53	TO
George Mason University	69	21	560–660	560–650	1120–1310	23–28	73	14	TO
Georgia Institute of Technology	32	35	680–750	710–780	1390–1530	30–33	77	67	
Hampden-Sydney College	55	15	540–650	530–630	1070–1280	21–27	100	40	
Hampton University	69	13	520–580	510–570	1030–1150	19–24	54	36	TO
Hendrix College	82	28	580–720	600–690	1180–1410	25–32	33	90	

College Profiles: South	Acceptance Rate	Yield	NEW SAT			ACT	% Submitting		Test Optional or Test Flexible
			EBRW 25th–75th Percentile	Math 25th–75th Percentile	Total 25th–75th Percentile	Composite 25th–75th Percentile	SAT	ACT	
High Point University	72	17	550–650	540–620	1090–1270	22–27	72	52	
Hollins University	61	14	560–680	510–600	1070–1280	21–30	76	43	
James Madison University	73	28	560–660	560–640	1120–1300	25–27	91	35	TO
John Brown University	74	42	560–700	540–650	1100–1350	24–30	26	86	
Lipscomb University	56	31	560–680	550–640	1110–1320	23–29	29	86	
Louisiana State Univ, Baton Rouge	77	42	560–660	540–660	1100–1320	23–28	8	92	
Loyola University New Orleans	90	21	560–660	510–630	1070–1290	22–28	43	72	
Mercer University	67	27	580–680	570–670	1150–1350	25–29	56	43	
Millsaps College	53	12	560–680	560–650	1120–1330	23–28	21	88	
Mississippi State University	72	38	520–660	510–660	1030–1320	20–27	15	85	
Morehouse College	76	34	480–590	470–570	950–1160	18–23	69	54	
New College of Florida	61	26	650–730	580–690	1230–1420	27–31	83	60	
North Carolina State Univ, Raleigh	50	40	610–690	620–710	1230–1400	26–31	65	32	
Oklahoma State University	75	44	520–640	540–640	1060–1280	22–28	24	91	
Presbyterian College (SC)	62	20	520–640	520–620	1040–1260	20–27	73	69	TO
Queens University of Charlotte	53	20	510–640	500–590	1010–1230	20–26	79	47	
Randolph-Macon College	60	23	550–650	530–600	1080–1250	22–27	92	35	
Rhodes College	47	26	640–740	620–720	1260–1460	27–31	50	73	
Rice University	16	34	720–780	740–800	1460–1580	32–35	72	58	
Rollins College	60	17	610–700	580–690	1190–1390	24–29	59	44	TO
Samford University	93	28	560–660	520–630	1080–1290	23–29	35	86	
Sewanee—University of the South	41	26	630–710	580–670	1210–1380	26–30	40	53	TO
Southern Methodist University	49	22	650–730	640–750	1290–1480	28–32	47	68	
Southwestern University	44	22	560–680	550–650	1110–1330	23–29	75	61	
Spelman College	54	24	510–610	480–570	990–1180	19–24	70	58	
Stetson University	61	11	590–680	560–640	1150–1320	24–28	50	37	TO
Texas A&M University, College Station	66	46	560–680	570–700	1130–1380	25–30	61	39	
Texas Christian University	43	26	590–680	570–670	1160–1350	25–30	38	62	
Texas Lutheran University	51	42	490–590	510–580	1000–1170	19–23	85	47	
The Citadel	77	32	540–640	530–620	1070–1260	20–25	57	42	
Transylvania University	93	22	560–680	530–690	1090–1370	24–30	12	94	TO
Trinity University	48	23	630–710	600–710	1230–1420	27–32	48	52	
Tulane University	31	21	680–740	640–730	1320–1470	29–32	39	60	
University of Alabama	51	40	540–660	530–650	1070–1310	22–31	23	76	
University of Arkansas	60	40	540–660	540–640	1080–1300	23–28	25	91	
University of Dallas	61	40	600–700	620–730	1220–1430	25–31	77	55	
University of Florida	48	51	630–710	610–710	1240–1420	27–31	81	79	
University of Georgia	53	45	620–700	600–700	1220–1400	26–31	77	69	
University of Kentucky	91	31	550–670	540–650	1090–1320	22–28	17	92	
University of Mary Washington	83	21	560–650	530–620	1090–1270	22–27	90	31	TO
University of Miami	38	16	640–720	630–730	1270–1450	28–32	41	46	
University of Mississippi	79	28	540–640	530–620	1070–1260	21–28	26	89	TO
University of N Carolina, Chapel Hill	30	43	650–730	630–730	1280–1460	27–32	76	74	
University of N Carolina, Wilmington	30	43	590–680	580–660	1170–1340	22–26	87	76	
University of Oklahoma	78	45	560–720	570–700	1130–1420	23–29	34	86	
University of Richmond	31	26	660–730	640–750	1300–1480	29–32	57	43	
University of South Carolina	65	31	600–680	580–670	1180–1350	25–30	55	46	
University of South Florida	45	30	580–670	570–660	1150–1330	24–28	52	48	
University of Tennessee	76	36	560–680	560–650	1120–1330	24–30	18	93	
University of Texas, Austin	40	47	610–710	610–740	1220–1450	25–31	83	55	
University of Texas, Dallas	61	40	600–700	620–730	1220–1430	25–31	77	55	
University of Tulsa	42	25	600–740	590–730	1190–1470	26–32	25	75	
University of Virginia	30	40	670–750	650–760	1320–1510	29–33	82	44	
Vanderbilt University	12	44	730–790	750–800	1480–1590	32–35	41	63	
Virginia Commonwealth University	72	34	550–650	520–610	1070–1260	21–27	87	27	TO
Virginia Military Institute	53	48	570–670	570–640	1140–1310	23–28	86	49	
Wake Forest University	29	33	650–730	630–750	1280–1480	27–33	53	44	TO
Washington and Lee University	24	35	700–750	690–760	1390–1510	30–33	46	53	
Washington University in St. Louis	17	35	730–780	740–800	1470–1580	32–34	45	68	
Wofford College	72	22	580–680	560–650	1140–1330	23–29	47	53	TO

## College Profiles: Midwest

	Acceptance Rate	Yield	NEW SAT			ACT	% Submitting		Test Optional or Test Flexible
			EBRW 25th–75th Percentile	Math 25th–75th Percentile	Total 25th–75th Percentile	Composite 25th–75th Percentile	SAT	ACT	
Albion College	79	20	540–640	460–590	1000–1230	22–27	2	92	
Augustana College	49	20	580–690	540–720	1120–1410	23–28	7	88	TO
Baldwin Wallace University	60	29	520–650	510–620	1030–1270	20–27	27	83	TO
Beloit College	69	16	580–740	570–670	1150–1410	24–30	28	48	TO
Bradley University	66	15	540–670	550–670	1090–1340	23–28	9	95	
Butler University	70	15	570–670	560–650	1130–1320	25–30	51	83	
Carleton College	21	35	700–770	690–780	1390–1550	29–33	57	59	
Case Western Reserve University	36	15	670–750	710–780	1380–1530	30–33	57	62	
Coe College	61	17	570–670	530–660	1100–1330	22–27	10	94	
College of St. Benedict	75	34	540–630	490–590	1030–1220	22–27	10	91	
College of Wooster	55	18	600–700	580–710	1180–1410	25–30	45	71	
Concordia College, Moorhead	78	29	N/A	N/A	N/A	22–28	N/A	97	
Cornell College	71	20	560–690	530–660	1090–1350	23–29	29	82	TO
Creighton University	70	16	570–680	570–670	1140–1350	24–29	26	88	
Denison University	48	22	620–720	600–710	1220–1430	26–31	28	41	TO
DePaul University	72	18	560–660	520–630	1080–1290	22–28	21	85	TO
DePauw University	65	18	570–670	570–700	1140–1370	25–29	34	68	
Drake University	67	18	580–680	560–700	1140–1380	25–30	10	95	TO
Drury University	65	29	560–700	550–630	1110–1330	20–31	1	99	
Earlham College	62	16	600–730	580–720	1180–1450	25–31	46	34	TO
Elmhurst College	55	24	530–650	520–620	1050–1270	21–26	6	96	
Goshen College	66	34	510–670	530–650	1040–1320	21–28	72	44	
Grinnell College	25	28	680–760	690–780	1370–1540	30–33	38	62	
Gustavus Adolphus College	67	20	600–720	570–710	1170–1430	24–30	6	61	TO
Hanover College	61	15	530–650	510–620	1040–1270	22–27	49	50	
Hillsdale College	50	40	670–760	600–690	1270–1450	27–31	40	98	
Hope College	72	25	580–700	570–700	1150–1400	24–29	11	95	
Illinois Institute of Technology	53	21	580–690	650–760	1230–1450	25–30	31	75	
Illinois Wesleyan University	62	19	540–660	690–780	1230–1440	25–30	18	85	
Indiana University, Bloomington	72	28	570–680	570–690	1140–1370	24–30	72	64	
Iowa State University	87	37	500–660	530–660	1030–1320	21–29	8	91	
Kalamazoo College	72	21	580–700	570–720	1150–1420	26–30	29	84	TO
Kenyon College	22	29	680–750	630–720	1310–1470	28–32	59	55	
Knox College	64	18	640–680	610–690	1250–1370	23–29	26	74	TO
Lake Forest College	55	19	N/A	N/A	N/A	23–28	N/A	64	TO
Lawrence University	68	19	630–720	580–750	1210–1470	25–31	29	68	TO
Loyola University Chicago	71	14	580–680	550–650	1130–1330	24–29	18	89	
Luther College	67	24	540–670	510–660	1050–1330	23–29	9	91	
Macalester College	39	25	680–750	640–760	1320–1510	29–32	56	58	
Marquette University	74	12	580–690	570–690	1150–1380	24–30	16	91	
Miami University, Oxford	65	21	600–700	610–720	1210–1420	26–30	25	84	
Michigan State University	66	35	510–640	560–710	1070–1350	23–28	13	83	
Michigan Technological University	75	31	580–690	580–720	1160–1410	24–29	6	96	
Milwaukee School of Engineering	65	34	620–720	630–760	1250–1480	25–30	6	94	
Missouri University of Sci & Tech	88	47	560–700	580–660	1140–1360	25–31	8	92	
Northwestern University	13	48	740–780	740–800	1480–1580	31–34	50	67	
Oberlin College	29	35	690–750	640–750	1330–1500	28–32	71	43	
Ohio State University, Columbus	49	35	620–710	630–750	1250–1460	27–31	32	87	
Ohio University	74	28	540–650	530–630	1070–1280	22–26	21	91	
Ohio Wesleyan University	75	15	550–670	540–640	1090–1310	22–28	32	57	TO
Purdue University, West Lafayette	59	26	580–680	580–730	1160–1410	25–30	73	54	
Ripon College	66	17	500–680	530–640	1030–1320	21–27	7	93	TO
Saint Louis University	63	20	580–720	580–710	1160–1430	25–31	16	89	
St. Mary's College (IN)	80	30	560–670	510–610	1070–1280	22–28	44	76	
St. Olaf College	36	28	600–740	600–730	1200–1470	26–31	32	80	



### College Profiles: Midwest

	Acceptance Rate	Yield	NEW SAT			ACT	% Submitting		Test Optional or Test Flexible
			EBRW 25th–75th Percentile	Math 25th–75th Percentile	Total 25th–75th Percentile	Composite 25th–75th Percentile	SAT	ACT	
Taylor University	85	36	550–670	520–660	1070–1330	24–30	36	64	
Truman State University	79	41	620–760	580–710	1200–1470	25–30	4	94	
University of Chicago	9	61	740–800	750–800	1490–1600	32–35	63	56	
University of Cincinnati	76	34	560–680	560–690	1120–1370	23–28	22	91	
University of Dayton	58	22	570–660	560–660	1130–1320	24–29	33	81	
University of Illinois, Chicago	77	29	530–640	550–700	1080–1340	21–26	4	96	
University of Illinois, Urbana–Champaign	66	34	640–720	730–800	1370–1520	26–31	24	82	
University of Iowa	81	25	500–680	570–720	1070–1400	23–28	10	88	
University of Kansas	93	30	N/A	N/A	N/A	22–28	N/A	97	
University of Michigan, Ann Arbor	26	45	680–750	690–780	1370–1530	29–33	27	83	
University of Minnesota, Twin Cities	45	28	620–720	640–770	1260–1490	26–30	14	91	
University of Missouri	78	36	580–700	560–670	1140–1370	24–29	8	94	
University of Nebraska, Lincoln	76	62	540–680	530–690	1070–1370	22–28	7	94	
University of Notre Dame	20	56	700–770	710–780	1410–1550	32–34	41	59	
University of St. Thomas (MN)	84	31	560–680	540–640	1100–1320	24–29	4	97	
University of Wisconsin, Madison	49	39	640–710	650–780	1290–1490	27–31	19	87	
Valparaiso University	82	14	550–650	530–640	1080–1290	23–29	47	72	
Wabash College	61	31	540–650	550–660	1090–1310	22–27	79	65	
Wheaton College (IL)	65	15	600–700	570–690	1170–1390	27–32	44	11	
Xavier University	72	15	540–650	520–610	1060–1260	22–27	37	84	

### College Profiles: West

	Acceptance Rate	Yield	NEW SAT			ACT	Submitting		Test Optional or Test Flexible
			EBRW 25th–75th Percentile	Math 25th–75th Percentile	Total 25th–75th Percentile	Composite 25th–75th Percentile	SAT	ACT	
Arizona State University, Tempe	83	40	560–680	550–660	1110–1340	23–28	55	57	TO
Biola University	73	31	550–670	520–640	1070–1310	21–28	83	38	
Brigham Young University, Provo	48	80	620–710	600–710	1220–1420	27–31	27	95	
California Institute of Technology	9	42	750–800	780–800	1530–1600	34–35	78	50	
California Lutheran University	62	15	550–650	530–620	1080–1270	22–27	81	45	
Cal Poly, San Luis Obispo	31	34	600–700	600–720	1200–1420	26–31	77	70	
Cal Poly, Pomona	39	20	500–620	510–630	1010–1250	20–27	88	29	TO
California State University, Fresno	52	34	440–550	440–540	880–1090	16–21	90	39	TO
California State University, Fullerton	42	25	500–600	510–590	1010–1190	19–24	91	37	TO
California State University, Long Beach	34	23	500–620	510–620	1010–1240	20–26	94	40	TO
California State University, Los Angeles	68	18	440–540	430–530	870–1070	15–20	95	36	TO
California State University, Monterey Bay	49	14	480–600	460–570	940–1170	17–23	93	39	TO
California State University, Northridge	46	36	440–560	440–550	880–1110	16–22	91	22	TO
Carroll College	64	17	530–650	520–620	1050–1270	22–27	51	80	
Chapman University	47	22	610–700	570–670	1180–1370	25–30	68	54	
Claremont McKenna College	11	44	720–770	700–790	1420–1560	29–33	58	56	
Colorado College	17	42	680–740	640–740	1320–1480	28–32	44	56	TF
Colorado School of Mines	38	23	640–710	670–760	1310–1470	28–32	35	90	
Colorado State University	81	32	560–660	550–650	1110–1310	22–28	23	88	
Gonzaga University	73	27	580–680	570–670	1150–1350	25–29	71	56	
Harvey Mudd College	13	40	710–770	760–800	1470–1570	33–35	79	54	
Humboldt State University	75	15	490–610	470–570	960–1180	18–24	92	39	TO
Lewis & Clark College	63	14	650–710	610–700	1260–1410	27–31	51	42	TO
Loyola Marymount University	51	20	610–690	580–690	1190–1380	25–30	68	48	
Mills College	76	22	590–700	530–640	1120–1340	24–30	65	35	TO
Occidental College	45	20	660–730	620–720	1280–1450	28–31	62	51	
Oregon State University	78	25	530–650	530–640	1060–1290	21–28	76	42	
Pacific Lutheran University	76	23	530–660	530–630	1060–1290	22–28	81	33	
Pepperdine University	38	20	610–700	570–700	1180–1400	25–30	66	53	

**College Profiles:  
West**

	Acceptance Rate	Yield	NEW SAT			ACT	Submitting		Test Optional or Test Flexible
			EBRW 25th–75th Percentile	Math 25th–75th Percentile	Total 25th–75th Percentile	Composite 25th–75th Percentile	SAT	ACT	
Pitzer College	13	48	660–760	650–750	1310–1510	29–32	32	21	TO
Point Loma Nazarene University	71	30	570–650	530–640	1100–1290	23–28	77	50	
Pomona College	10	48	710–780	720–780	1430–1560	30–34	61	59	
Reed College	35	22	700–760	640–750	1340–1510	29–33	74	46	
San Diego State University	34	26	550–650	540–650	1090–1300	22–28	84	52	
San Francisco State University	66	18	480–580	470–570	950–1150	18–24	90	26	TO
San Jose State University	55	20	500–620	510–630	1010–1250	20–26	90	32	TO
Santa Clara University	49	17	640–740	640–740	1280–1480	27–32	57	57	
Scripps College	28	38	700–750	650–750	1350–1500	29–32	59	54	
Seattle University	73	17	590–680	560–660	1150–1340	24–29	77	43	
Soka University of America	46	61	580–690	600–760	1180–1450	24–30	82	28	
St. Mary's College of California	76	18	560–660	560–650	1120–1310	22–27	75	51	
Stanford University	5	80	730–790	730–800	1460–1590	31–35	80	51	
Thomas Aquinas College	63	66	650–740	570–670	1220–1410	26–30	84	22	
United States Air Force Academy	17	80	650–730	650–730	1300–1460	28–33	41	59	
University of Arizona	76	30	530–650	510–640	1040–1290	21–27	56	55	TO
University of California, Berkeley	15	46	670–760	660–780	1330–1540	29–34	82	49	
University of California, Davis	38	22	580–690	580–740	1160–1430	24–30	67	33	
University of California, Irvine	39	21	560–670	570–720	1130–1390	N/A	100	N/A	
University of California, Los Angeles	17	35	640–750	630–780	1270–1530	25–33	83	55	
University of California, Merced	67	14	500–610	500–600	1000–1210	19–24	93	45	
University of California, Riverside	56	19	560–660	550–670	1110–1330	22–28	70	30	
University of California, San Diego	34	20	640–730	650–780	1290–1510	27–32	87	44	
University of California, Santa Barbara	33	19	610–710	600–730	1210–1440	24–30	86	55	
University of California, Santa Cruz	51	16	580–690	570–700	1150–1390	23–29	87	45	
University of Colorado, Boulder	76	26	580–680	570–690	1150–1370	24–30	38	77	
University of Denver	73	13	600–690	580–690	1180–1380	23–30	35	74	
University of Hawaii at Manoa	81	31	530–630	530–630	1060–1260	21–26	65	45	
University of La Verne	47	19	520–620	510–580	1030–1200	20–24	88	34	
University of Oregon	74	25	550–660	530–630	1080–1290	22–27	67	48	
University of Portland	62	14	580–700	570–670	1150–1370	N/A	99	N/A	
University of Puget Sound	79	14	610–710	570–690	1180–1400	25–30	62	55	TO
University of Redlands	68	16	560–660	540–630	1100–1290	22–28	74	50	
University of San Diego	52	16	600–690	580–700	1180–1390	26–30	65	56	
University of San Francisco	60	13	580–670	570–660	1150–1330	24–28	72	43	
University of Southern California	18	32	680–760	670–780	1350–1540	30–33	68	48	
University of the Pacific	65	10	550–680	550–690	1100–1370	22–29	80	41	
University of Utah	81	34	550–680	540–690	1090–1370	21–28	18	88	
University of Washington	53	35	590–700	600–740	1190–1440	26–31	79	37	
Washington State University	80	30	490–610	500–590	990–1200	19–26	87	24	
Westmont College	81	20	580–690	560–670	1140–1360	23–29	77	51	
Whitman College	43	22	650–740	630–730	1280–1470	27–32	59	51	TO
Whittier College	63	14	510–630	510–610	1020–1240	20–26	83	35	TO
Willamette University	78	11	600–700	570–670	1170–1370	24–30	79	43	TO

# College-Bound Seniors Percentiles 2015

## Estimated SAT Percentile Ranks (2015)

The SAT percentile ranks on your score report are not based on the test date you took. Instead, they are usually based on the entire performance of an earlier cohort. A class year has not yet completed the new SAT, so we will not have an accurate set of percentiles until late 2017. College Board is currently reporting two types of percentiles (Nationally Representative Sample Percentile and SAT User Percentile—National), both based on pilot studies. The higher number is the National Representative Sample, because this includes all students, even those who would not normally take the SAT. The User Percentile is closer to traditional expectations, but it is still based on a small study.

Nationally Representative Sample Percentile									SAT User Percentile—National								
Score	EBRW	Math	Score	EBRW	Math	Score	EBRW	Math	Score	EBRW	Math	Score	EBRW	Math	Score	EBRW	Math
800	99+	99+	600	79	81	400	16	15	800	99+	99+	600	69	73	400	9	8
790	99+	99+	590	76	79	390	13	13	790	99+	99	590	66	70	390	7	7
780	99+	99	580	74	76	380	11	10	780	99+	98	580	63	67	380	6	5
770	99+	99	570	71	73	370	9	9	770	99	98	570	60	64	370	5	4
760	99+	99	560	68	71	360	7	7	760	99	98	560	56	60	360	3	3
750	99	98	550	65	68	350	5	5	750	99	97	550	52	57	350	3	3
740	99	98	540	62	65	340	3	4	740	98	96	540	49	53	340	2	2
730	99	97	530	58	61	330	2	3	730	97	95	530	45	49	330	1	1
720	98	97	520	55	57	320	2	2	720	96	95	520	42	45	320	1	1
710	97	96	510	51	52	310	1	1	710	95	94	510	38	40	310	1	1
700	97	95	500	48	47	300	1	1	700	94	92	500	35	34	300	1-	1
690	96	94	490	44	44	290	1-	1-	690	92	91	490	31	30	290	1-	1-
680	95	93	480	41	40	280	1-	1-	680	91	89	480	28	27	280	1-	1-
670	93	92	470	38	36	270	1-	1-	670	89	88	470	25	24	270	1-	1-
660	92	91	460	34	32	260	1-	1-	660	86	87	460	22	21	260	1-	1-
650	90	90	450	31	29	250	1-	1-	650	84	86	450	20	18	250	1-	1-
640	88	89	440	28	25	240	1-	1-	640	81	83	440	17	16	240	1-	1-
630	86	87	430	24	23	230	1-	1-	630	78	81	430	15	14	230	1-	1-
620	84	85	420	22	20	220	1-	1-	620	75	79	420	13	12	220	1-	1-
610	81	83	410	19	17	210	1-	1-	610	72	76	410	11	10	210	1-	1-
						200	1-	1-							200	1-	1-

Source: College Board, *Understanding Scores 2016*

## ACT Percentile Ranks (2016)

The percentiles below are based on the scores of students who graduated in 2016 and are defined as the percentage of students who scored at or below the given score. Writing test percentiles are based on the scores of 2016 graduates who tested starting in September of 2015 when the scoring changed from a 1–36 scale to a 2–12 scale.

Score	Composite	English	Math	Reading	Science	Score	Composite	English	Math	Reading	Science	Writing (2–12)
36	100	100	100	100	100	18	37	41	43	36	33	
35	100	100	100	99	99	17	30	36	37	30	27	
34	99	98	99	98	99	16	24	32	27	25	22	
33	99	96	98	97	98	15	18	27	16	20	16	
32	97	95	97	94	97	14	12	20	7	15	12	
31	96	93	96	92	95	13	7	16	3	11	9	
30	94	91	95	89	94	12	3	13	1	7	6	100
29	92	89	93	86	93	11	1	10	1	3	3	99
28	89	87	91	83	92	10	1	7	1	2	2	97
27	86	84	88	80	89	9	1	4	1	1	1	91
26	82	82	83	77	87	8	1	2	1	1	1	82
25	78	78	78	74	82	7	1	1	1	1	1	58
24	73	73	73	71	76	6	1	1	1	1	1	38
23	68	69	68	66	69	5	1	1	1	1	1	17
22	62	63	62	60	62	4	1	1	1	1	1	7
21	56	58	58	54	55	3	1	1	1	1	1	2
20	50	52	54	48	48	2	1	1	1	1	1	1
19	43	46	49	42	40	1	1	1	1	1	1	-

Source: *The ACT Profile Report—National: Graduating Class 2016; ACT National Distributions of Cumulative Percents: ELA and Writing Scores, ACT-Tested High School Graduates from 2016*

# Testing Calendar

The exact dates change from year to year, but the annual testing calendar is consistent. Remember that you can take tests more than once, and many people do.

	SAT	ACT	Subject Tests	Other
September		●		
October	●	●	●	PSAT/NMSQT
November	●		●	
December	●	●	●	
January				
February		●*		
March	●			
April		●		
May	●		●	AP
June	●	●	●	
July		●*		
August	●		●	

\* No February or July test date in New York

Three main tests—ACT, SAT, and SAT Subject Tests—and 14 possible test dates in one year can leave families wondering when is the best time to prepare and test. On the following pages, we provide guidelines for sophomore, junior, and senior years. These timelines are meant to give you a general guide; every student is different. We always recommend talking with a Compass director to identify the ideal timeline for your family.

## Sophomore Year

Sophomore Year	October	PSAT
	November	
	December	
	January	
	February	
	March	PSAT 10
	April	
	May	Subject Tests
June		

**PSAT or PSAT 10** The PSAT/NMSQT is the traditional October offering that allows juniors to qualify for the National Merit Scholarship Program. Many schools also offer this test to sophomores, but students’ scores will not count toward National Merit. The PSAT 10 is structured identically to the PSAT/NMSQT; thus, some schools prefer to give the spring PSAT 10 to sophomores to provide a better sense of where students stand closer to the end of the academic year. Schools may also choose to use PSAT scores to aid in AP placement decisions going into junior year.

**SAT SUBJECT TESTS** Not every student will need Subject Tests (see pages 58–61 for school requirements), but those who do are encouraged to take exams at the end of the school year in which they have taken the relevant academic classes. For instance, a student excelling in precalculus in 10th grade may want to take the Math Level 2 Subject Test in May or June of sophomore year.

**PRACTICE TESTS** In the late spring or early summer of sophomore year, take a practice SAT and a practice ACT to determine which is the ideal test for you. Compass offers complimentary practice tests and consultations to help you craft an individualized test preparation plan.

**TAKE A PRACTICE SAT AND A PRACTICE ACT**

# Three Popular Testing Timelines

## Junior and Senior Years

While Compass believes in customizing a test preparation plan to each student's unique schedule, many students fall into common timelines for their testing. What follow are three popular testing timelines. These examples are based on students' initial practice test scores—sophomore PSAT, practice SAT, or practice ACT—but it's also possible that a different timeline would work better for a student because of additional factors like extracurriculars or travel plans.

### TRADITIONAL TESTING

SAT 900–1200  
ACT 17–25

### DEFERRED TESTING

SAT <900  
ACT <17

### EARLY TESTING

SAT >1200  
ACT >25

While we indicate the most popular test dates for each timeline, we do not mean to suggest that students *must* test on those dates. Schedules are complex; the best test date is the one that works for you. But thoughtful planning can help ensure that there is ample time for preparation in advance of the exams. This page covers the traditional testing timeline. Please see the following pages for deferred and early testing.

SOPHOMORE SCORE  
P/SAT: 900–1200  
ACT: 17–25

		SAT	ACT
Junior Year	September		○
	October	○	○
	November	○	
	December	○	○
	January		
	February		○*
Summer	March	●	
	April		●
	May	○	
	June	●	○
	July		○*
	August	○	
Senior Year	September		●
	October	●	○
	November	○	○

## TRADITIONAL TESTING

Approximately one in two juniors falls into this category.

**BEGIN PREPARATION** Many students in this range will begin preparing for the SAT or ACT during the late summer or early fall of junior year. September's back-to-school is a popular start time, especially when test preparation can be scheduled alongside homework, because students are often focused on academics.

**FIRST SITTING** Preparation generally intensifies in the months leading up to the exam. Most SAT students will take the exam for the first time in March. May and June are popular dates for Subject Tests but can also work well for a first sitting. ACT students often choose April for their first test, though June is also quite popular, and February is a possibility for those feeling prepared early.

**APs and SUBJECT TESTS** The end of the school year is the ideal time to take SAT Subject Tests if needed. Students taking APs in early May often take the remainder of May to prepare for Subject Tests in June.

**REFRESH** Summer is a good time to refresh the skills solidified in the spring by tutoring and taking practice tests.

**SECOND SITTING** Traditionally, the October SAT and September ACT have been the most popular second-sitting test dates. With the introduction of the August SAT we may see a preference for earlier second sittings. Either way, November is generally the last advisable date for students applying via regular decisions; those applying early should be finished by October.

- Most Popular Test Date
- Most Popular Subject Test Date
- Potential Test Date

\* No February or July test date in New York

SOPHOMORE SCORE

P/SAT: <900

ACT: <17

		SAT	ACT
Summer	June	○	○
	July		○*
	August	○	
Junior Year	September		○
	October	○	○
	November	○	
	December	○	○
	January		
	February		○*
	March	○	
	April		○
	May	●	
	June	●	●
	July		○*
	August	○	
Senior Year	September		●
	October	●	○
	November	○	○
	December	○	○

Testing Window

● Most Popular Test Date

● Most Popular Subject Test Date

○ Potential Test Date

\* No February or July test date in New York

## DEFERRED TESTING

Approximately one in three juniors falls into this category.

**BEGIN FOUNDATIONAL WORK** Students in this score range often begin doing foundational work over the summer before junior year or during the fall. This work may include traditional test preparation, but it may also be focused on solidifying fundamental knowledge by reviewing math concepts, practicing reading comprehension skills, and learning conventional grammar rules. The goal is to make formal test preparation less stressful in the few months leading up to the exam.

**FORMAL TEST PREPARATION** Whether or not students have done foundational work over the summer or fall, most will begin test preparation 3–4 months in advance of the late spring exams. A practice test in January can help assess how much a student has grown since initial diagnostic exams and set a baseline for improvement. Tutoring proceeds steadily throughout the spring.

**APs and SUBJECT TESTS** APs take place in May. If needed, Subject Tests can be taken in May or June, but June is the more popular date.

**FIRST SITTING** Students on the deferred timeline will often skip the March SAT and April ACT, aiming instead for the May SAT or June ACT. This gives students the full spring to prepare, allowing them to concentrate on school and extracurriculars.

**REFRESH** It's common for students to grow more focused on college applications during the summer—practice tests and a refresh of tutoring can help encourage this focus.

**SECOND SITTING** Any fall test date has the potential to be a good time for a second sitting; the October SAT and September ACT are particularly popular. Both test dates give students the opportunity to sit for the exams a third time in November or December if it makes sense to do so.

**SOPHOMORE SCORE**  
**P/SAT: >1200**  
**ACT: >25**

		SAT	ACT
Summer	June	○	○
	July		○
	August	○	
Junior Year	September		○
	October	○	○
	November	●	
	December	○	●
	January		
	February		○*
	March	○	
	April		●
	May	●	
	June	●	○
	July		○
Summer	August	○	

Testing Window

- Most Popular Test Date
- Most Popular Subject Test Date
- Potential Test Date
- \* No February or July test date in New York

## EARLY TESTING

Approximately one in six juniors falls into this category.

**BEGIN PREPARATION** Students in this score range frequently aim to complete testing by the end of junior year so that they can concentrate on other aspects of the college application process in the fall of senior year. Preparation typically begins over the summer before junior year. For those within striking range of National Merit, tutoring may include preparation for the PSAT/NMSQT in October.

**FIRST SITTING** SAT students often move from the PSAT/NMSQT straight into the November exam while preparation is still fresh. December is a popular test date for early ACT students. Both test dates are advantageous for students who want to lock in a first score before holiday distractions.

**REFRESH** Students may want to sit for a couple of practice exams or work with a tutor to refresh strategies before taking the exam a second time. Many students also take the spring to work with a tutor to prepare for Subject Tests and AP exams.

**SECOND SITTING** Spring test dates are a popular time for students in this score range to retake the exam. The May and June SAT are both ideal for either SAT or Subject Tests. The April ACT is a good opportunity to post a second score before the end-of-the-year crush.

**APs and SUBJECT TESTS** Depending on a student's AP schedule, it can make sense to either take the Subject Tests in May right before AP exams or wait a month and take them in June.

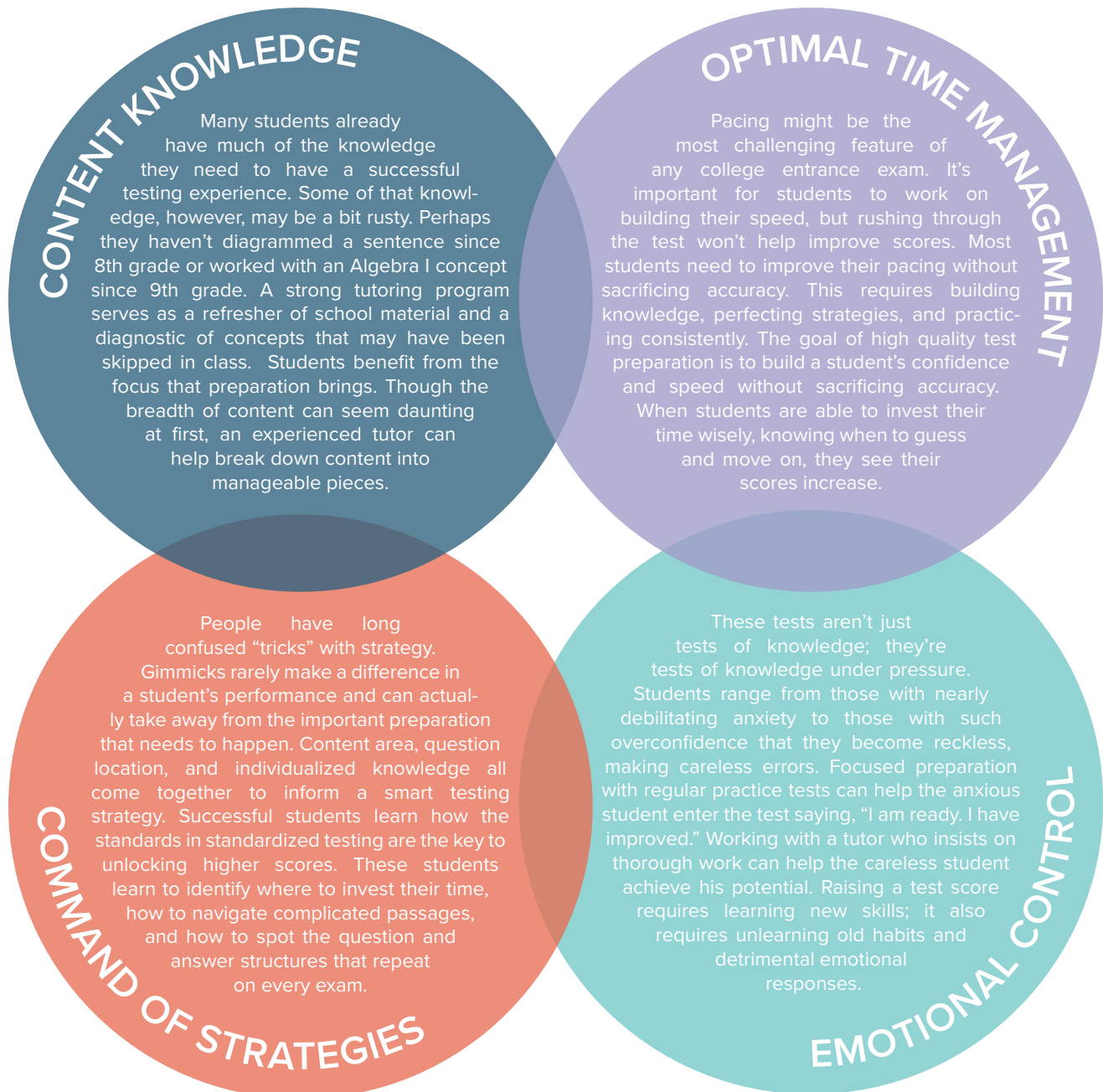
**SUMMER TESTING** The August SAT and July ACT are new to the testing calendar. We anticipate that they will prove popular for students who decide to delay their second sittings and for those who may want to take the test a third time before Early Decision applications are due.

## What Do Test Scores Reflect?

It may be easier to identify what SAT and ACT scores *do not* reflect, than what they do. They don't reflect how smart a student is nor how much potential she has. They are not even a good measure of how successful a student will be in college beyond the first year. And despite the tests' emphases on content, neither test is a true reflection of what a student knows.

What test scores do demonstrate is a particular cross section of four skill areas that students need well beyond the classroom: content knowledge, time management, plan implementation, and emotional control. Compass tutors are trained to address all four areas during lessons.

Each test is a performance, and just as with a dance recital or football game, practice is crucial. The students who see the greatest score gains are those who take three to four practice tests as part of their preparation in the months leading up to a test date. When taken seriously, practice tests offer students the opportunity to implement the plans they've developed with their tutors.





# The Compass Approach

We employ a process—both deliberate and dynamic—that we have refined over decades of work with students.

## ASSESSMENT



Our programs—both in-person and online—begin with a thorough assessment of prior testing and a formal practice test supervised by a live or virtual proctor. Your director carefully analyzes the results with you, asks about your student's background, needs, and goals, and develops an individualized preparation plan.

*Compass is clearly one of the best investments you can make in your child's future. They offer a myriad of tools—consulting, practice tests, and individualized tutoring—to help your child understand her strengths and weaknesses on admission tests.*

*- Donna R, Mother of Justine  
11th Grader at Tamalpais High School*

## SELECTION

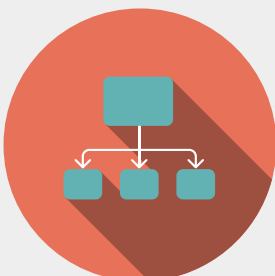


Your director then makes a thoughtful tutor selection. The depth and talent of our team of tutors, combined with our care and expertise in making the perfect match for you, form the bedrock of our program. If you are less than thrilled with your match, we want to hear from you immediately.

*The tutors' level of professionalism, engagement, and knowledge made a significant difference in final test scores. I recommend Compass without reservation and feel confident that their high standards of excellence distinguish them from their competitors.*

*- Maria G, Mother of Joshua  
10th Grader at Milken Community High School*

## CUSTOMIZATION



In-home and online lessons are scheduled directly with your tutors and are 90 minutes in length. Your student will be assigned 2–3 hours of homework per lesson and will be asked to sit for proctored practice tests every 3–4 weeks. Practice tests are an essential component of the program.

*Compass' approach efficiently catered to our daughter's needs. With technology figured out, it was easy. Working online was significantly more convenient considering our busy schedule, and Compass was consistent with outstanding tutors and prompt feedback.*

*- Barbara J, Mother of Elena  
11th Grader in Zurich, Switzerland*

# Comparing SAT and ACT Scores

The first step in deciding between the SAT and ACT is to take practice tests of each and compare your scores.

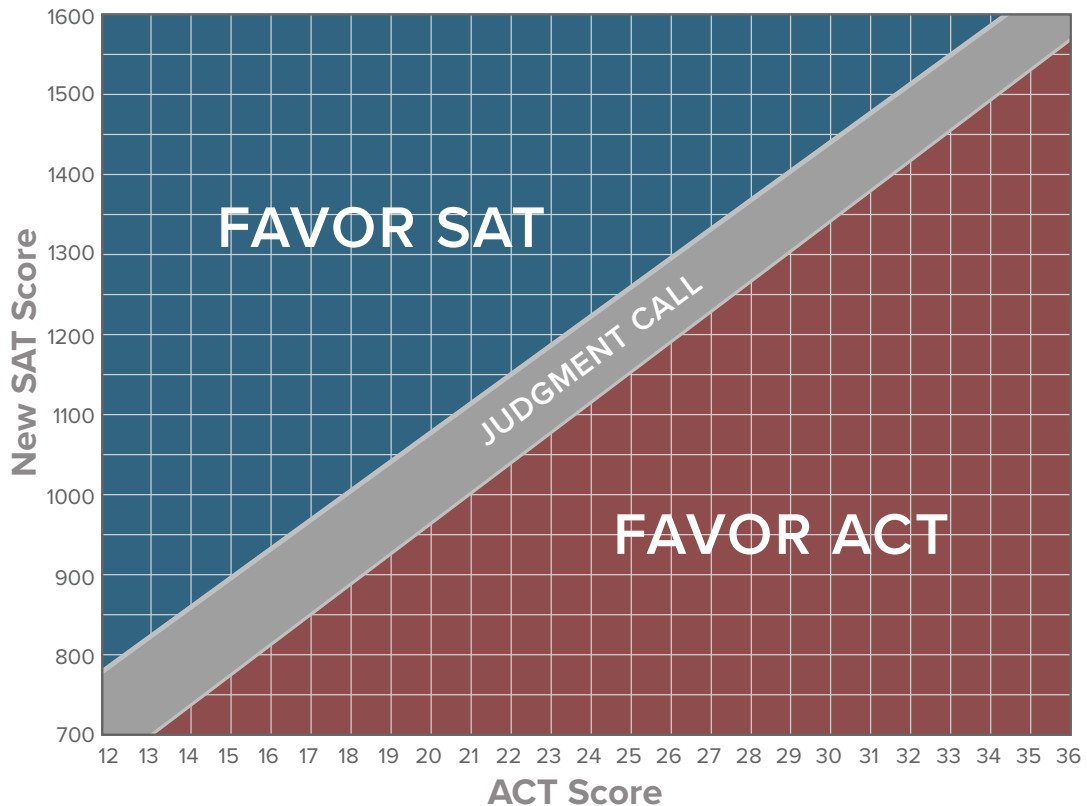
Scores on the ACT cannot be directly converted to SAT scores—they are different tests. However, a concordance can be developed that matches comparable performance on the two exams by comparing thousands of students who took both tests at approximately the same time.

The new SAT is enough of a change from the pre-March 2016 SAT that scores cannot be interchanged. Instead, a concordance must be developed between the old SAT and new SAT. College Board released this concordance in May 2016 along with a “derived” concordance between the ACT and the new SAT, which uses the old SAT to ACT concordance as a common ground.

Compass has analyzed these concordances and available research to create a comparison tool in both table (right) and chart (below) forms. Although most students will likely find their SAT and ACT scores intersect somewhere in the gray “Judgment Call” band, some students may discover that one test is actually better suited to them.

See page 25 for the concordance table.

ACT	IF YOUR SAT SCORE IS:		
36	<1550	1550–1600	>1590
35	<1520	1520–1590	>1560
34	<1490	1490–1560	>1550
33	<1450	1420–1510	>1510
32	<1420	1390–1480	>1480
31	<1390	1350–1440	>1440
30	<1350	1310–1410	>1410
29	<1310	1280–1380	>1380
28	<1280	1240–1340	>1340
27	<1240	1200–1300	>1300
26	<1200	1160–1270	>1270
25	<1160	1130–1230	>1230
24	<1130	1100–1190	>1190
23	<1100	1060–1150	>1150
22	<1060	1020–1120	>1120
21	<1020	980–1090	>1090
20	<980	940–1050	>1050
19	<940	900–1010	>1010
18	<900	860–970	>970
17	<860	810–930	>930
16	<810	770–890	>890
15	<770	720–840	>840
14	<720	680–800	>800
13	<680	620–740	>740
12	<620		



## Comparing SAT and ACT Content

For those students who find their compared scores in the “Judgment Call” band, additional subjective qualities may come to bear on the decision between tests. The charts below introduce some of the qualitative differences between tests; for in-depth content descriptions, please see pages 36–55.

### Content Comparison

New SAT	ACT	Key Differences
<b>Writing and Language</b> 35 minutes, 44 questions	<b>English</b> 45 minutes, 75 questions	Both tests balance questions about standard English conventions with questions about rhetorical skills such as word choice and paragraph development. SAT Writing and Language includes questions on graphs and charts.
<b>Reading</b> 65 minutes, 52 questions on 5 passages	<b>Reading</b> 35 minutes, 40 questions on 4 passages	The SAT places more emphasis on science-themed passages and includes questions on graphs and charts. There are also two-part questions on the SAT that require a student to identify the line in the passage that provides the evidence for the answer to the prior question.
<b>Math</b> 25 minutes, 20 questions without calculator 55 minutes, 38 questions with calculator	<b>Math</b> 60 minutes, 60 questions with calculator	The ACT takes a “broad but shallow” approach and covers more topics, while the SAT puts a heavy emphasis on algebra and data analysis.
N/A	<b>Science</b> 35 minutes, 40 questions on 6 or 7 passages	The SAT has no science section, but data graphics and interpretation skills are tested throughout Reading, Writing and Language, and Math.
Essay	Writing	The SAT essay assignment provides a passage and asks the student to write a rhetorical analysis of the author’s persuasive strategies. The ACT writing assignment provides the student with three perspectives on a relevant social issue and asks the student to analyze and evaluate each perspective, develop his or her own position, and connect that position to the three provided.

### Scoring Comparison

New SAT	ACT	Key Differences
<b>Total Score</b> 400–1600	<b>Composite</b> 1–36	The SAT’s total score is the sum of its two 200–800 area scores. The ACT’s composite score is the rounded average of the four test scores.
<b>Reading and Writing</b> 200–800	<b>English</b> 1–36  <b>Reading</b> 1–36	SAT Reading and Writing scores are combined into a single 200–800 score. ACT English and Reading Tests each receive 1–36 scores.
<b>Math</b> 200–800	<b>Math</b> 1–36	SAT Math is scored based on two sections, calculator and no calculator, each with a mix of multiple choice and grid-in problems. ACT Math has one multiple choice section with no grid-ins and allows a calculator on all problems.
N/A	<b>Science</b> 1–36	N/A
<b>Essay (optional)</b> Raw: 2–8 in three domains Total: N/A	<b>Writing (optional)</b> Raw: 2–12 in four domains Total: Average of four domain scores	SAT scores are reported as the raw sum of two readers’ scores (1–4 in three domains). ACT scores are the sum of two readers’ raw scores (1–6 in four domains) averaged across the four domains. The SAT Essay is not included in the total SAT score, nor is the ACT Writing score included in the ACT Composite score.

# Standardized Test Scoring

## Scaled Scores and Test Reliability

One of the most important features of standardized tests is their ability to provide consistent scores from year to year and from test date to test date. SAT scores are converted to a 200–800 scale in order to account for any small differences between tests; ACT scores are converted to a 1–36 scale.

Standardized test makers follow strict guidelines when setting their initial reference group and determining the initial scale. Once those things are set, they rarely change because they don't need to. A 30 on ACT English means the same thing whether it was taken in September 2008 or September 2016. In order to accomplish this feat, one additional concept must be added—equating. Not every test can have the same questions, so not every test form can have the exact same difficulty. However, by always mapping performance back to the reference group, ACT can make small adjustments to the scale to smooth away these differences. The math is tricky, but the goals are simple. Make the results of each test date as fair as any other test date and make sure that no student is disadvantaged by the abilities of other students taking the exam.

This process has been complicated on the SAT because the new SAT differs enough from the old SAT that the original reference group is no longer directly valid. To account for this, College Board conducted pilot studies to establish concordances—translations of scores—between the old and new SAT. These studies had students take both tests so that comparable scores could be established. The 200–800 scores on the new SAT follow a different distribution from the 200–800 scores on the old SAT, but the use of the concordances is designed to ensure that the tests can still be fairly compared. These comparisons require the use of the College Board's concordance tables (see page 25).

## Raw Scores and Guessing

An important area where the SAT and ACT are finally aligned is in scoring correct, incorrect, and blank answers. The old SAT made a one-quarter raw point deduction for each wrong multiple choice answer to dissuade students from random guessing. The new SAT eliminated this so-called guessing penalty. The new SAT and the ACT both use “rights-only” scoring, where the number of correct answers is all that matters. Students should never leave a multiple choice question blank on either exam. The SAT Subject Tests, however, have not been updated, so they continue to have a penalty for wrong answers.

Even without the guessing penalty, these tests are best approached with a guessing strategy. Students stand to maximize their points when they go into the test with a plan for where to invest their time. This may include portions of the test where they have to guess randomly because of lack of time. Guessing is still more effective than leaving questions blank.

### Leaving Blank

- 1 (A) (B) (C) (D)
- 2 (A) (B) (C) (D)
- 3 (A) (B) (C) (D)
- 4 (A) (B) (C) (D)
- 5 (A) (B) (C) (D)
- 6 (A) (B) (C) (D)
- 7 (A) (B) (C) (D)
- 8 (A) (B) (C) (D)

Raw Points: 0

### Random Guessing

- ✓ 1 ● (B) (C) (D)
- 2 (A) ✗ (C) (D)
- 3 (A) (B) ✗ (D)
- 4 (A) (B) (C) ✗
- 5 (A) (B) (C) ✗
- ✓ 6 (A) (B) ● (D)
- 7 (A) ✗ (C) (D)
- 8 ✗ (B) (C) (D)

Raw Points: 2

### Process of Elimination

- ✓ 1 ● (B) (C) (D)
- 2 ✗ (B) (C) (D)
- ✓ 3 ✗ (B) (C) (D)
- 4 (A) (B) (C) ✗
- 5 (A) ✗ (C) (D)
- ✓ 6 (A) ● (C) (D)
- ✓ 7 ✗ (B) (C) (D)
- 8 ✗ (B) (C) (D)

Raw Points: 4

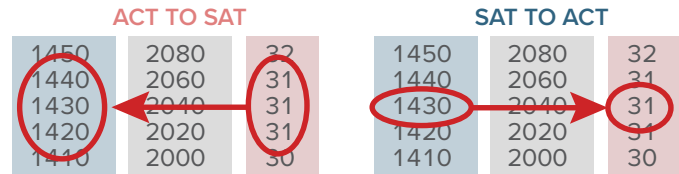
## Experimental Sections

Students not taking the essay with the SAT or ACT may have an additional section that is used to test new items and to equate the form to previous administrations. Proctors may require you to complete the section. Although this added section should not count toward your score, you should take it seriously, as College Board has given conflicting information about where operational (scored) and pre-test (unscored) items may occur on the new SAT.

# SAT to ACT Concordance

While scaling and equating processes allow for comparisons between different versions of the same test, concordance is necessary for comparisons between different tests. In 2005, College Board and ACT used data from students who took both the SAT and ACT within a short time frame to create concordance tables. The most recent concordance tables (below) constitute a “derived concordance,” because College Board has used the old SAT as a middle step between the two tests. In other words, College Board prepared a concordance between the old and new SAT and then used that concordance to work backwards to the ACT. While this process has proved somewhat controversial, most college admission offices are using such tables to allow them to compare students' SAT and ACT scores. A new concordance will be developed by 2019.

Because there are more score points on the SAT than on the ACT, moving from SAT to ACT gives a single point, whereas moving from ACT to SAT offers a range of scores. As at right, a 31 ACT concurs to the SAT range of 1420-1440. The reverse can also be done. A score of 1430 is concordant with an ACT of 31.



New SAT	Old SAT	ACT	New SAT	Old SAT	ACT	New SAT	Old SAT	ACT
1600	2390	36	1200	1670	25	800	1060	14
1590	2370	35	1190	1650	24	790	1040	14
1580	2350	35	1180	1640	24	780	1030	14
1570	2330	35	1170	1620	24	770	1010	14
1560	2300	35	1160	1610	24	760	990	14
1550	2280	34	1150	1590	23	750	980	13
1540	2260	34	1140	1570	23	740	960	13
1530	2230	34	1130	1560	23	730	950	13
1520	2210	34	1120	1540	22	720	930	13
1510	2190	33	1110	1530	22	710	910	12
1500	2170	33	1100	1510	22	700	900	12
1490	2150	33	1090	1490	21	690	880	12
1480	2130	32	1080	1480	21	680	870	12
1470	2110	32	1070	1460	21	670	860	12
1460	2090	32	1060	1450	21	660	850	12
1450	2080	32	1050	1430	20	650	840	12
1440	2060	31	1040	1420	20	640	830	12
1430	2040	31	1030	1400	20	630	820	12
1420	2020	31	1020	1390	20	620	810	11
1410	2000	30	1010	1370	19	610	800	11
1400	1990	30	1000	1360	19	600	790	11
1390	1970	30	990	1340	19	590	780	11
1380	1950	29	980	1330	19	580	770	11
1370	1930	29	970	1310	18	570	760	11
1360	1920	29	960	1300	18	560	750	11
1350	1900	29	950	1280	18	550	740	-
1340	1880	28	940	1270	18	540	730	-
1330	1870	28	930	1250	17	530	730	-
1320	1850	28	920	1240	17	520	720	-
1310	1840	28	910	1220	17	510	710	-
1300	1820	27	900	1210	17	500	700	-
1290	1810	27	890	1200	16	490	690	-
1280	1790	27	880	1180	16	480	680	-
1270	1780	26	870	1170	16	470	670	-
1260	1760	26	860	1150	16	460	660	-
1250	1750	26	850	1140	15	450	650	-
1240	1730	26	840	1120	15	440	640	-
1230	1710	25	830	1110	15	430	630	-
1220	1700	25	820	1090	15	420	620	-
1210	1680	25	810	1070	15	410	610	-
						400	600	-

# SAT Score Reports

College Board's online and paper score reports are filled with detailed information about the individual student's performance and how it fits in with larger testing populations. While this information may be useful when preparing to retake the exam, the most important pieces for applying to colleges appear at the top: total score, section scores, and SAT User Percentile—National.

**Your Total Score**

**1440** | 400 to 1600

<b>98th</b> Nationally Representative Sample Percentile	<b>96th</b> SAT User Percentile— National
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**Essay Scores**

<b>6</b>   2 to 8 Reading	<b>6</b>   2 to 8 Analysis	<b>6</b>   2 to 8 Writing
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**Section Scores**

<p><b>740</b>   200 to 800 Your Evidence-Based Reading and Writing Score</p> <p><b>700</b>   200 to 800 Your Math Score</p>	<p><b>99th</b> Nationally Representative Sample Percentile</p> <p><b>98th</b> SAT User Percentile— National</p> <p><b>95th</b> Nationally Representative Sample Percentile</p> <p><b>92nd</b> SAT User Percentile— National</p>
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<p><b>Test Scores</b></p> <p><b>37</b>   10 to 40 Reading</p> <p><b>37</b>   10 to 40 Writing and Language</p> <p><b>35.0</b>   10 to 40 Math</p>	<p><b>Cross-Test Scores</b>   10 to 40</p> <p><b>38</b> Analysis in History/Social Studies</p> <p><b>35</b> Analysis in Science</p> <p><b>Subscores</b>   1 to 15</p> <table style="width: 100%;"> <tr> <td><b>12</b> Command of Evidence</td> <td><b>14</b> Words in Context</td> </tr> <tr> <td><b>13</b> Expression of Ideas</td> <td><b>15</b> Standard English Conventions</td> </tr> <tr> <td><b>15</b> Heart of Algebra</td> <td><b>11</b> Problem Solving and Data Analysis</td> </tr> <tr> <td><b>13</b> Passport to Advanced Math</td> <td></td> </tr> </table>	<b>12</b> Command of Evidence	<b>14</b> Words in Context	<b>13</b> Expression of Ideas	<b>15</b> Standard English Conventions	<b>15</b> Heart of Algebra	<b>11</b> Problem Solving and Data Analysis	<b>13</b> Passport to Advanced Math	
<b>12</b> Command of Evidence	<b>14</b> Words in Context								
<b>13</b> Expression of Ideas	<b>15</b> Standard English Conventions								
<b>15</b> Heart of Algebra	<b>11</b> Problem Solving and Data Analysis								
<b>13</b> Passport to Advanced Math									

“**Your Total Score**” is the sum of your two section scores: Evidence-Based Reading and Writing and Math. Both sections are on a scale of 200–800; the total score is on a scale of 400–1600. Both College Board and ACT use scaled scores to account for slight differences in difficulty among test forms.

**Essay scores** are not included in the total score; they remain three discrete scores, each on a scale of 2–8. See pages 50–55 for a detailed breakdown of the SAT essay assignment.

**Section scores** are the most commonly used scores. The first two parts of the SAT—a reading comprehension test followed by an editing test—are combined into the “Evidence-Based Reading and Writing Score.” The “Math Score” is made up of two parts: the first without calculator and the second with calculator. Section scores and total score are what colleges use for admission purposes.

**Test scores** exist primarily to break up performance on Reading from that on Writing and Language. These scores also appear on PSAT reports and are used to calculate the Selection Index for National Merit. While test scores may help determine where time should be spent studying, they are not important for college admission.

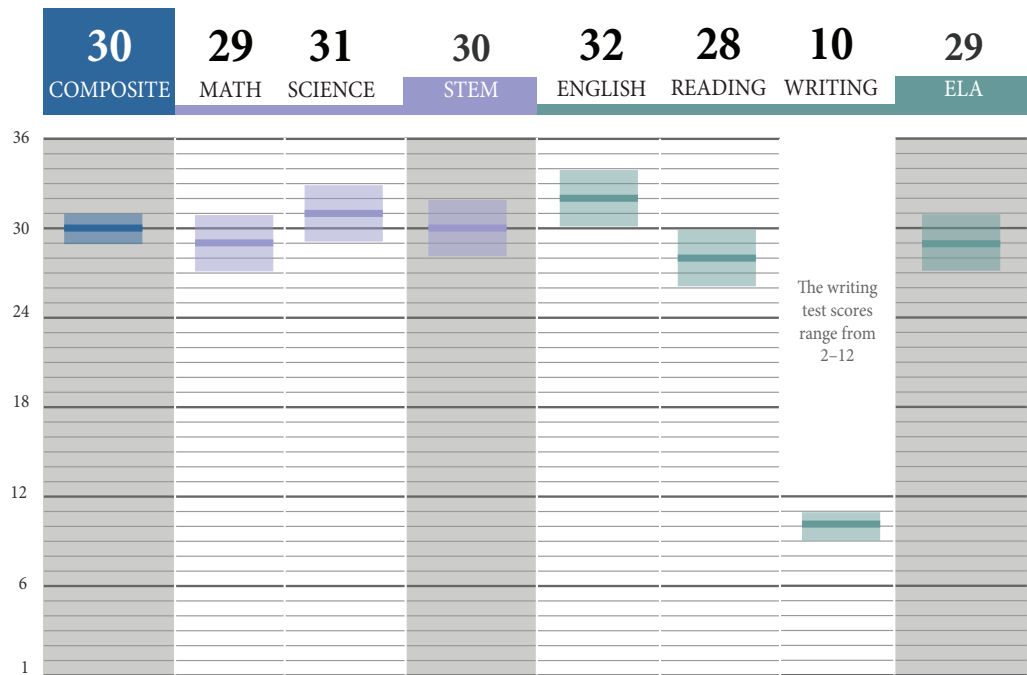
Similarly, the **cross-test scores** and **subscores** are generally ignored by college admission offices. Only a subset of questions across the tests make up these scores; for instance, twenty-one questions on the natural science Reading Test passages, six questions on the science-themed Writing and Language Test passage, and seven to nine of the Math Test questions compose the Analysis in Science cross-test score. Heart of Algebra and Passport to Advanced Math are Algebra I and Algebra II respectively. These scores exist so that school districts and states can determine how well student populations are meeting education standards.

Perhaps the most confusing aspect of this report is the presence of two different percentile ranks. College Board now presents students with a **Nationally Representative Sample Percentile** and an **SAT User Percentile—National**. The first, higher, percentile is based on a sample group that is intended to represent all students in a class year; as a result, it includes students who would not normally take the SAT or attend college. The better percentile to consider is the SAT User Percentile—National as this would normally be based on the previous class year's performance and represents the pool of students who are likely taking the SAT for college admission purposes. Because the redesigned SAT is a new test, all percentiles are based on College Board's pilot studies and should be used with caution.

# ACT Score Reports

While SAT provides a total score that is the sum of two section scores, ACT provides a Composite score, which is the average of the four tests: English, Math, Reading, and Science. Each test is on a scale of 1–36.

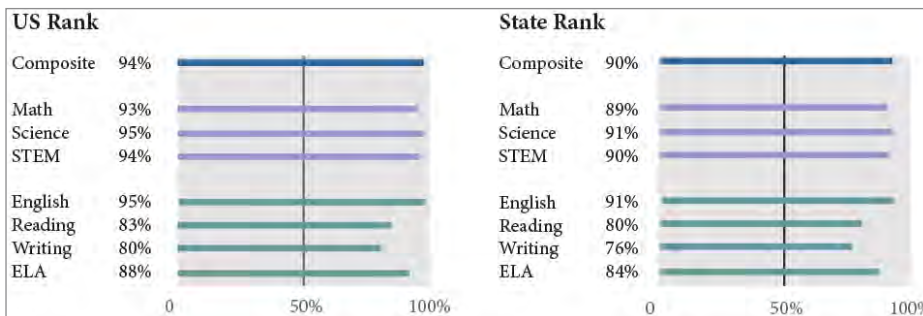
The wide bands surrounding each score represent the range of scores a student would be expected to achieve if he or she were to retake the test in quick succession. They are intended to illustrate the idea that no score is exact but reflects the central point of a range of possible scores that result from natural variations in test difficulty and testing environment.



Though the order of tests is always English, Math, Reading, and Science, followed by the optional Writing Test, on the score report Math and Science are grouped so that ACT can average the two into the STEM score. Likewise, English, Reading, and Writing are combined into the ELA (English Language Arts) score. If a student does not take the optional Writing Test, ACT will not provide an ELA score.

The ELA score is complicated. In order to average the three scores that make up the ELA score, they must each be on the 1–36 scale; this means that even though ACT will not display a 1–36 Writing score, this score will be used to determine the ELA score. ACT has stated that you can estimate the 1–36 score by using the following equation:  $(\text{English} + \text{Reading} + \text{Writing}) / 3 = \text{ELA}$ . In the example above, we have  $(32 + 28 + \text{Writing}) / 3 = 29$ . The Writing score range is, therefore, 26–28.

Fortunately, much like the SAT's cross-test scores and subscores, ACT's STEM and ELA scores are not typically used for college admission; they exist for school and district administrators. For more information on the writing assignment and schools that require it, please see pages 50–55.



Like College Board, ACT provides two sets of percentile ranks, but in the case of ACT both sets of numbers are determined by data from the entire previous year's performance, not sample groups. U.S. Rank gives the student's performance relative to that of the entire

U.S. test taker population; State Rank shows performance relative to that of the population of the student's state. The terms "Percentile" (SAT) and "Rank" (ACT) mean the same thing: the percentage of students scoring at or below the student's score.

Percentile ranks are useful for comparing a student's performance to a population taking the same test. They should not be used for comparing performance between tests. To compare SAT to ACT scores, concordance tables (see page 25) are more accurate.

# PSAT

Most students begin their testing sequence with the PSAT offered in either their sophomore or junior years. The PSAT gives students practice on the skills tested on college admission exams, especially the SAT. While the PSAT is not used for admission purposes, it helps students identify strengths and weaknesses.

Students who took the PSAT in 2014 as sophomores saw a redesigned test in 2015. The changes to the PSAT were closely aligned with those that the SAT debuted in March 2016. College Board now offers an expanded suite of assessments with versions of PSATs specific to certain grade levels.

## PSAT/NMSQT

This test is offered on Wednesday, October 11, 2017, and Saturday, October 14, 2017, with an alternate sitting on Wednesday, October 25, 2017.

All juniors are encouraged to take this test, and many schools offer sophomores the opportunity to sit for it as well. However, only juniors are eligible for National Merit recognition (see page 32 for more details).

## PSAT 10

The PSAT 10 and the PSAT/NMSQT cover the same content and share the same scoring scale (see page 30 to read more about how these tests share a continuous scoring scale). On both versions, sophomore-normed percentiles will be reported. Most schools will combine sophomores and juniors in October and offer only the PSAT/NMSQT, but some may instead choose to offer the PSAT 10 to sophomores separately during a spring testing window.

## PSAT 8/9

The PSAT 8/9 replaces the discontinued ReadStep exam and serves as the baseline test in the PSAT/SAT assessment system. It is designed for 8th and 9th graders, although few schools elect to offer it. It can be administered during either a fall or a spring testing window.

## PSAT Structure and Scoring

<b>Total Score</b> Total time: 2 hours and 45 minutes			<b>1 Total Score</b> 320–1520 Scale
Evidence-Based Reading and Writing		Math	<b>2 Section Scores</b> 160–760 Scale
Reading 60 min   47 questions	Writing & Language 35 min   44 questions	Math 70 min   48 questions	<b>3 Test Scores</b> 8–38 Scale
Analysis in Science			<b>2 Cross-Test Scores</b> 8–38 Scale
Analysis in History / Social Studies			
Words in Context		Heart of Algebra	<b>7 Subscores</b> 1–15 Scale
Command of Evidence		Passport to Advanced Math	
	Expression of Ideas	Problem Solving & Data Analysis	
	Standard English Conventions		

**Note:** The PSAT employs rights-only scoring (a point for a correct answer but no deduction for an incorrect answer; blank responses have no impact on scores).



## PreACT & Aspire

Previously, ACT offered the PLAN, an exam for sophomores that functioned primarily as an early practice test and diagnostic tool thought of as a “Pre-ACT.” The PLAN was discontinued in 2014 when the multi-grade Aspire assessment system was introduced. However, ACT has begun to offer a new preliminary test—the PreACT—designed to predict a score range on the ACT and give students “high-stakes practice in a low-stakes environment.”

### PreACT

ACT is now offering the PreACT, whose relationship to the ACT is similar to that of the PSAT to the SAT: the PreACT is a shorter exam than is the ACT but will include the same question types and will allow students to predict their scores on the ACT. Though freshmen can take the exam, it is designed so that sophomores can predict their junior year ACT scores based on one year of growth. The PreACT is an easier version of the ACT, so the highest possible score is a 35 instead of 36.

#### PreACT Structure

Total Score (1–35) Total time: 2 hours and 10 minutes			
English 30 min 45 questions 3 passages	Math 40 min 36 questions	Reading 30 min 25 questions 3 passages	Science 30 min 30 questions 5 passages

The PreACT is offered through a flexible testing window; actual test dates will be determined by schools but may occur between September 1, 2017 and June 1, 2018.

### Aspire

The Aspire testing system offers exams for students in grades 3 through 8, plus an “early high school” exam for freshmen and sophomores. The score report for the latter includes a predicted ACT score, but it’s important to note that the content and format of ACT Aspire do not perfectly align with those of the ACT. And at 4 hours and 10 minutes, Aspire is longer than the ACT.

ACT Aspire: Early High School Level Assessment					
Test	Multiple Choice	Technology Enhanced	Constructed Response	Total Number of Questions	Time (Minutes)
English	58–62	0–4	0	62	40
Writing	0	0	1	1	30
Reading	24–26	1–3	4	31	60
Math	31–34	5–8	6	45	65
Science	26–29	4–7	7	40	55

### Aspire Scoring

Because ACT Aspire can be offered in grades 3–10, it uses a longitudinal scale to help measure progress over time on a common scale. Every grade-level version of Aspire uses a minimum scaled score of 400, but maximum scores vary depending on the subject and grade.

The scoring ranges for the 9th and 10th grade Aspire are as follows:

English	400–456	Mathematics	400–460
Reading	400–442	Science	400–449
Writing	400–448	Composite	400–452

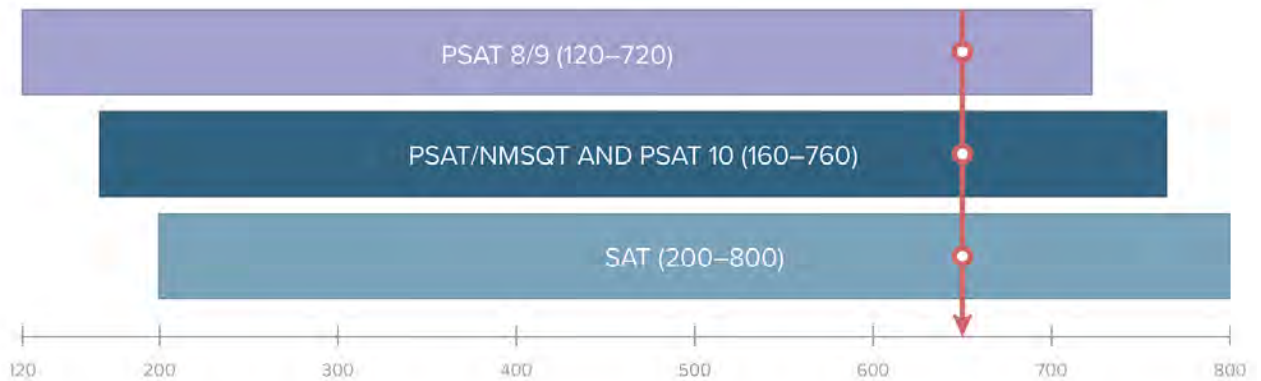
## PSAT and SAT Vertical Scaling

A significant feature of the PSAT is that its scaled scores top out at 760 per section. The explanation is grounded on College Board's commitment to increasing the visibility of students' college readiness.

The SAT is part of a broader College Board initiative. The SAT anchors a vertically aligned assessment system that includes the PSAT 8/9 for 8th and 9th graders, PSAT 10 for 10th graders, and PSAT/NMSQT for 11th graders (and optionally for 10th graders).

These tests are built upon a single empirical backbone, so as students advance through high school, the scope and difficulty of the tests increase accordingly. The suite of assessments contains different tests for students at different academic stages of development, but the tests share one continuous scale (120–800).

Because lower-level tests focus on earlier concepts, they are limited to lower bands of the full scale (see graphic below). The SAT tests higher concepts, so its maximum potential score is higher. The vertically aligned scale more accurately predicts a student's SAT score "now," indicating a likely SAT score if it had been taken instead of the PSAT on that day. This "staircase" model makes it easier to track a student's progress over time on a continuum.



A score of 650 on the PSAT 8/9 would predict that a student would have scored a 650 on the PSAT 10 or the SAT had the student taken those exams at the same time.

## PSAT as SAT Score Predictor

The PSAT has always been a useful, but imperfect, predictor of SAT performance. Prior to 2015, a PSAT score report included an estimate, based on past data, of the student's score range on the SAT. Two-thirds of students were expected to score somewhere in the given range, which also means that approximately one-sixth of students were predicted to score below the range and one-sixth were predicted to score above the range.

Because the 2015–2016 transition year involved new tests and new scales, there are no historical data sets to rely upon to predict student performance from PSAT to SAT. The numbers below show the estimated relationship between PSAT scores and subsequent SAT scores for students in a given range.

Please note that the data represent the entire pool of test-takers. Factors that will impact your individual performance include your academic progress during your junior year, your level of outside writing and reading, and your commitment to studying for the test.

PSAT/ NMSQT Score	SAT Reading and Writing Range	SAT Math Range	PSAT/ NMSQT Score	SAT Reading and Writing Range	SAT Math Range
760	720–800	720–800			
750	720–800	710–800	500	470–580	460–580
740	710–800	700–800	490	460–570	450–570
730	700–800	690–800	480	450–560	440–560
720	690–800	680–800	470	440–550	430–550
710	680–790	670–790	460	430–540	420–540
700	670–780	660–780	450	420–530	410–530
690	660–770	650–770	440	410–520	400–520
680	650–760	640–760	430	400–510	390–510
670	640–750	630–750	420	390–500	380–500
660	630–740	620–740	410	380–490	370–490
650	620–730	610–730	400	370–480	360–480
640	610–720	600–720	390	360–470	350–470
630	600–710	590–710	380	350–460	340–460
620	590–700	580–700	370	340–450	330–450
610	580–690	570–690	360	330–440	320–440
600	570–680	560–680	350	320–430	310–430
590	560–670	550–670	340	310–420	300–420
580	550–660	540–660	330	300–410	290–410
570	540–650	530–650	320	290–400	280–400
560	530–640	520–640	310	280–390	270–390
550	520–630	510–630	300	270–380	260–380
540	510–620	500–620	< 300	not enough data available	
530	500–610	490–610			
520	490–600	480–600			
510	480–590	470–590			

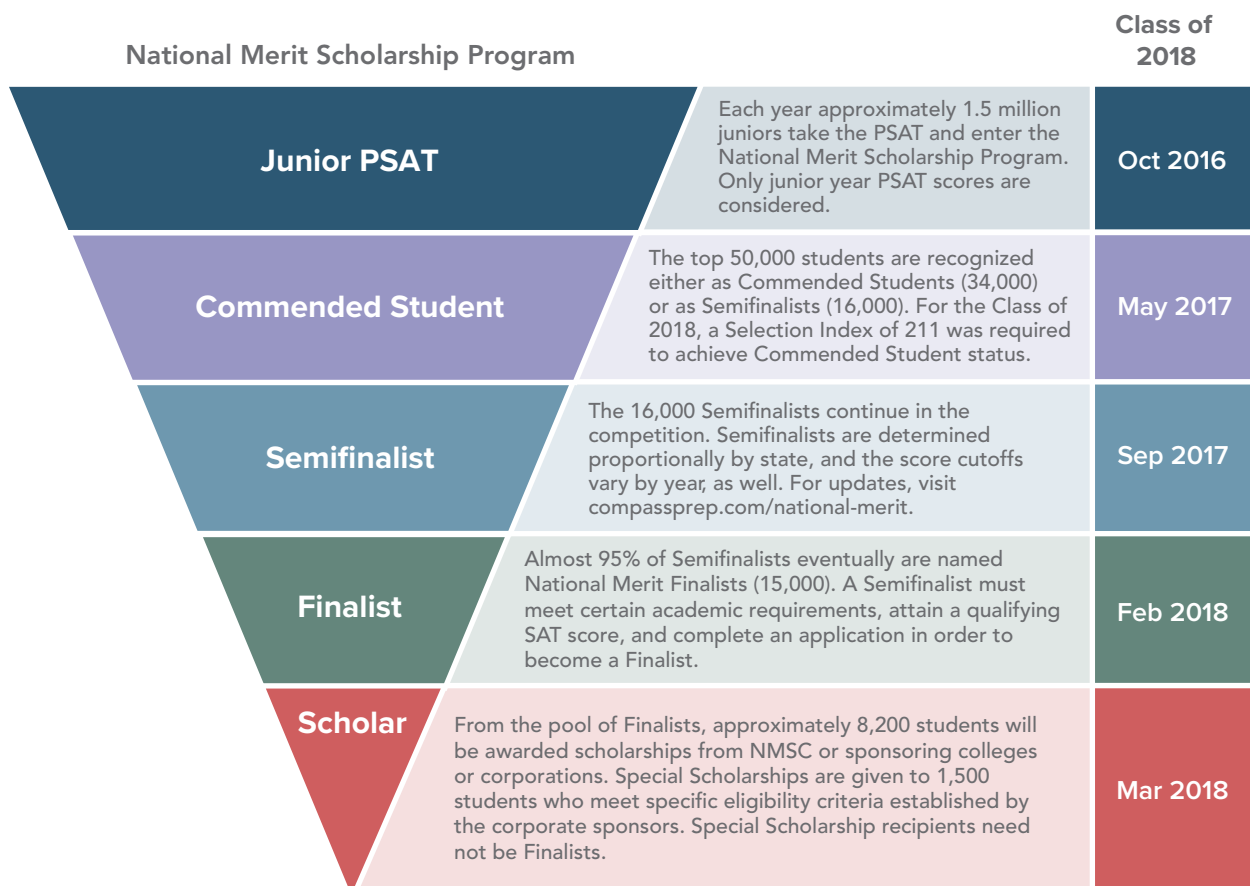
# National Merit Scholarship Program

The PSAT is not used as an admission test by colleges. However, the junior year PSAT/NMSQT (National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test) is used to determine eligibility for honors and scholarships via the National Merit Scholarship Program. Until students progress beyond the Semifinalist stage, honors are based solely on the Selection Index.

The formula for calculating the Selection Index is based on the 8–38 Test Scores in Reading, Writing & Language, and Math. The three scores are summed and multiplied by two. Because the scale of the new PSAT changed in 2015, the Selection Index range and cutoff scores for the National Merit Scholarship Program have shifted from prior years' scores. The highest possible Selection Index is  $228 - [(38 + 38 + 38) \times 2]$ —but the number of students earning recognition nationwide will not change.

For the class of 2018, a Selection Index score of 211 was required for students to achieve Commended Student status. This is an increase of two points from last year's Commended Student cutoff. The following page lists historic cutoffs and this year's estimates for Semifinalist cutoffs.

For updates on all states' Semifinalist cut-off scores, please visit [compassprep.com/national-merit](http://compassprep.com/national-merit).



More information can be found at [nationalmerit.org](http://nationalmerit.org).

## National Merit Semifinalist Cutoffs

The official Semifinalist cutoffs for the class of 2018 will be announced in September 2017 and will be posted at [compassprep.com/national-merit](http://compassprep.com/national-merit). Based on Compass' analysis of PSAT score changes and on the rise of the Commended Student cutoff from 209 to 211, we expect most states to see higher cutoffs than those reported for the class of 2017.

State	Class of 2018		Class of 2017
	Most Likely Cutoff	Estimated Range	
Alabama	216	214–218	215
Alaska	215	212–216	213
Arizona	220	218–221	219
Arkansas	214	212–215	213
California	222	220–223	221
Colorado	219	217–221	218
Connecticut	221	220–222	220
Delaware	219	217–221	218
District of Columbia	223	222–224	222
Florida	218	216–220	217
Georgia	220	218–221	219
Hawaii	219	216–220	217
Idaho	216	213–217	214
Illinois	220	218–221	219
Indiana	219	216–220	217
Iowa	216	214–217	215
Kansas	219	216–220	217
Kentucky	216	214–218	215
Louisiana	216	213–217	214
Maine	216	214–218	214
Maryland	222	220–223	221
Massachusetts	223	221–224	222
Michigan	217	215–219	216
Minnesota	220	218–221	219
Mississippi	214	211–215	212
Missouri	217	215–219	216
Montana	212	211–214	210
Nebraska	216	214–218	215
Nevada	216	213–217	214
New Hampshire	218	215–219	216
New Jersey	223	222–224	222
New Mexico	215	212–216	213
New York	220	219–222	219
North Carolina	219	217–221	218
North Dakota	211	211–213	209
Ohio	219	216–220	217
Oklahoma	215	212–216	213
Oregon	220	218–221	219
Pennsylvania	219	217–221	218
Rhode Island	219	216–220	217
South Carolina	216	214–218	215
South Dakota	211	211–213	209
Tennessee	219	216–220	218
Texas	221	219–222	220
Utah	216	214–217	215
Vermont	217	215–219	215
Virginia	222	220–223	221
Washington	221	220–222	220
West Virginia	211	211–213	209
Wisconsin	216	214–218	215
Wyoming	211	211–213	209
U.S. Citizens Studying Abroad	223	222–224	222
U.S. Territories	211	211–213	209

Source: National Merit Scholarship Corporation and Compass analysis

# Evolution of the SAT

Since its introduction in 1926, the SAT has evolved from an aptitude test for a small number of elite colleges to an entrance exam taken by more than 1.6 million students each year.

Since the 1970s, the SAT has undergone several major transformations. Many parents and teachers took the 1974–1994 version of the SAT, so it is helpful to understand how the test had already changed before the March 2016 changes.

## Scholastic Aptitude Test (1974–January 1994)

The SAT still showed its roots as a psychological test, with an emphasis on a high number of short questions. Vocabulary questions—Antonyms, Analogies, and Sentence Completions—dominated the Verbal section. The “SAT word” cliché dates from this period, with popular entries such as antediluvian, salubrious, and munificent. Math was still entirely multiple choice but contained the idiosyncratic Quantitative Comparison questions that asked students to compare the quantities of two columns. A grammar and usage section—Test of Standard Written English (TSWE)—was added for the purpose of placement in college-level writing courses. However, it had no bearing on the 400–1600 admission test scores.

6 Sections; 3 Hours

30 min	30 min	30 min	30 min	30 min	30 min
Verbal 85 Questions 200–800 Scale		Math 60 Questions 200–800 Scale		Test of Standard Written English 50 Questions	Experimental

## SAT I: Reasoning Test (March 1994–January 2005)

The ACT had been overhauled in 1989 and had become almost universally accepted. In comparison, the SAT was perceived as outmoded and even unfair. The College Board did away with “aptitude” and rechristened the exam as the Scholastic Assessment Test. The SAT I was distinguished from SAT IIs (formerly the Achievement Tests and now the Subject Tests). By 1997 the College Board had gone even further and proclaimed that SAT was no longer an acronym at all. Antonyms were dropped to de-emphasize vocabulary and, it was hoped, eliminate the impression that the exam could be prepped for with a stack of flashcards. Math added a new question type that asked students to “grid-in” a numeric value and was brought in closer alignment to the academic topics taught in school. Dropping the TSWE allowed the SAT to provide students more time per question while keeping the overall test length at 3 hours.

7 Sections; 3 Hours

30 min	30 min	15 min	30 min	30 min	15 min	30 min
Verbal 78 Questions 200–800 Scale			Math 60 Questions 200–800 Scale			Experimental

## SAT Reasoning Test (March 2005–January 2016)

Despite steady growth in student numbers, the SAT I still received criticism as being a test of test-taking skills. Under particular pressure from its largest customer, the University of California system, the College Board remade the SAT again. Analogies were removed, additional reading passages added, and Quantitative Comparisons pulled from the Math sections. “Verbal” was renamed “Critical Reading,” and a Writing section—comprising grammar multiple choice and a 25-minute essay—was added. The revised exam was dubbed SAT Reasoning.

10 Sections; 3 Hours and 45 Minutes

25 min	25 min	20 min	25 min	25 min	20 min	25 min	10 min	25 min	25 min
Critical Reading 67 Questions 200–800 Scale			Math 54 Questions 200–800 Scale			Writing 49 Questions		Essay (2–12)	Experimental
						200–800 Scale			

## The Redesigned or “New” SAT (from March 2016)

The SAT never shed its reputation as a test of “SAT words,” with the *New York Times* referring to the exam’s “rarefied vocabulary” in 2014. From the outset, the SAT essay suffered from a reputation for rewarding memorized paragraphs and “made-up” facts. Perhaps most damaging was that the SAT had been eclipsed by the ACT in market share and was losing the battle for statewide testing of students. Even the newly hired president of the College Board, David Coleman, lamented that the SAT had “become disconnected from the work of our high schools.” Coleman had been an important architect of the Common Core’s English Language Arts standards, and his hiring pointed to the future of the SAT.

The new SAT is a rethinking of the entire exam. The maximum score has returned to 1600, as the SAT has consolidated Critical Reading and Writing scores into Evidence-Based Reading and Writing. Sentence Completions have been eliminated, removing the last vestige of flashcard testing. The Math Test has been overhauled to align with Common Core standards and has put particular emphasis on algebra and data interpretation. In fact, data interpretation questions also appear on the Reading and Writing Tests. The essay has been separated from the rest of the exam and doubled in length; it asks the student to analyze how an author of a passage builds a persuasive argument.

The experimental section is no longer folded into every exam; instead, it *may* appear when students elect to take the exam without the optional essay. According to College Board, it is a 20-minute Reading, Writing and Language, or Math section that appears at the end of the exam.

4 Sections + Essay; 3 Hours and 50 Minutes

65 min	35 min	25 min	55 min	50 min
Reading 52 Questions	Writing and Language 44 Questions	Math No Calculator 20 Questions	Math Calculator 38 Questions	Optional Essay (2–8 / 2–8 / 2–8)
200–800 Scale		200–800 Scale		

## SAT Overview

The SAT begins with a long Reading Test made up of five passages. The Writing and Language Test follows with four passages for students to edit. Math makes up the second half of the multiple choice exam; the Math Test is split into a no calculator section and a calculator section. The essay was a mandatory section on the old SAT but has been made an optional final section on the new SAT.

The SAT's recent changes have made it, in many ways, more similar to the ACT than ever before. In order to align the SAT with Common Core standards, College Board has adopted many of the descriptions used by ACT. Take, for instance, the similarities between the SAT's Writing and Language Test and the ACT's English Test; though the names are slightly different, the contents and formats of the two tests are largely the same.

	Time	% of Test	Questions
<b>Reading</b>			
U.S. and World Literature (1 passage)		20%	10
History/Social Studies (2 passages)		40%	21
Science (2 passages)		40%	21
<b>Reading Total</b>	<b>65 minutes</b>		<b>52</b>
<b>Writing and Language</b>			
Standard English Conventions		45%	20
Punctuation			
Usage			
Sentence Structure			
Expression of Ideas		55%	24
Development			
Organization			
Effective Language Use			
<b>Writing and Language Total</b>	<b>35 minutes</b>		<b>44</b>
<b>Mathematics</b>			
Heart of Algebra		33%	19
Problem Solving and Data Analysis		29%	17
Passport to Advanced Math		28%	16
Additional Topics		10%	6
<b>Mathematics Total</b>	<b>80 minutes</b>		<b>58</b>
<b>Essay (Optional)</b>			
<b>Essay Total</b>	<b>50 minutes</b>		<b>1</b>
<b>SAT with Essay</b>		<b>3 hours 50 minutes</b>	

Perhaps the most noticeable difference between the SAT and the ACT is the absence of a Science section on the SAT. Rather than devoting a specific section to science, College Board has peppered the SAT with reading passages and questions that have science themes. In fact, the redesigned SAT is more heavily weighted toward science themes than were past SATs.



## ACT Overview

Since 2011, the number of students taking the ACT has eclipsed the number of students taking the SAT. For the class of 2015, 1.9 million students took the ACT, whereas 1.7 million took the SAT. The ACT is accepted in lieu of the SAT at essentially all colleges. Although most students score comparably on the competing exams, some students perform better on the ACT (as some do on the SAT) and find it to their advantage to submit the comparatively higher scores with their applications.

The ACT is made up of tests in English, Mathematics, Reading, and Science. An optional Writing test was added in February 2005. Many schools require the “optional” Writing test, so we recommend that students take this test.

	Time	% of Test	Questions
<b>English</b>			
Conventions of Standard English		53%	40
Punctuation			
Grammar and Usage			
Sentence Structure			
Production of Writing		31%	23
Knowledge of Language		16%	12
<b>English Total</b>	<b>45 minutes</b>		<b>75</b>
<b>Mathematics</b>			
Pre-Algebra		23%	14
Elementary Algebra		17%	10
Intermediate Algebra		15%	9
Coordinate Geometry		15%	9
Plane Geometry		23%	14
Trigonometry		7%	4
<b>Mathematics Total</b>	<b>60 minutes</b>		<b>60</b>
<b>Reading*</b>			
Literary Narrative or Prose Fiction		25%	10
Humanities		25%	10
Social Sciences		25%	10
Natural Sciences		25%	10
<b>Reading Total</b>	<b>35 minutes</b>		<b>40</b>
<b>Science†</b>			
Data Representation		30–40%	12–16
Research Summaries		45–55%	18–22
Conflicting Viewpoints		15–20%	6–8
<b>Science Total</b>	<b>35 minutes</b>		<b>40</b>
<b>Writing (Optional)</b>			
<b>Essay Total</b>	<b>40 minutes</b>		<b>1</b>
<b>ACT with Writing</b>		<b>3 hours 35 minutes</b>	

\* There will be at least one paired passage in the Reading section. It can fall within any of the four passage types and will be followed by 10 questions.

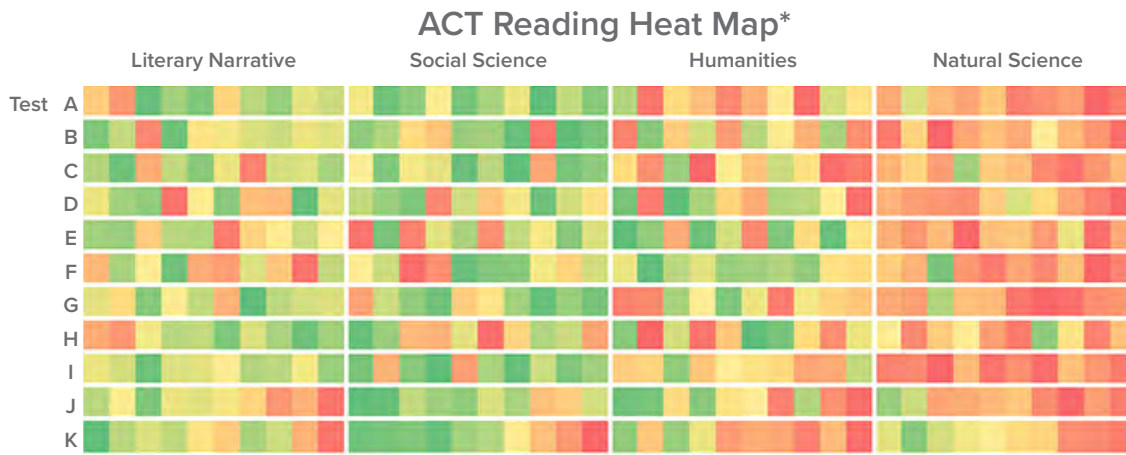
† Science passages are drawn from biology, chemistry, Earth/space sciences, and physics. As of 2017, the Science section contains 6 or 7 passages.

# Reading

As is clear from the table below, the most striking difference between the two exams is the speed of the ACT. Pacing strategies are paramount on the ACT Reading Test, as students have fewer than nine minutes to read and answer questions for each passage.

	SAT Reading	ACT Reading
<b>Time allotted</b>	65 minutes	35 minutes
<b>Number of passages</b>	Always 5	Always 4
<b>Number of questions</b>	52	40
<b>Passage length</b>	Approximately 550–750 words	Approximately 700–900 words
<b>Passage topics</b>	The five passages will most likely come in the same order and always from the same categories: (1) U.S. and world literature, (2) history/social studies, (3) science, (4) history/social studies, and (5) science.	The four passages always come in the same order and from the same categories: (1) literary narrative or prose fiction, (2) social sciences, (3) humanities, and (4) natural sciences.
	One passage will be a paired passage.	One passage will be a paired passage.
<b>Order of questions</b>	Roughly follows the order of the passage	Random

SAT takers will find that the passages are often in the same order and that questions are ordered largely chronologically alongside the passage. Students may find that answering questions as they read may help maximize their scores.



The heat map above demonstrates the difficulty students have in completing the entire ACT Reading Test. The passages and questions do not become objectively more difficult; instead, poor pacing and fatigue leave many students guessing on the final passage.

To have the most successful testing experience, students should skim while mapping the location of significant information, which can then be found if needed for a particular question. In this way, the ACT tests a student’s ability to read quickly and prioritize information rather than the ability to read closely and make significant inferences.

It’s important to note that though the question order is random, the passage order is not. Just because the passages come in a particular order does not mean that a student has to read them in that order. In fact, many students can improve their scores by simply reordering how they approach the passages. Tutoring can help students incorporate strategies that are tailored to their individual strengths.

\*Compass has compiled item-by-item performance for several thousand students on eleven different ACT tests. Green questions are ones that most students answer correctly. Red questions are the ones most commonly answered incorrectly.

Though the two tests share many of the same question types, only the SAT presents students with citation questions that require students to justify their previous answer with a line number, as in the example below. The ACT example is a question type found on both exams and requires students to understand why the author has included particular information.

### SAT Reading

This passage is adapted from Adam Smith, *The Theory of Moral Sentiments*, originally published in 1759. Smith was a key Scottish Enlightenment figure, whose earliest writings focused on his moral philosophy. These writings provided the ethical foundation for his later, more famous economic treatise, *The Wealth of Nations*.

Line 5 However selfish man may be supposed to be, there are evidently some principles in his nature, which interest him in the fortune of others and render their happiness necessary to him, though he derives nothing from it except the pleasure of seeing it. Of this kind is pity or compassion, the emotion that we feel for the misery of others, when we either see it, or are made to conceive it in a very lively manner. That we often derive sorrow from the sorrow of others is a matter of fact too obvious to require any instances to prove it; for this sentiment is by no means confined to the virtuous and humane, though they perhaps may feel it with the most exquisite sensitivity.

15 As we have no immediate experience of what others feel, we can form no idea of the manner in which they are affected, but by conceiving what we ourselves should feel in the like situation. Though our brother is upon the rack, as long as we ourselves are at our ease, our senses will never inform us of what he suffers. They never did, and never can, carry us beyond our own person, and it is by the imagination only that we can form any conception of what are his sensations.

### ACT Reading

Line 5 All of Sartre's study flows from what is referred to as Baudelaire's initial choice, made at the age of seven and resulting from the trauma of his mother's second marriage, to flee into a self-imposed exile. Baudelaire's trauma from losing the total affection of his mother—"when one has a son like me, one doesn't remarry"—leads to a flight into the self. Baudelaire sets to affirm himself as different; he is condemned to a separate existence. He prefers himself to everyone since everyone (at the time, "everyone" was his mother) abandoned him.

15 Sartre goes on to rebuke Baudelaire for being immature, narcissistic, masochistic, obsessive, and exhibitionistic. What makes these accusations sting—and, in a sense, sing with a completely novel profundity—is Sartre's belief that we choose what we wish to become.

1. The author states that we can only access the feelings of others through
  - A) our imagination.
  - B) our five senses.
  - C) innate intuition.
  - D) personal sorrow.
2. Which choice provides the best evidence for the answer to the previous question?
  - A) Lines 5–8 (“Of this . . . manner”)
  - B) Lines 8–10 (“That . . . prove it”)
  - C) Lines 17–19 (“Though . . . suffers”)
  - D) Lines 19–22 (“They never . . . sensations”)
1. The details in the first paragraph (lines 1–10) primarily serve to:
  - A. identify specific flaws in Sartre's critique of Baudelaire.
  - B. describe Baudelaire's artistic inspiration.
  - C. outline Sartre's criticism of Baudelaire.
  - D. illustrate why Sartre is considered to be depressing.

# English

The biggest difference between SAT Writing and Language and ACT English is the name of each test. As you will see in the following pages, the content and format of the two tests are quite similar.

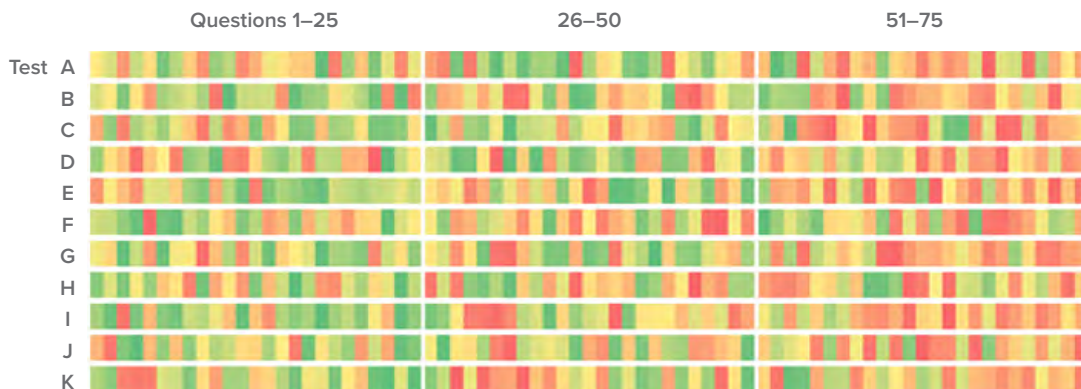
	SAT Writing and Language	ACT English
<b>Time allotted</b>	35 minutes	45 minutes
<b>Number of passages</b>	4	5
<b>Number of questions</b>	44	75
<b>Topics and Style</b>	The four passages will always represent the following topics: history/social studies, careers, humanities, and science. The style will range from argument to informative/explanatory to nonfiction narrative.	The five passages are written to appear like typical high-school level writing. Topics range from history reports to personal narrative.
<b>Topics Tested</b>	Questions are split between Standard English Conventions (grammar, punctuation, and usage) and Expression of Ideas (development, organization, and effective language use).	Questions are classified as Conventions of Standard English (grammar, punctuation, and usage), Production of Writing (development and organization), and Knowledge of Language (effective language use).

On the SAT, questions are divided into Standard English Conventions and Expression of Ideas. ACT labels the former Conventions of Standard English, and breaks the latter into Production of Writing and Knowledge of Language. Fundamentally, the two tests are assessing students' knowledge of grammar and effective writing (including development, organization, and word choice).

Unique to the SAT is the presence of graphics, support, and proposition questions. At least one SAT Writing and Language passage will include a graph, and one or two questions will ask the student to select an edit to the passage based on information presented in the graph. Support and proposition questions require students to correctly connect claims, evidence, and reasoning.

## ACT English Heat Map

The heat map below shows that ACT English questions are not arranged in order of difficulty. Students can work through the test quickly with fewer of the pacing and decision-making challenges encountered on Math, Reading, and Science. Most students are able to reach the final questions of the test once they acclimate to the format and practice the underlying skills. SAT questions are likewise random in difficulty, though the SAT gives students more time per question than does the ACT.



## English Strategy

Both the SAT Writing and Language and ACT English Tests require students to handle both questions about grammar and questions about overall rhetorical strategies. A passage with underlined portions will appear on the left side of the page; questions will appear alongside the passage on the right. The example below is from the ACT, which aligns questions with their placement in the passage, resulting in gaps within paragraphs. The SAT avoids such gaps by aligning questions at the top of the column.

### Charles Drew and the Creation of Blood Banks

Charles Richard Drew was the most prominent African

American doctor in the field of blood transfusion during

the 1940s, and his work leading direct to the creation of the

60

American Red Cross Blood Bank. Prior to the 20th century,

all blood donations had to be made directly from the donor to

61

the receiver; the first institution focused on blood transfusion

62

research was in Moscow. The storage

62

60. F. NO CHANGE  
 G. led directly  
 H. led direct  
 J. directly leading

61. A. NO CHANGE  
 B. could of been made  
 C. was made  
 D. may had made

62. Given that all of the following statements are true, which one most effectively elaborates on a point made earlier in the sentence?  
 F. NO CHANGE  
 G. a Belgian doctor performed the first non-direct transfusion.  
 H. the first blood donors were sheep.  
 J. otherwise, the blood would clot.

This shared format presents a challenge: the predominance of problems that consist only of answer choices can train students to ignore the questions that are present (see question 62 above). Consistent practice and expert guidance can help students become more comfortable with both the underlying knowledge they need to answer questions correctly and the format that is designed to distract them from those correct answers.

# Common Errors of English Conventions

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Though the English language comprises a complex web of usage, dialects, and idiosyncratic personal preferences, English tests are designed to account for a finite set of defined conventions. This is good news for students preparing for these exams. We identify the top 10 errors for both the SAT and ACT below.

## Top 10 Errors of English Conventions

The following 10 errors account for nearly all of the Standard English Conventions questions on the SAT and ACT. The accompanying examples are intended merely to illustrate the errors, not to represent actual questions or level of difficulty; the first, italicized sentence is incorrect, the second is correct.

1. Punctuation

*Frederick Law Olmsted the famous landscape architect, was also a conservationist.*  
Frederick Law **Olmsted, the** famous landscape architect, was also a conservationist.

2. Pronouns

*Each of the trees had dropped their leaves.*  
Each of the trees had dropped **its** leaves.

3. Verb Tense and Agreement

*I planted vegetables last year, but a late frost kills my tomatoes.*  
I planted vegetables last year, but a late frost **killed** my tomatoes.

4. Parallel Structure

*The subjects Shana likes best are biology, physics, and studying French.*  
The subjects Shana likes best are biology, physics, and **French**.

5. Sentence Fragments

*While Charlie was at the beach to enjoy the sunshine and the ocean breeze.*  
While Charlie was at the **beach, he enjoyed** the sunshine and the ocean breeze.

6. Comma Splices

*I moved to Washington when I was seven, my brother followed a year later.*  
I moved to Washington when I was **seven, and my** brother followed a year later.

7. Conjunctions

*Thomas had been walking for miles, so he finally spotted his campsite in the distance.*  
Thomas had been walking for **miles when** he finally spotted his campsite in the distance.

8. Faulty Modification

*Leaping from the window onto the roof, Grandma was delighted by the cat's agility.*  
Leaping from the window onto the roof, **the cat delighted Grandma with its agility**.

9. Idioms

*Choosing where to apply about college is a difficult process for high school students.*  
Choosing where to apply **to** college is a difficult process for high school students.

10. Frequently Confused Words

*I completed all of the summer reading accept the Jane Austen novel.*  
I completed all of the summer reading **except** the Jane Austen novel.

## Common Errors of Expression

The ACT's new Production of Writing and Knowledge of Language categories have been broken out from the old Rhetorical Skills category, which covered both of these topics and generally corresponded to the SAT's Expression of Ideas category. These types of questions test students' ability to present ideas effectively. They focus on audience, purpose, style, development, and organization rather than on hard-and-fast rules of grammar. The ACT and SAT test many of the same concepts.

### Top 6 Errors in Expression

[1] Even in densely populated urban areas, people are learning to grow herbs, greens, and patio-friendly vegetables. [2] With the boom in organic and environmentally friendly eating, home gardening has become more popular than ever. [3] Gardening clubs and classes have (1) elevated sprung up around the country. [4] The country is turning green, and our diets are growing healthier.

(2) *Sentence 1 should be placed where it is after sentence 3.*

(3a) Gardeners can also save money on their grocery bills. Nonetheless, this new lifestyle carries its own risks. First-time gardeners must learn to recognize the potential hazards of their new hobby. Tomato plants' fine, hair-like spines and chemical defenses can leave rashes or even welts upon exposed skin. (3b) Nonetheless, Similarly, the prickly spines of squash plants can scrape and scratch the incautious harvester. More insidious is the threat of contaminated soil; many urban locations (4) in the big cities are steeped in lead, and vegetables grown (5) where these sorts of soil problems can be found in such soil can be dangerous to eat. (6) Home-grown vegetables can also be picked at the peak of ripeness. [End paragraph after "eat."]

1. **Word choice.** Students must select words that fit precisely in tone, meaning, and usage.
2. **Sequence.** Students must choose the right location for a sentence or paragraph.
3. **Transitions.** Both tests require students both to choose sentences or phrases that create effective transitions between paragraphs or ideas (3a) and to select the appropriate transitional word to join two sentences (3b).
4. **Redundancy.** Students must eliminate information given elsewhere.
5. **Wordiness.** Students must select the most concise phrasing.
6. **Irrelevance.** Students must choose the most relevant information or delete irrelevant material.

The SAT Writing and Language Test also requires students to relate essential elements of an argument to each other. Students may be asked to select the best support for a given claim, choose the sentence that introduces the central claim developed in a paragraph, or read charts and graphs and accurately incorporate their information into the passage.

# Math

Math differs between the SAT and ACT in both form and content. Students preparing for each test should employ different strategies and review different math topics. See pages 46–47 for a detailed breakdown of the topics tested on the SAT and ACT.

	SAT Math		ACT Math
Section placement	3rd	4th	2nd
Calculator	No Calculator	Calculator	Calculator
Time allotted	25 minutes	55 minutes	60 minutes
Number of questions	20	38	60
Question types	Multiple Choice and Grid-In		Multiple Choice
Topics tested	Emphasis on Algebra I and II topics and data analysis		Broad but shallow approach to math topics ranging from pre-algebra to trigonometry

## SAT Math Strategy

More than any previous SAT, the new SAT is built on “math class” math. Like every standardized test, though, the SAT reveals itself through predictability and repetition. Students don’t need to review five years of math; they do need to review the math that the SAT thinks is important.

The SAT has two types of Math sections—No Calculator and Calculator—and two types of questions on each of those sections—multiple choice and grid-in.

SAT Math questions are arranged in rough order of difficulty within each section and problem type. For example, question 15 in the No Calculator section of the SAT will be much harder than question 5—fewer students will get question 15 correct, and even those who do may take 4 to 6 times as long as they needed for the earlier problem. However, question 16 (the first grid-in) will be much easier than question 15. Each student needs to develop a pacing strategy that maximizes his or her math scores.

Every question is worth one raw point, so students should try to gain as many points as possible from the easy and medium questions. Many students can raise their scores by skipping the hardest multiple choice questions so that they have sufficient time to complete the first few grid-ins. If time permits, they can then return to the hard multiple choice questions. Students should always save a few moments at the end of a section to bubble a guess on ALL remaining questions.

Section 3, No Calculator  
25 minutes, 20 Questions

Multiple Choice															Grid-In				
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20

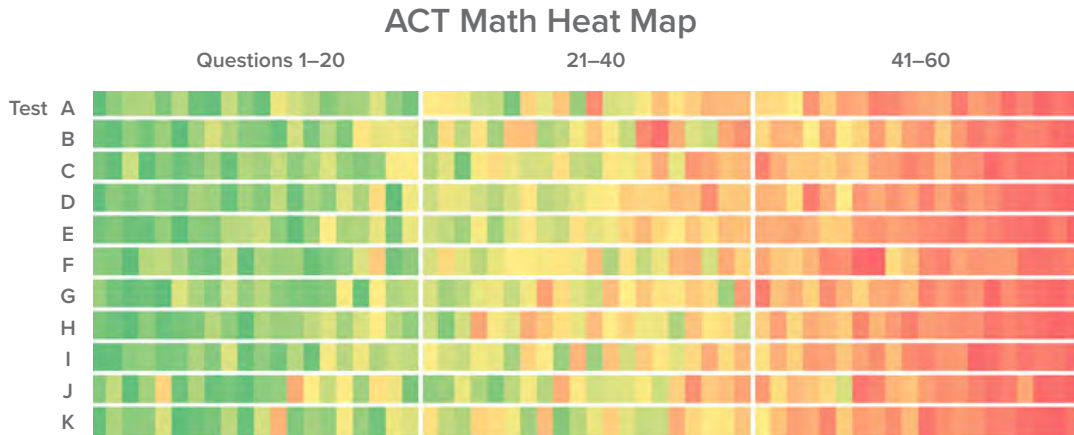
Section 4, Calculator  
55 minutes, 38 Questions

Multiple Choice																														Grid-In							
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32	33	34	35	36	37	38



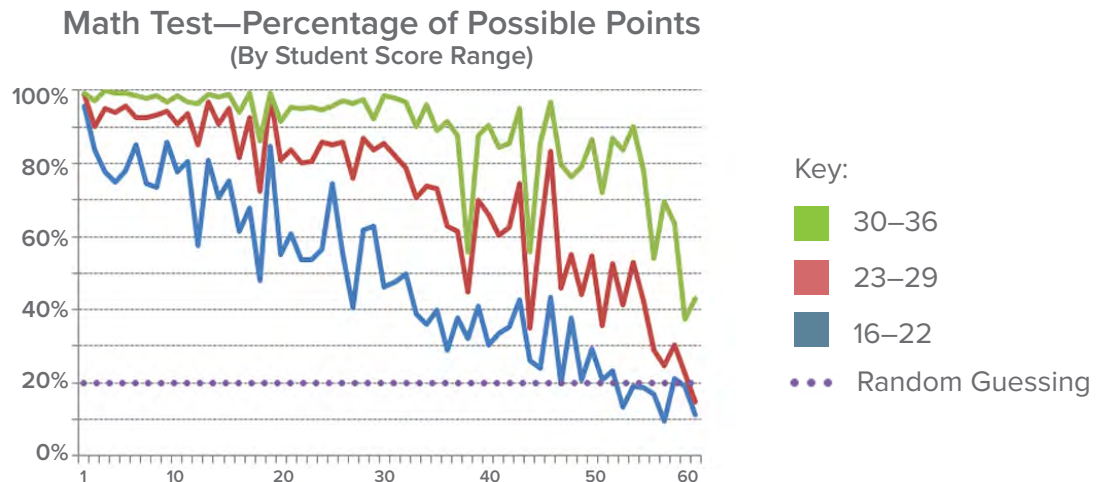
## ACT Math Strategy

ACT Math questions roughly increase in difficulty throughout the test. The heat map below shows the progression from green to red. While question 12 may not be harder than question 10, question 40 is almost certainly more difficult than both 10 and 12. This ladder of difficulty can create significant pacing problems for students.



The math on the ACT aligns with high school math standards, and there is no “guessing penalty” (students receive 1 raw point for every correct answer), so there is often the misperception that the test is straightforward and requires little strategy. In analyzing student performance, we have found the opposite. The increasing question difficulty and wide variety of topics mean that students must actively work on pacing skills and develop a type of process of elimination at the question level—“not a good investment of time, GUESS”; “difficult question but familiar topic, ATTEMPT”; etc.

Random guessing should allow even a student with no understanding of a question to choose a correct answer one time out of five (20%). However, the ACT—like the SAT—can draw students into traps that can lower performance below that threshold. Students may spend valuable time attempting problems where they gain fewer points than peers who pick an answer with a metaphorical dart. The graph below shows how students at different score levels perform throughout the Math Test. By approximately question 52, lower scoring students fall below the 20% guessing threshold. Even students scoring between 23 and 29 receive almost no net gain from the final problems of the test.



Knowledge, strategy, pacing, and practice impact a student’s performance, and none of these elements should be discounted on ACT Math.

## Math Standards: SAT vs. ACT

In order to build parallel—fair and equivalent—forms for each administration of their tests, the College Board and ACT must adhere to consistent sets of standards. Parallelism places one constraint on the test makers. The other constraint comes from the decision to academically align the SAT. Neither the ACT nor the SAT “make up” the standards. They work closely with the Common Core standards and with the National Council of Teachers of Mathematics to develop “domains” and “content dimensions and descriptions.”

The SAT has put a strong emphasis on Algebra I, Algebra II, and data interpretation and analysis—what it refers to as Heart of Algebra, Passport to Advanced Math, and Problem Solving and Data Analysis, respectively. The College Board considers these content domains as essential building blocks for the mathematics, science, and social science necessary for success in college and careers. The SAT has also greatly decreased its emphasis on plane geometry and what it considers peripheral subjects.

A comparison to the pre-March 2016 SAT and the ACT demonstrates how content decisions can influence the character of an exam. Even the number of questions on a topic can have a dramatic impact. There is only one trigonometry question on the new SAT, for example, so the exam can only test a narrow range of trigonometric ideas. If the material jumped around too much from administration to administration, it would risk the parallelism required of a standardized test. The ACT, on the other hand, has four trigonometry questions on each test. This does not just mean that there are four times as many trig questions as on the new SAT. It means that the ACT has more room to explore different areas of trig—amplitude, inverse functions, unit circles, etc. A student preparing for the SAT should study trigonometry in a different way from a student getting ready for the ACT. A student taking the pre-March 2016 SAT faced no trigonometry at all.

The tables below summarize, at a high level, the content differences between the old SAT, the new SAT, and the ACT.

### Prevalence of Math Topics on the Old SAT, New SAT, and ACT

Pre-Algebra and Miscellaneous			
	Old SAT	New SAT	ACT
Absolute Value Arithmetic	○	✗	◐
Combinations	○	✗	○
Digits	○	✗	○
Exponents and Roots	●	◐	●
Fractions and Decimals	◐	○	◐
Imaginary/Complex Numbers	✗	○	◐
Logarithms	✗	✗	○
Logic	○	✗	○
Number Line	◐	✗	◐
Number Properties	●	○	◐
Overlapping Sets/Venn Diagrams	◐	✗	○
Percents	●	○	◐
Probability	◐	○	◐
Scientific Notation	○	✗	○
Sequences and Patterns	◐	✗	◐

Data Interpretation and Analysis			
	Old SAT	New SAT	ACT
Data Graphics	◐	●	○
Data Tables	◐	○	●
Line of Best Fit	✗	●	✗
Mean, Median, and Mode	●	○	●
Other Charts and Graphs	◐	●	○
Rates	◐	◐	○
Ratios and Proportions	●	○	●
Sampling	✗	◐	✗
Scatter plots	○	●	○
Two-Way Tables	✗	●	✗
Units	○	●	○
Variance/Dispersion/Range	✗	◐	✗

Algebra			
	Old SAT	New SAT	ACT
Direct and Inverse Variation	●	X	○
Domain and Range	○	○	◐
Equivalent Expressions/ Simplifying	◐	●	●
Exponential Change	○	●	○
Graphs of Lines and Inequalities	◐	●	◐
Inequalities	○	●	◐
Linear Equations	●	●	●
Matrices	X	X	○
Parabolas	○	●	○
Parallel and Perpendicular Lines	◐	○	◐
Polynomial Division	X	○	○
Quadratic Formula	X	●	●
Quadratic Functions	○	●	◐
Slope	◐	◐	◐
Symbol Functions	●	X	◐
System of Equations	◐	●	◐
Zeros	○	●	◐

Trigonometry			
	Old SAT	New SAT	ACT
Trigonometry	X	○	●

Tested frequently on each exam	●
Tested approximately once per exam	◐
Tested infrequently	○
Not included in content standards	X

Plane and 3-D Geometry			
	Old SAT	New SAT	ACT
Absolute Value Equations and Graphs	◐	○	◐
Angles	●	◐	●
Area	●	○	●
Circle Equations	X	○	○
Circles—Arcs, Chords, Radii	●	◐	●
Circumference	●	○	●
Distance Formula	◐	○	◐
Ellipse Equations	X	X	○
Geometric Visualization	○	X	◐
Hybrid Figures	◐	○	◐
Line Segments/ Midpoints	◐	○	◐
Perimeter	●	○	●
Pythagorean Theorem and Right Triangles	●	○	●
Rotation, Reflection, and Transformation	◐	X	◐
Similar Triangles	○	◐	◐
Squares and Rectangles	○	○	●
Surface Area	○	X	○
Volume	◐	○	◐
xyz-Coordinate System	○	X	○

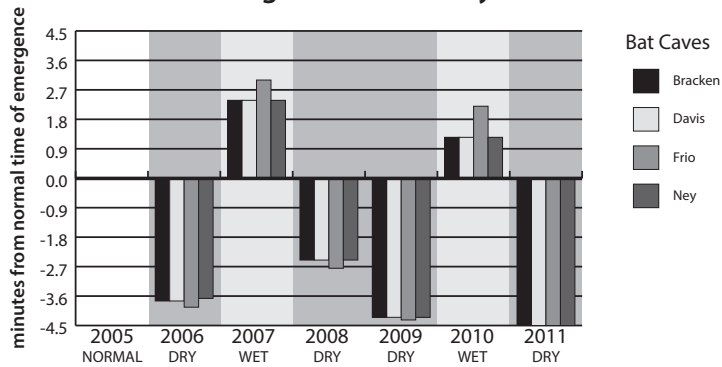
# SAT: Analysis in Science

Unlike the ACT, the SAT does not present a section devoted to science. Even so, there are a number of science-themed questions on the exam, enough to form the backbone of the SAT's Analysis in Science cross-test score.\* In Evidence-Based Reading and Writing, 27 questions drawn from the three passages on science contribute to this cross-test score; in Math, 7 to 9 questions, particularly those that require data interpretation, contribute to the score.

As the examples below demonstrate, students do not need to memorize concepts from science classes so much as they need to be confident interpreting tables and charts.

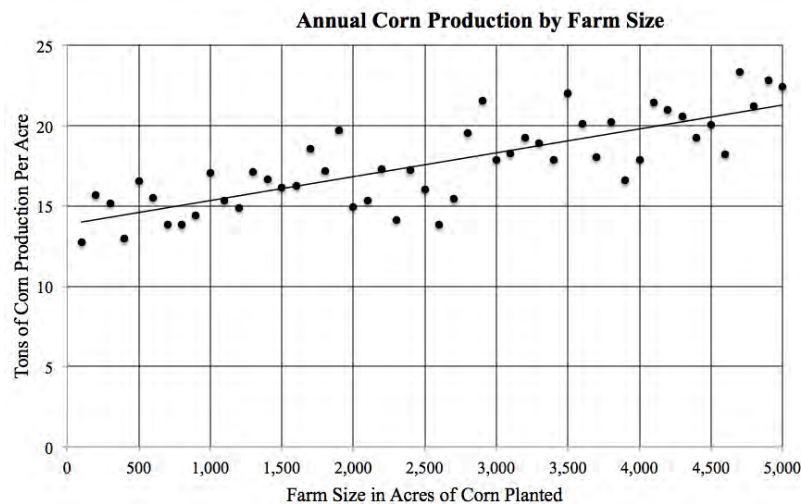
## Analysis in Science Example: Reading and Writing

### Average Variance during wet and dry years from time of emergence in normal years



31. Which statement is most strongly supported by the graph?
- A) Bats at all locations emerged from their caves earlier in 2011 than in 2008.
  - B) Although both were dry years, 2009 was wetter than 2008.
  - C) Davis is geographically closer to Bracken than it is to Ney.
  - D) The bats in Ney reacted more strongly to dry weather than any other bats.

## Analysis in Science Example: Math



24. The agronomist assumes that the relationship between farm size and annual crop yield per acre will continue its trend on farms of larger size. Based on the line of best fit, which of the following would be the best estimate of annual production of corn, in tons, for farms of 6,000 acres?
- A) 21
  - B) 23
  - C) 25
  - D) 26

The scatter plot above shows corn yield in tons per acre for farms averaging between 100 and 5,000 acres of corn planted.

\* College Board also provides students with an Analysis in History/Social Studies cross-test score by drawing from passages and math questions with history or social studies themes. However, because students sometimes specifically choose the SAT to avoid the Science Test on the ACT, we emphasize that both tests include science, though it appears in a more diffuse form on the SAT. History and social studies themes have long been common to both tests.

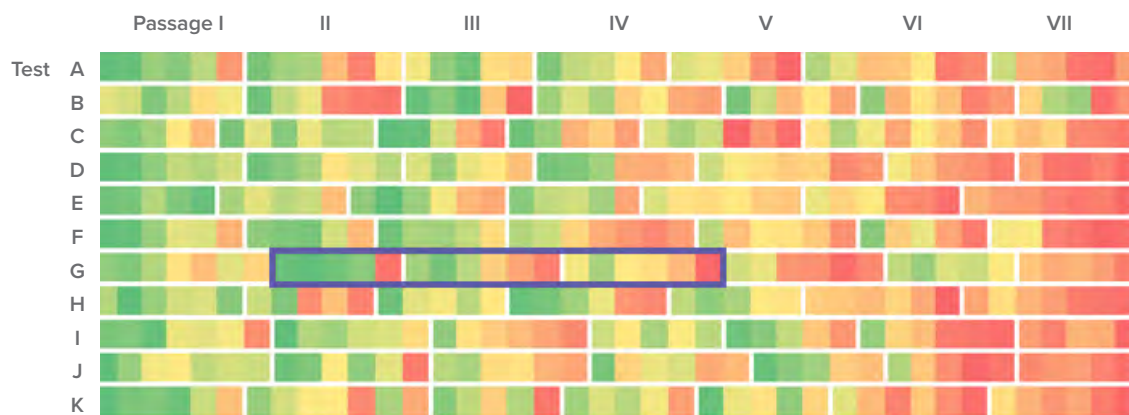
## ACT Science

The ACT Science Test measures interpretation, analysis, evaluation, reasoning, and problem-solving skills. Although it uses scientific language and reasoning, very little prior science knowledge is needed to do well on the ACT. When the ACT does call for prior knowledge, it's typically something very basic that the vast majority of high school students will know (e.g. knowing that H<sub>2</sub>O is water). This test is more about understanding and interpreting information you're given and understanding the nature of scientific experiments. It may have very little to do with what a student is actually learning in his or her science classes at school.

What it does require is an ability to navigate a multi-level maze. Nowhere else on the ACT is so much extraneous information provided. Solutions are often deeply embedded within complicated diagrams or tables. Detailed experiment write-ups may be helpful only for a single question. The upside is that ACT Science rewards preparation. Success on ACT Science is not about learning science—it is about combining reading and data analysis skills and learning to do it at speed.

Passage Type	Passages per ACT	Number of Questions per Passage	Characteristics
Data Representation	2–3	5–6	Scientific information is presented in charts, graphs, tables, and diagrams. Questions require interpretation and analysis of the information.
Research Summaries	2–3	6–8	One or more related experiments are described, with the results of the experiment(s) typically summarized in graphs and/or tables. Questions cover the design, execution, and results.
Conflicting Viewpoints	1	6–8	Two or more incompatible theories, hypotheses, or viewpoints on a specific observable phenomenon are offered. Questions will evaluate your ability to analyze and compare the different viewpoints.

### ACT Science Heat Map



Science passages tend to get harder throughout the test, and questions tend to get harder throughout a passage. The highlighted section of the heat map above shows an example of this trend in Form G. At multiple points, students are confronted with a decision: wade through the most difficult questions of a passage or invest time in a new passage with the hope of reaching easier questions. Pacing practice is essential for students to master ACT Science.

## SAT Essay vs. ACT Writing

Both the SAT and ACT offer an optional writing assessment at the end of each exam; however, they are very different types of writing assignments. Students may want to consider these differences when making the initial SAT vs. ACT decision. The SAT Essay focuses on analyzing a text; students are instructed to leave their personal opinions about the topic out of the essay. ACT, on the other hand, requires students to give their opinions on a topic, while simultaneously analyzing three additional perspectives and discussing how these positions relate to one another. Both tests assign multiple scores based on particular areas or “domains” of the writing process; SAT keeps these scores separate, while ACT averages them into a single Writing Test score.

	SAT Essay				ACT Writing			
Length	50 minutes (optional)				40 minutes (optional)			
Order	Last section of the test				Last section of the test			
Prompt	One previously published persuasive essay is used as a source passage. Students are instructed to write a rhetorical analysis that explains how the argument persuades its audience. See page 52 for a sample prompt.				One short paragraph of background information on a contemporary social issue is followed by three perspectives on the topic. Students are instructed to consider the three perspectives in light of their own views. See page 53 for a sample prompt.			
Goal	Students' essays should demonstrate an understanding of the source document and present an analysis of the reasoning, evidence, and stylistic devices used.				Students' essays should present their own persuasive positions while analyzing and evaluating the three given perspectives.			
Scoring	<b>3 Separate Scores</b>				<b>1 Total Score: Average of Domain Scores</b>			
		Reading	Analysis	Writing	Ideas & Analysis	Development & Support	Organization	Language Use
	Reader 1	1–4	1–4	1–4	1–6	1–6	1–6	1–6
	Reader 2	1–4	1–4	1–4	1–6	1–6	1–6	1–6
	Domain Totals	2–8	2–8	2–8	2–12	2–12	2–12	2–12
	Scores remain separate. No sum or average is provided. Essay scores are not combined with EBRW scores.				Four domain scores are averaged. Total Score: 2–12 Writing score combined with English and Reading scores to form English Language Arts (ELA) score.			

## SAT Essay and ACT Writing Policies

Admission policies on the optional writing exams vary by college. While most colleges do not require either the SAT's Essay score or the ACT's Writing Test, many colleges of interest to Compass students do. Before deciding whether to write the essay, students are well-advised to research the policies of the schools to which they plan to apply and err on the side of keeping their options open. Students who are targeting selective colleges should try to exceed the bare minimum requirements if they have the ability to do so. Below, we list the policies for schools who require or recommend the writing exams. This list is limited to the 360 schools whose profiles and policies we track (see pages 8–15). Updates can be found at [www.compassprep.com/act-writing-and-sat-essay-requirements](http://www.compassprep.com/act-writing-and-sat-essay-requirements).

Required
  Recommended
  Optional

School	SAT	ACT	School	SAT	ACT	School	SAT	ACT
Abilene Christian University	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Hampden-Sydney College	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Taylor University	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Amherst College	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Harvard University	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	United States Coast Guard Academy	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Austin College	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Michigan State University	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	United States Military Academy	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Berry College	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Morehouse College	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	University of California System	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Brown University	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	New Jersey Institute of Technology	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	University of Delaware	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
California Institute of Technology	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Occidental College	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	University of Miami	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Chapman University	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Oregon State University	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	University of Michigan, Ann Arbor	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Claremont McKenna College	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Pomona College	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	University of Minnesota, Twin Cities	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Colby College	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Princeton University	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	University of San Diego	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
College of Charleston	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Rutgers University, New Brunswick	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	University of Texas, Austin	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Concordia College, Moorhead	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Rutgers University, Newark	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Wellesley College	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
The Cooper Union	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Simmons College	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Westmont College	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Dartmouth College	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Soka University of America	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Yale University	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Duke University	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Stanford University	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>			
Georgia Institute of Technology	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Stony Brook University	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>			

Some colleges requiring the essay will not superscore test dates without the essay (for more information about superscoring see pages 68–69). The University of California system alone drives the decision for many of Compass's students. Just as important, it's uncommon for an ACT or SAT essay to be a significant negative factor on an application. With a minimum amount of practice, most students can reach the 25th–75th percentile score ranges of even the most elite colleges in the country—something not at all true about other sections of the exams.

## SAT Essay

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The SAT Essay is a 50-minute, optional writing assignment. Students are asked to read a persuasive essay and then compose a rhetorical analysis that explains how the essay persuades its audience.

Some students will have written this form of essay in English class, particularly AP English Language, and feel comfortable focusing on analyzing the style of the source text. Other students trained to take a position on a topic and support it with three examples may find this assignment to be a challenge because the writing prompt explicitly states that students are not to agree or disagree with the ideas presented in the source passage.

The goal of the assignment is to explain how the author of the source passage builds a 650–750 word persuasive argument on a contemporary issue in a topic like science, art, the environment, or politics. This is a common type of writing assignment in first-year college writing classes, so preparing for this essay can help students prepare for college as well.

### Example SAT Essay Prompt

*The following example provides the instructions and an excerpt of a typical essay. The essay students encounter on the exam will be longer than the one provided here.*

As you read the passage below, consider how Sean Dowson uses

- evidence, such as facts or examples, to support claims.
- reasoning to develop ideas and to connect claims and evidence.
- stylistic or persuasive elements, such as word choice or appeals to emotion, to add power to the ideas expressed.

Adapted from Sean Dowson, “Rhyme and Reason.” ©2010 by Compass Education. *The full essay continues for an additional three paragraphs.*

Poetry is slipping away gradually from our culture. In public schools it is taught as an awkward extra thing to jam in around the novels and histories, a strange, artificial construct with which few educators feel truly comfortable. At home and in public life, it has nearly vanished. This art, this act, prized for nearly the entirety of human history, is sliding quietly into oblivion.

Its absence from our schools is the product of understandable pressures. As each year brings new laws, new standardized tests, and new demands to push cutting-edge technology and straight-to-the-workplace skill sets, poetry has been shouldered off into the dusty corners of the classroom, an antiquated figure in costume-ball clothing. Teachers and students have a frantic schedule to keep and no time to fiddle with archaic wording or uncomfortably numerical business of rhyme and meter. To the passionate reader of novels, the rigor of metrical composition can appear unpleasantly reminiscent of algebraic equations, an unwelcome mathematical intrusion upon the arts...

Write an essay in which you explain how Sean Dowson builds an argument to persuade his audience that poetry should continue to be part of students' education. In your essay, analyze how Dowson uses one or more of the features listed in the box above (or features of your own choice) to strengthen the logic and persuasiveness of his argument. Be sure that your analysis focuses on the most relevant features of the passage.

Your essay should not explain whether you agree with Dowson's claims, but rather explain how Dowson builds an argument to persuade his audience.



## ACT Writing

ACT Writing is optional and consists of one 40-minute essay on a contemporary topic with social relevance. The prompt consists of a short background paragraph followed by three distinct perspectives on the subject. The student is asked to analyze and evaluate each perspective, develop his or her own position, and explain how each perspective relates to the student’s own position. Though that might seem like a lot to accomplish in 40 minutes, with focused practice and feedback, it can become a manageable series of tasks. Students can break down the directions to “analyze and evaluate the perspectives given” into four questions:

1. *Who holds this position?*
2. *Why do they hold it?*
3. *What if everyone embraced this perspective?*
4. *What is this perspective’s greatest strength or weakness?*

The emphasis the ACT now places on the three reasonable perspectives has shifted the writing assignment to be more in line with first-year college writing classes, which tend to focus more on “the critical conversation” and less on debate-style argumentative essays.

### Example ACT Writing Prompt

#### Privacy

Technology is changing our ideas about privacy. Our social media posts help us connect to friends, families, and people across the globe, but they also supply a steady stream of information to advertisers and, potentially, to governments, employers, and law enforcement agencies. Smartphone apps track our locations, buying habits, and Internet searches; that data can be both used to improve services and sold to companies to better target marketing. We’re increasingly willing to share our opinions, images, and relationships online and to turn to the Internet to run searches on others. As sharing our lives with a global audience increasingly becomes the norm, it’s important to consider how our connected lifestyle is changing the value we place upon privacy.

*Read and carefully consider these perspectives. Each suggests a particular way of thinking about our changing perceptions of the value of privacy.*

Perspective One	Perspective Two	Perspective Three
<p>Social media and smartphone apps help us navigate the world and our relationships with greater knowledge and insight. The only people who should be worried about losing privacy are those who have something to hide.</p>	<p>When we lose our sense of private lives, we lose part of ourselves. Being on public display hinders introspection and a sense of our independent identities. When nothing is private, nothing is personal.</p>	<p>Our desire for privacy is often rooted in embarrassment about common human issues like illness or financial struggles. Letting go of old ideas about privacy would break down barriers and help create a more open and empathetic society.</p>

#### Essay Task

Write a unified, coherent essay in which you evaluate multiple perspectives on how our value of privacy is changing as a result of technological advances. In your essay, be sure to:

- analyze and evaluate the perspectives given
- state and develop your own perspective on the issue
- explain the relationship between your perspective and those given

# Essay Scoring

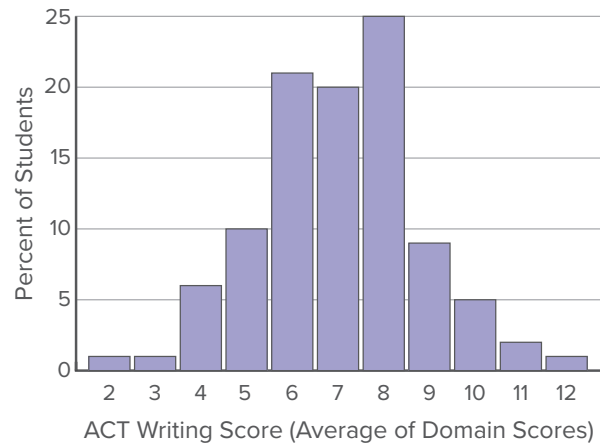
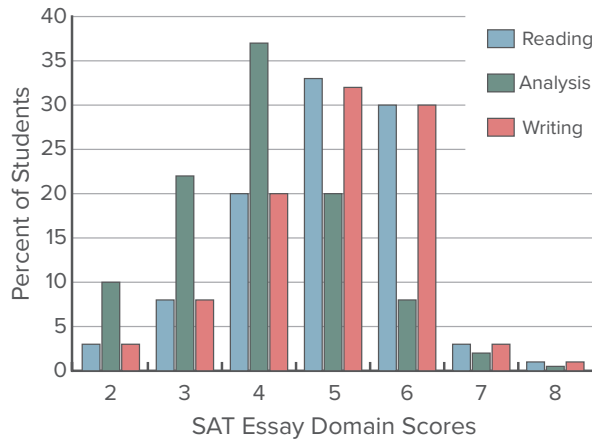
If College Board or ACT let each reader decide how to grade essays, the process would soon devolve into chaos, with different standards and expectations. Instead, the readers are taught how to agree on community standards. Using a scoring rubric, senior readers select a set of papers that align with the qualities defined in a scoring rubric and then use this “anchor” set to train readers to gauge the relative quality of student essays.

Until the 2015–2016 school year, the scoring was “holistic,” meaning that the grader would consider and balance many aspects of the writing and arrive at a single score of 1–6. Now, both College Board and ACT employ “analytic” scoring. Though the testing organizations still use anchor sets for training, they train readers to consider and score different elements of the essay separately. The official rubric for each exam’s assignment is available online; the following gives an overview of what graders are taught to expect when scoring each domain.

SAT Essay				ACT Writing		
<p><b>READING</b> The Reading score is based on how accurately a student summarizes the argument or specific claims presented in the source document. High-scoring essays include relevant, specific examples from the source document and interpret their meanings correctly. Students are penalized for misrepresenting or misunderstanding the author’s position or claims.</p>				<p><b>IDEAS AND ANALYSIS</b> This domain score describes how well a student (a) presents her own thesis, (b) engages with the given perspectives, (c) provides context for the debate, and (d) examines the relationships among perspectives. Successful essays both take a clear position and discuss the strengths and weaknesses of the prompt’s perspectives.</p>		
<p><b>ANALYSIS</b> The Analysis score describes how well a student explains how and why particular elements of the writing are persuasive. Emotional appeals, data, rhetorical questions, and anecdotes are all elements that a student could describe and analyze when appropriate. Strong essays focus on the most significant elements, rather than simply cataloguing persuasive elements, and tie the author’s strategies to key goals.</p>				<p><b>DEVELOPMENT AND SUPPORT</b> This is similar to the SAT’s Reading score in that the Development and Support score is based on how effectively and specifically the student uses specific examples to support her ideas. For the ACT, specific examples can be drawn from a student’s experiences, while the SAT’s examples must be taken from the source text. Students with high scores in this domain not only identify concrete examples but also explain <i>how</i> and <i>why</i> these examples support the claims.</p>		
<p><b>WRITING</b> The Writing score addresses the mechanics of writing: overall organization, sentence structure, and language use. Students should aim to group ideas into focused paragraphs, vary sentence structure, and use vocabulary correctly.</p>				<p><b>ORGANIZATION</b> ACT splits SAT’s Writing score into two parts; the first is Organization. This score reflects whether the student maintains focus and provides transitions between and within paragraphs. Effective essays emphasize transitions with words like <i>however</i>, <i>nevertheless</i>, <i>therefore</i>, <i>but</i>.</p>		
				<p><b>LANGUAGE USE</b> This score covers the remaining writing mechanics: word choice, sentence structure, tone, and grammar.</p>		
4 Advanced	3 Proficient	2 Partial	1 Inadequate	6 Effective	5 Well-developed	4 Adequate
				3 Developing skill	2 Weak	1 Little or no skill

## What's a Good Score?

A nearly universal truth of standardized test essays is that readers gravitate to the middle of the scale. For the SAT, readers favor 2s and 3s, so the most common combined scores are 4s, 5s, and 6s. For the ACT, readers most commonly settle on 3s and 4s, so overall student scores cluster at 6, 7, and 8. The one noticeable outlier is the SAT Analysis score, which tends to be a point below the other two SAT domain scores, with 4s more common than 5s.



Students who score well on the multiple choice sections of the SAT and ACT naturally expect to do well on the essay sections. While Compass has shown that there is an overall correlation between the two types of scores (see tables below), the unreliability of essay scoring and the looseness of the correlation means that there is often a mismatch between expectations and reality. Even students scoring in the 33–36 range on the ACT are more likely to see 8s, 9s and 10s than 11s and 12s. Students scoring 1500–1600 on the SAT will receive more 5s and 6s than 7s and 8s.

SAT Total	Reading		Analysis		Writing	
	Range	Mean	Range	Mean	Range	Mean
800	3–5	3.9	2–4	2.9	3–5	3.9
900	3–5	4.2	2–4	3.2	3–5	4.2
1000	4–6	4.6	3–5	3.6	4–6	4.6
1100	4–6	5.0	3–5	4.0	4–6	5.0
1200	4–6	5.4	3–5	4.4	4–6	5.4
1300	5–7	5.8	4–6	4.8	5–7	5.8
1400	5–7	6.1	4–6	5.1	5–7	6.1
1500	5–7	6.3	4–6	5.3	5–7	6.3

ACT Composite	Writing	
	Range	Mean
13–15	5–7	5.6
16–18	5–7	6.0
19–21	6–8	6.7
22–24	6–8	7.2
25–27	7–9	7.6
28–30	7–9	8.0
31–33	8–9	8.4
34–36	8–10	9.0

Sources: College Board data class of 2017; *ACT Research Explains New ACT Test Writing Scores*; and Compass analysis

Colleges understand the limitations of the SAT Essay and ACT Writing Test. None of the most competitive colleges in the country have ACT Writing scores higher than 8–10 for the 25th–75th percentile of enrolled freshmen. In other words, at least 25 percent of students at Harvard, MIT, and Stanford did no better than almost half of all essay writers in the country.

### How Low is Too Low?

Even when students understand all of this, it can still be disconcerting to receive high scores overall along with a seemingly weak essay score. Students are left wondering whether they should retake an exam just to try to improve the essay score. In general, Compass recommends that students *only* retake an exam if they feel confident that their other scores will improve. Students can use the tables above to find the typical essay score ranges that match up with their Composite or Total Score. Students should not be concerned if they fall only a point below the corresponding ranges. There is little sense retaking an ACT with a composite score of 32 just to try to improve a Writing score of 7. Similarly, a student with an SAT Total score of 1450 is advised not to retake the exam solely because of a 5/4/5 score.

However, if a student falls two or more points below the indicated range, feels confident in her ability to maintain or improve her scores in other areas, and is applying to competitive schools that require or recommend the essay, it may be worth retaking the exam. This is especially true if she has a plan for preparation and works with someone experienced in developing essay writing skills for standardized tests.

## SAT Subject Tests

The Subject Tests are designed to demonstrate academic achievement in specific subject areas. They are typically required by only the more competitive colleges. See the following pages for a detailed list of Subject Test policies. A number of colleges accept the ACT in lieu of both the SAT and Subject Tests.

Not all Subject Tests are given on all test dates, and you cannot take Subject Tests on the same day as the SAT. You can take up to three Subject Tests in one day, and you can change your mind about which Subject Tests to take right up until the day of the exam; Language with Listening tests are the exception, however, because they require prior registration. Subject Tests are scored on the same 200–800 scale as the SAT. Percentile scores for Subject Tests are misleading because they often indicate a skewed testing population. For example, only 50,000 students take the Physics test each year, so it is logical to assume that most are quite good at Physics. Your scaled score, not your percentile, is the most important number on your Subject Test report and allows you to compare your performance across different subjects.

For more information, please visit [compassprep.com/whats-a-good-sat-subject-test-score](http://compassprep.com/whats-a-good-sat-subject-test-score).

Advance planning is essential for maximizing your Subject Test scores, since you will perform best if you take the test immediately after finishing your last class in the subject. Some tests are given only once or twice during the year.

Subject Test	OCT	NOV	DEC	MAY	JUN	AUG
Literature	●	●	●	●	●	●
United States (U.S.) History	●	●	●	●	●	●
World History			●		●	
Mathematics Level 1	●	●	●	●	●	●
Mathematics Level 2	●	●	●	●	●	●
Biology E/M (Ecological/Molecular)	●	●	●	●	●	●
Chemistry	●	●	●	●	●	●
Physics	●	●	●	●	●	●
<b>Languages</b>						
Chinese w/Listening		●				
French	●		●	●	●	●
French w/Listening		●				
German					●	
German w/Listening		●				
Modern Hebrew					●	
Italian					●	
Japanese w/Listening		●				
Korean w/Listening		●				
Latin			●		●	
Spanish	●		●	●	●	●
Spanish w/Listening		●				

## Subject Test Breakdown

Each Subject Test lasts 60 minutes. Following are the number of questions and descriptions for each test.

Subject Test	Questions	Description
Literature	≈60	Tests your ability to read and interpret poetry (50%) and prose (50%). You do not have to identify works or authors, but you should be familiar with basic literary terminology.
United States (U.S.) History	90	Covers U.S. history from pre-Columbian to present. However, 80% of the exam covers 1790 to the present.
World History	95	Measures your understanding of world cultures and historical techniques. The exam covers pre-history to the present and is global in scope.
Mathematics Level 1	50	Covers math from algebra through basic trigonometry. The questions are generally easier than those on the Level 2, but the Level 2 is scaled more leniently.
Mathematics Level 2	50	Increased emphasis on functions and trigonometry. Topics not on the Level 1 include log, inverse trig, recursive, periodic, and parametric functions, 3-D coordinates and more extensive trigonometry, conics, and statistics. A strong performance in a precalculus course is a recommended prerequisite.
Biology E/M (Ecological/Molecular)	80	The Biology-E and -M tests share the first 60 questions but then branch off with a choice of either a 20-question ecological biology (E) section or a 20-question molecular biology (M) section.
Chemistry	85	Covers structure and states of matter, reaction types, stoichiometry, reactions, thermodynamics, and descriptive and laboratory chemistry.
Physics	75	Mechanics is the largest component, followed by electricity and magnetism, waves, thermodynamics, and modern physics.
Chinese with Listening	70–75	<p><b>Language Tests</b></p> <p>In general, the language exams cover usage and structure, vocabulary in context, and reading comprehension.</p> <p><b>Languages with Listening</b></p> <p>The languages with listening include 20 minutes of multiple choice questions about audio selections followed by 40 minutes of written multiple choice questions.</p> <p><b>Language Preparation</b></p> <p>Most students find that they need three to four years of high-school-level study to perform well on these exams. Some native speakers express a preference for the listening tests. Note that not all tests are given on all dates. November is the only test date for listening tests.</p>
French	85	
French with Listening	≈85	
German	85	
German with Listening	≈85	
Modern Hebrew	85	
Italian	80–85	
Japanese with Listening	80	
Korean with Listening	80	
Latin	70–75	
Spanish	85	
Spanish with Listening	≈85	

### Subject Tests vs. AP Exams

Students often wonder about the difference between Subject Tests and AP exams (see page 62–65 for more information on AP exams). APs include a section of free-response in addition to multiple choice and are longer exams. In addition, Subject Tests assume a year of high-school-level work in the subject matter, while APs assume a year of college-level work. APs are designed to test a deeper understanding of underlying concepts and critical thinking, while Subject Tests will cover a range of topics with less depth. For instance, the U.S. History Subject Test might ask you to select which answer best describes the Marshall Plan, but the AP U.S. History exam could ask you to analyze that plan within its broader political and social context.

APs aren't necessarily *harder* than the Subject Tests, but preparing for APs often helps students prepare for Subject Tests. Even so, the Subject Tests have idiosyncrasies that are best unpacked with the guidance of an experienced tutor.

## SAT Subject Test Policies: Summary

Each year, the requirements and recommendations around SAT Subject Tests (SAT IIs for the many still using the old College Board name) grow more diverse. Colleges may find Subject Tests helpful, but they are not always in agreement about how the exams are helpful. The general trend is toward more flexible requirements, and no school has recently tightened requirements. Still, the most competitive colleges in the country tend to be found on this list and skew toward the “required” end of the spectrum, even when listed as “recommended.”

College	Summary	College	Summary	College	Summary
California Institute of Technology	Required (2)	Claremont McKenna College	Considered	University of California, Santa Cruz	Considered
Cornell University	Required (2)	College of William & Mary	Considered	University of Chicago	Considered
Harvard University	Required* (2)	Columbia University	Considered	University of Miami	Considered
Harvey Mudd College	Required (2)	Connecticut College	Considered	University of Michigan	Considered
Massachusetts Institute of Technology	Required (2)	The Cooper Union	Considered	University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill	Considered
McGill University	Required (2) (or ACT)	Davidson College	Considered	University of Notre Dame	Considered
Rice University	Required (2) (or ACT)	Franklin Olin College of Engineering	Considered	University of Southern California	Considered
Tufts University	Required (2) (or ACT)	George Washington University	Considered	University of Virginia	Considered
Webb Institute	Required (2)	Ithaca College	Considered	Vanderbilt University	Considered
Brown University	Recommended (2)	Johns Hopkins University	Considered	Vassar College	Considered
Carnegie Mellon University	Recommended	Kenyon College	Considered	Wake Forest University	Considered
Dartmouth College	Recommended (2)	Macalester College	Considered	Washington University in St. Louis	Considered
Duke University	Recommended Strongly (2) (or ACT)	Oberlin College	Considered	Wesleyan University	Considered
Emory University	Recommended	Occidental College	Considered	Worcester Polytechnic Institute	Considered
Georgetown University	Recommended Strongly (3)	Pomona College	Considered	Colby College	Alternative (3)
Lafayette College	Recommended	Pratt Institute	Considered	Colorado College	Alternative (3)
Northwestern University	Recommended (2)	Reed College	Considered	Hamilton College	Alternative
Princeton University	Recommended (2)	Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute	Considered	Middlebury College	Alternative (3)
Stanford University	Recommended	Scripps College	Considered	New York University	Alternative (3)
University of Delaware	Recommended	Smith College	Considered	University of Rochester	Alternative
University of Georgia	Recommended	Stevens Institute of Technology	Considered		
University of Pennsylvania	Recommended	Swarthmore College	Considered		
Wellesley College	Recommended	Union College	Considered		
Yale University	Recommended	University of California, Berkeley	Considered		
Amherst College	Considered	University of California, Davis	Considered		
Babson College	Considered	University of California, Irvine	Considered		
Barnard College	Considered	University of California, Los Angeles	Considered		
Bates College	Considered	University of California, Merced	Considered		
Boston College	Considered	University of California, Riverside	Considered		
Boston University	Considered	University of California, San Diego	Considered		
Bowdoin College	Considered	University of California, Santa Barbara	Considered		
Bucknell University	Considered				
Case Western Reserve University	Considered				

\* Harvard expects SAT Subject Tests from applicants but will accept applications without Subject Tests in some cases.

This information is current as of summer 2017 but is subject to change. For the most up-to-date information, including full policies and links to these policies on the colleges’ websites, please visit [compassprep.com/subject-test-requirements](http://compassprep.com/subject-test-requirements).

## SAT Subject Test Policies: Detailed Policies

Below are the SAT, ACT, and Subject Test recommendations and requirements at colleges that use Subject Tests in admission decisions. During the transition period to the new SAT, many colleges are adjusting their testing policies for the class of 2018—particularly regarding the optional essay for the SAT and ACT.

You can visit [compassprep.com/subject-test-requirements](http://compassprep.com/subject-test-requirements) to find updates to this chart.

College	Policy
Amherst College	Required: SAT or ACT. Optional essays are recommended. Considered: SAT Subject Tests.
Babson College	Required: SAT or ACT. Considered: SAT Subject Tests.
Barnard College	Required: SAT or ACT. Considered: SAT Subject Tests.
Bates College	Test optional. SAT, ACT, and SAT Subject Tests are considered if submitted.
Boston College	Required: SAT or ACT. Considered: SAT Subject Tests.
Boston University	Required: SAT or ACT. Considered: SAT Subject Tests. Accelerated medical and dental programs require Subject Tests in Chemistry and Math 2. A Subject Test in a foreign language is also recommended for applicants to these programs.
Bowdoin College	Test optional. SAT, ACT, and SAT Subject Tests are considered if submitted. Homeschooled applicants must submit both (A) and (B): (A) SAT or ACT (B) Two SAT Subject Tests.
Brown University	SAT with Essay OR ACT with Writing. Essays are required; Brown recommends, but does not require, the submission of two SAT Subject Tests of the student's choice. Liberal Medical Education Applicants should submit at least one science Subject Test.
Bucknell University	Required: SAT or ACT. Considered: SAT Subject Tests will be considered as "supplemental information."
California Institute of Technology	Required: SAT with Essay or ACT with Writing. Also Required: SAT Subject Test Math Level 2 and one SAT Subject Test in Biology (Ecological), Biology (Molecular), Chemistry, or Physics.
Carnegie Mellon University	Required: SAT or ACT. Recommended for various programs: SAT Subject Tests in math or science. Subject Test recommendations vary by program. College of Fine Arts programs, with the exception of Architecture, do not recommend Subject Tests. "Applicants won't be penalized if the cost of taking the SAT Subject Tests causes financial hardship and as a result, prohibits their submission."
Case Western Reserve University	Required: SAT or ACT. Optional essays and SAT Subject Tests are considered if submitted.
Claremont McKenna College	Required: SAT with Essay or ACT with Writing. Considered: SAT Subject Tests. Homeschooled students are required to submit two SAT Subject Tests, one of which must be math.
Colby College	Testing requirements satisfied with one of the following options: (1) SAT (2) ACT (3) Three Subject Tests.
College of William & Mary	Required: SAT or ACT. SAT Subject tests are optional. Homeschooled students are strongly encouraged to submit at least two SAT Subject Tests.
Colorado College	Testing requirements satisfied with one of the following options: (1) SAT (2) ACT (3) Three exams of the student's choice, including one verbal/writing and one quantitative, selected from the lists provided by Colorado College's website.
Columbia University	Required: SAT or ACT. Considered: SAT Subject Tests.
Connecticut College	Test Optional. Students may choose to submit the SAT, two Subject Tests, or the ACT if they wish. "If you submit multiple SAT Subject Tests, we will consider your two highest scores from two different tests."
The Cooper Union	Required: SAT or ACT. Additional Requirement: School of Engineering requires SAT Subject Tests in Math and either Physics or Chemistry.
Cornell University	Required: SAT or ACT. Additional requirement: one or two SAT Subject Tests; requirements vary by college.
Dartmouth College	Required: SAT with Essay or ACT with Writing. Recommended: two SAT Subject Tests.
Davidson College	Required: SAT or ACT. Considered: SAT Subject Tests.
Duke University	Required: SAT with Essay or ACT with Writing. Recommended: two SAT Subject Tests if submitting SAT. Subject Tests are considered if submitting ACT. "Applicants to the Pratt School of Engineering who take the SAT are strongly recommended to take one SAT Subject Test in Mathematics (level 1 or level 2)."
Emory University	Required: SAT or ACT. Recommended: "[SAT Subject Tests] are encouraged, but not required. Students are encouraged to submit SAT subject exam scores for academic areas of strength and/or interest."
Franklin Olin College of Engineering	Required: SAT with Essay or ACT with Writing. Considered: SAT Subject Tests.
George Washington University	Test optional. SAT, ACT, and SAT Subject Tests are considered if submitted. Two SAT Subject Tests are required in science and mathematics for the Seven Year BA/MD program.
Georgetown University	Georgetown requires the SAT or ACT and does not consider the essay from either test. Georgetown strongly recommends three Subject Tests. Applicants are required to submit all College Board and ACT scores.
Hamilton College	Testing requirements satisfied with one of the following options: (1) SAT (Essay optional) (2) ACT (Writing optional) (3) Quantitative, verbal, and writing tests from among SAT, ACT, SAT Subject Tests, and APs.

College	Policy
Harvard University	Required: SAT with Essay or ACT with Writing. Two SAT Subject Tests are “normally” required. “While we normally require two SAT Subject Tests, you may apply without them if the cost of taking the tests represents a financial hardship or if you prefer to have your application considered without them . . . If your first language is not English, a Subject Test in your first language may be less helpful.”
Harvey Mudd College	Required: SAT or ACT AND two SAT Subject Tests (Math Level 2 and one other).
Ithaca College	Test Optional. SAT, ACT, and SAT Subject Tests are all optional, but “you may submit your results as supplemental information.”
Johns Hopkins University	Required: SAT or ACT. Considered: Students may submit Subject Tests as a “way to demonstrate an academic strength . . . Engineering applicants are encouraged to submit Math Level 2 and one science.”
Kenyon College	Required: SAT or ACT. Considered: SAT Subject Tests and SAT or ACT essays will be considered as additional information.
Lafayette College	Required: SAT or ACT. Recommended: SAT Subject Tests.
Macalester College	Required: SAT or ACT. Considered: SAT Subject Tests.
Massachusetts Institute of Technology	Required: SAT or ACT AND two SAT Subject Tests—Math (Level 1 or Level 2) and a science. “We do not have a preference as to which” science and math you choose.
McGill University	SAT and 2 SAT Subject Tests (subject recommendations vary by department) OR ACT.
Middlebury College	Testing requirements satisfied with one of the following options: (1) SAT (2) ACT (3) Three Subject Tests.
New York University	Test requirements satisfied by fulfilling one of the following: (1) SAT (2) ACT (3) three Subject Tests (4) three AP exams (5) The International Baccalaureate Diploma (6) three IB higher-level exams (if a student is not an IB Diploma candidate). Students who choose to submit three SAT Subject Test, AP, or IB scores must submit one in literature or the humanities, one in math or science, and one of the student’s choice. Some programs have additional requirements.
Northwestern University	Required: SAT or ACT. Recommended: two SAT Subject Tests. Required: The Honors Program in Medical Education (HPME) and the Integrated Science Program (ISP) REQUIRE specific Subject Tests. Homeschooled students must take Math Level 1 or 2 and 2 additional Subject Tests in different subject areas.
Oberlin College	Required: SAT or ACT. Considered: SAT Subject Tests.
Occidental College	Required: SAT or ACT. Optional essays are recommended. Considered: SAT Subject Tests.
Pomona College	Required: SAT or ACT. Optional essays are recommended. SAT Subject Tests considered as part of a complete testing profile.
Pratt Institute	Required: SAT or ACT. Considered: SAT Subject Tests are optional for most applicants. Recommended: Bachelor of Architecture applicants are encouraged to submit Math Level 1 or Level 2.
Princeton University	Required: SAT with Essay or ACT with Writing. Recommended: Two SAT Subject Tests. Engineering candidates are advised to take a math Subject Test and either chemistry or physics.
Reed College	Required: SAT or ACT. Considered: SAT Subject Tests.
Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute	Required: SAT or ACT. SAT Subject Tests are optional. Applicants to the accelerated program must take the SAT with Essay and two SAT Subject Tests (1 math and 1 science) OR the ACT with Writing.
Rice University	Required: SAT and two SAT Subject Tests OR ACT. Rice recommends that Subject Tests be taken in subjects related to applicant’s proposed area of study.
Scripps College	Required: SAT or ACT. Considered: SAT Subject Tests. “While not required, two SAT Subject Tests are highly recommended for homeschooled applicants.”
Smith College	Test Optional. SAT, ACT, and SAT Subject Tests are all optional, but will be considered if submitted.
Stanford University	Required: SAT with Essay or ACT with Writing. ALL test scores from ALL dates must be submitted for the SAT and ACT. Recommended: “SAT Subject Tests are recommended but not required. Applicants who do not take SAT Subject Tests will not be at a disadvantage. Because SAT Subject Tests are optional, applicants may use Score Choice to selectively send their SAT Subject Test scores.”
Stevens Institute of Technology	Required: SAT or ACT. Subject Tests in Math (Level 1 or 2) and either Chemistry or Biology are required for the Accelerated Pre-Medicine Program. Musical or Visual Arts and Technology applicants may submit a portfolio in lieu of test scores.
Swarthmore College	Required: SAT or ACT. The optional essays will not be considered. Considered: SAT Subject Tests. Recommended: Prospective engineers are encouraged to take Math Level 2.
Tufts University	SAT and two SAT Subject Tests OR ACT. Engineering applicants submitting Subject Tests are advised to take math and either physics or chemistry. Students considering a major in mathematics or the sciences are advised to take math and a science test.
Union College	Test Optional except for Law and Public Policy, and Leadership in Medicine programs. The 6-year law program requires the SAT or ACT. The 8-year medical program requires either the ACT with Writing OR the SAT and two Subject Tests.
University of California, Berkeley	Required: SAT with Essay or ACT with Writing. Considered: Subject Tests. Recommended: College of Chemistry and College of Engineering recommend Math Level 2 and a science related to the applicant’s intended major.
University of California, Davis	Required: SAT with Essay or ACT with Writing. Considered: SAT Subject Tests.
University of California, Irvine	Required: SAT with Essay or ACT with Writing. Considered: Subject Tests. Recommended: School of Engineering, Department of Pharmaceutical Sciences, School of Physical Sciences, and Program in Public Health all have specific Subject Test recommendations.



College	Policy
University of California, Los Angeles	Required: SAT with Essay or ACT with Writing. Considered: Subject Tests. Recommended: School of Engineering and Applied Sciences recommends Math Level 2 and a science test related to the applicant's intended major.
University of California, Merced	Required: SAT with Essay or ACT with Writing. Considered: Subject Tests.
University of California, Riverside	Required: SAT with Essay or ACT with Writing. Considered: Subject Tests. Recommended: College of Natural and Agricultural Sciences and College of Engineering recommend Math Level 2 and either Chemistry or Physics.
University of California, San Diego	Required: SAT with Essay or ACT with Writing. Considered: Subject Tests. Recommended: Biological or physical science applicants and applicants to the School of Engineering should take Math Level 2 and a science Subject Test related to the applicant's intended major.
University of California, Santa Barbara	Required: SAT with Essay or ACT with Writing. Considered: Subject Tests. Recommended: Math Level 2 is recommended for College of Engineering applicants and College of Creative Studies applicants in math, physics, or computer science. In addition, physics, biology, chemistry, and biochemistry majors are encouraged to take the appropriate science Subject Test.
University of California, Santa Cruz	Required: SAT with Essay or ACT with Writing. Considered: Subject Tests.
University of Chicago	Required: SAT or ACT. Considered: "If you have done exceptionally well on a particular subject test and would like to show us, feel free to send us that score."
University of Delaware	Required: SAT or ACT. Recommended: Optional essays and 2 Subject Tests; STRONGLY recommended for the Honors Program.
University of Georgia	Required: SAT or ACT. Recommended: SAT Subject Tests.
University of Miami	Required: SAT with Essay or ACT with Writing. Essays are required but are used for placement only. Honors Program in Medicine and Honors Program in Biochemistry & Molecular Biology require minimum scores of 600 on a math Subject Test and on a science Subject Test.
University of Michigan	Required: SAT with Essay or ACT with Writing. Considered: SAT Subject Tests. Homeschooled students are required to submit SAT Subject Tests.
University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill	Required: SAT or ACT. Considered: "You may submit supplemental scores from AP, IB or SAT Subject tests if you think they are a good reflection of your mastery of the material."
University of Notre Dame	Required: SAT or ACT. Considered: "SAT Subject Tests, AP, and IB tests are only used in the application process if scores enhance an application."
University of Pennsylvania	Required: SAT or ACT. Recommended: Any two Subject Tests are recommended for arts, humanities, and social sciences applicants. STEM applicants are strongly encouraged to take Math Level 2 and a science Subject Test (Physics recommended for engineering applicants). Math Level 2 is recommended for business applicants. Nursing applicants are encouraged to submit a science Subject Test (preferably, Chemistry).
University of Rochester	Testing requirements satisfied with one of the following options: (1) SAT (2) ACT (3) two or more results from SAT Subject Tests, AP exams, or IB exams.
University of Southern California	Required: SAT or ACT. Considered: SAT Subject Tests. Homeschooled students are required to submit 3 SAT Subject Tests, one of which must be math.
University of Virginia	Required: SAT or ACT. Considered: SAT Subject Tests.
Vanderbilt University	Required: SAT or ACT. Considered: SAT Subject Tests are optional, but will be considered if submitted. School of Engineering applicants choosing to submit scores should strongly consider taking either Math Level 1 or Level 2. SAT Subject Tests are strongly recommended for homeschooled applicants.
Vassar College	Required: SAT or ACT. Considered: SAT Subject Tests. "Students opting not to send Subject Tests will not be penalized. However, SAT Subject Tests will be considered if submitted as part of a testing profile."
Wake Forest University	Test Optional. SAT, ACT, and SAT Subject Tests are all optional, but will be considered if submitted.
Washington University in St. Louis	Required: SAT or ACT. Considered: SAT Subject Tests. "We will only consider them if they strengthen your application."
Webb Institute	SAT or ACT with Writing AND Subject Tests in Math (Level 1 or Level 2) and either Chemistry or Physics.
Wellesley College	SAT or ACT with Writing. SAT Subject Tests are recommended. At least one quantitative Subject Test strongly recommended to students pursuing math or sciences.
Wesleyan University	Test Optional. SAT, ACT, and SAT Subject Tests are all optional, but will be considered if submitted. All entering first-year students must submit ACT or SAT and two SAT Subject Test scores after the conclusion of the admission process for academic counseling and placement.
Worcester Polytechnic Institute	Test Optional. SAT, ACT, and SAT Subject Tests are all optional, but will be considered if submitted.
Yale University	Required: SAT with Essay or ACT with Writing. Recommended: SAT Subject Tests.

## Advanced Placement Exams: Schedule

AP exams are not required by colleges and are used formally in admission only when test flexible (see page 7) options exist. Because AP exams are generally not reported on high school transcripts, it is usually up to the student to decide whether to self-report scores to colleges.

While most selective colleges have moved away from issuing course credit for high scores, they will still use scores for placement or to waive a prerequisite. Strong AP results can also help an applicant from a new or very large high school by providing a trusted point of reference. High AP exam scores are yet another predictor of college success.

2018 AP Testing Schedule		
Week 1	Morning Session: 8:00 am	Afternoon Session: 12:00 pm
Monday, May 7	Chemistry Spanish Literature and Culture	Psychology
Tuesday, May 8	Seminar Spanish Language and Culture	Art History Physics 1: Algebra-Based
Wednesday, May 9	English Literature and Composition	Japanese Language and Culture Physics 2: Algebra-Based
Thursday, May 10	United States Government and Politics	Chinese Language and Culture Environmental Science
Friday, May 11	German Language and Culture United States History	Computer Science Principles
Studio Art—last day for Coordinators to submit digital portfolios (by 8 pm EDT) and to gather 2-D Design and Drawing students for physical portfolio assembly.  Students should have forwarded their completed digital portfolios to teachers well before this date.		

2018 AP Testing Schedule			
Week 2	Morning Session: 8:00 am	Afternoon Session: 12:00 pm	Afternoon Session: 2:00 pm
Monday, May 14	Biology Music Theory	Physics C: Mechanics	Physics C: Electricity and Magnetism
Tuesday, May 15	Calculus AB Calculus BC	French Language and Culture Computer Science A	
Wednesday, May 16	English Language and Composition	Italian Language and Culture Macroeconomics	
Thursday, May 17	Comparative Government and Politics World History	Statistics	
Friday, May 18	Human Geography Microeconomics	European History Latin	

Coordinators are responsible for notifying students when and where to report for the exams. Early testing or testing at times other than those published by the College Board is not permitted under any circumstances.

### Late Testing

Late testing using an alternate form of the AP examination is allowed only under special circumstances and, depending on the circumstances, may require an additional fee. Makeup dates are typically scheduled over a three-day window approximately one week after the last regular AP day. Contact your school's AP Coordinator for additional information.

# Updates to the Advanced Placement Program

In recent years, College Board has increased efforts to encourage students—especially economically disadvantaged students—to enroll in AP courses. Based on their PSAT scores, students can be identified as having “AP potential” and feel confident enough to challenge themselves by taking an AP course, which mimics coursework at the college level. College Board hopes this confidence will encourage more students to imagine themselves applying to and attending college.

To support these efforts, College Board has also made great strides in aligning AP courses with first-year college-level course work. Over the past several years, College Board has been updating guidelines for AP courses and remaking exams to move away from tests that only require memorization and toward tests that measure a student’s conceptual understanding of a given subject. With AP Capstone, which combines AP Seminar and AP Research, students develop the research and argumentation skills that are so crucial for college success.

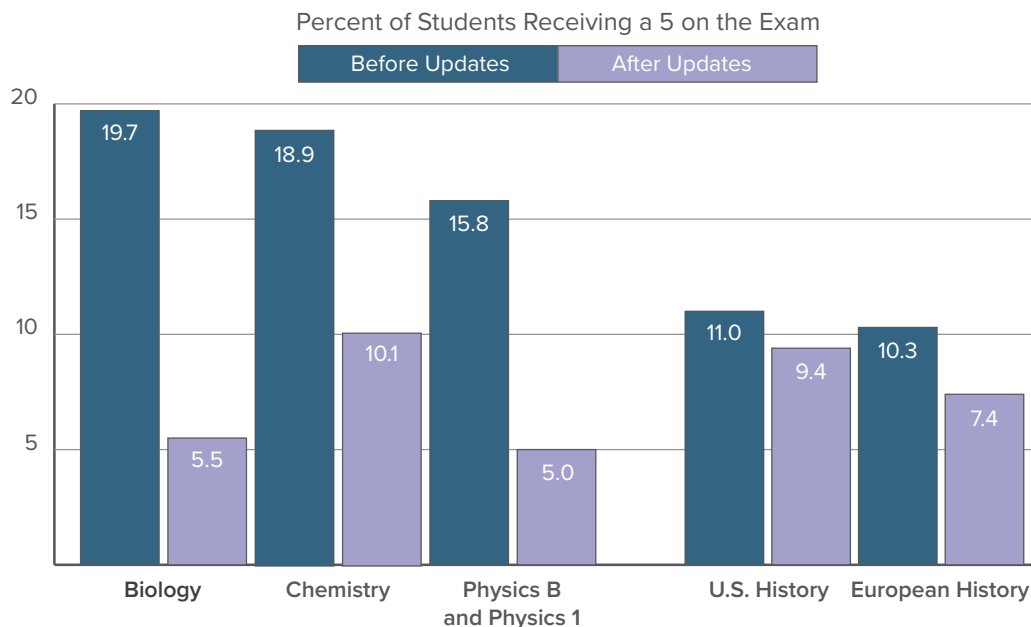
## AP Exam Scoring

Most AP exams offer a blend of multiple choice and free response questions. High school and college teachers gather once a year to agree on standards and score free response answers on a scale of 1 to 5. Each student’s free response scores are then combined with her multiple choice score to arrive at a final score on the following 5-point scale:

- 5 = extremely well qualified
- 4 = well qualified
- 3 = qualified
- 2 = possibly qualified
- 1 = no recommendation

As you’ll see from the sample of 2016 score distributions listed in the following pages, distributions and average scores vary from one AP exam to another. To some extent, percentages reflect students’ overall level of preparedness, but dramatic shifts in score distribution from one year to the next can correspond with major revisions to any given exam.

For example, when College Board overhauled AP Biology and AP Chemistry and split AP Physics B into two tests, score distributions changed dramatically. On the other hand, changes to emphasize understanding of large trends and analysis over rote memorization in humanities courses, like U.S. and European History, have resulted in less extreme changes in scores. The following graph shows the drop-off in percentage of students receiving the coveted 5 score after recent changes to the exams:



Source: College Board

# Popular AP Exams: English

## English

The AP English Language and Composition Exam tests a student’s ability to comprehend diverse texts, perform rhetorical analysis of texts in isolation, synthesize information from more than one text, and craft written argumentation.

In contrast, the AP English Literature and Composition Exam tests a student’s ability to analyze both prose and verse. Multiple choice questions on this exam assess whether the student can think critically about content, form, and style, while the free response invites the student to analyze and interpret texts.

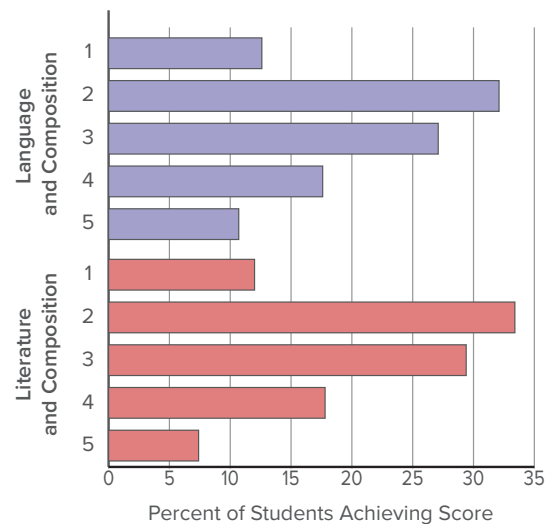
### What’s on the test?

#### English Language and Composition

- **Section 1:** Multiple choice, 52 to 55 questions  
1 hour, 45% of exam score  
Questions are based on excerpts from non-fiction texts
- **Section 2:** Free response, 3 questions  
2 hours, 15 minutes (includes 15-minute reading period)  
55% of exam score  
Students must address three prompts:
  - 1) synthesis,
  - 2) rhetorical analysis,
  - 3) argument.

#### English Literature and Composition

- **Section 1:** Multiple choice, 55 questions  
1 hour, 45% of exam score  
Questions are based on excerpts from drama, verse, and prose fiction
- **Section 2:** Free response, 3 free-response questions  
2 hours, 55% of exam score  
Essay prompts fall in the following categories:
  - 1) A literary analysis of a given poem
  - 2) A literary analysis of a given passage of prose fiction (this may include drama)
  - 3) An analysis that examines a specific concept, issue, or element in a work of literary merit selected by the student



### How do they differ from the Literature Subject Test?

The Literature Subject Test is most similar to the AP English Language and Composition and AP English Literature and Composition exams because it calls upon a student’s close-reading skills in the context of literature. On the Subject Test, students are asked to identify main themes and ideas, define words in context, understand literary terms, and recognize text structure, among other skills. The three tests overlap in that they all test reading comprehension. However, the reading level of texts that appear on AP exams is more in line with what the student would read at the college level. The Subject Test addresses what the student would have been learning in English courses throughout high school. The Subject Test is also simply multiple choice.

# Popular AP Exams: Calculus and Biology

## Calculus

Both Calculus AB and BC assess understanding of calculus concepts and the ability to apply them. What makes BC different from AB is that topics increase in scope. Together, the tests represent the level of work required from a student in a first-year college calculus course.

Overall, students are asked to demonstrate their ability to make connections among various representations—like graphical and numerical—of mathematics. To succeed on these exams, students should have the following foundations in addition to calculus: algebra, geometry, trigonometry, and elementary math. Calculus AB and BC were updated for the 2017 testing year, and both tests now place an increased emphasis on conceptual understanding. New topics on Calculus BC include the limit comparison test, absolute and conditional convergence, and the alternating series error bound.

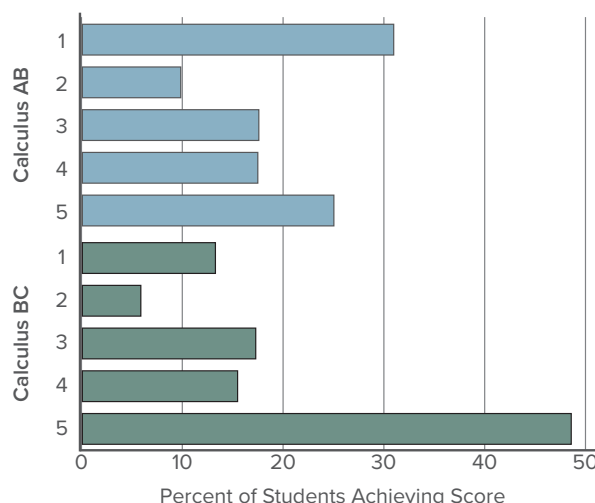
### What's on the test?

#### Calculus AB

- **Section 1:** Multiple choice, 45 questions  
1 hour 45 minutes, 50% of exam score
- **Section 2:** Free response, 6 questions  
1 hour 30 minutes, 50% of exam score

#### Calculus BC

- **Section 1:** Multiple choice, 45 questions  
1 hour 45 minutes, 50% of exam score
- **Section 2:** Free response, 6 questions  
1 hour 30 minutes, 50% of exam score



### How does Calculus AB differ from the Math Level 2 Subject Test?

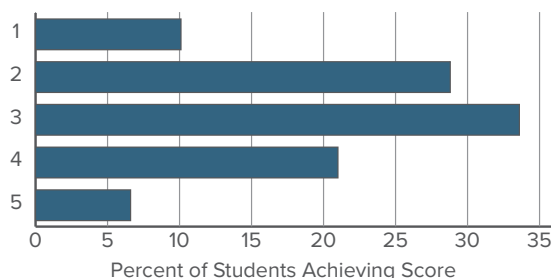
Students are increasingly taking AP Calculus AB as a combination of pre-calculus and introductory calculus. The AP Calculus AB test, however, tests a student's grasp of math topics that extend well beyond precalculus problems that would appear on the Math Level 2 Subject Test.

## Biology

The AP Biology exam is more focused on testing a student's ability to engage in science practices than his or her knowledge of biology. For example, students will need to know how to design a plan for collecting data, analyze the data, apply math principles, and connect concepts they've learned throughout the course. Students are allowed to use a four-function calculator (with square root) throughout the exam.

### What's on the test:

- **Section 1:** Multiple choice, 69 questions  
1 hour and 30 minutes, 50% of exam score
- **Section 2:** Grid-in, 6 questions  
1 hour and 30 minutes, 50% of exam score



### How does it differ from the Biology Subject Tests?

There are two SAT Biology Subject Tests: Ecological and Molecular. The former focuses on biological communities and populations, and the latter covers biochemistry, cellular structure, and processes. Since the AP exam assumes that the student has been exposed to information that would be taught in a first-year college biology course, the content is more challenging than that on the Subject Tests, which assume that the student has taken a year of high school biology.

## Upcoming Test Dates

You can register for the SAT or Subject Tests at [collegeboard.org](http://collegeboard.org). According to College Board, students taking the October administration of the SAT will have scores back in time to make early action, early decision, and regular decision deadlines.

SAT and Subject Tests			
2017 Test Dates	Registration	Late Registration	Multiple Choice Score Release <sup>††</sup>
August 26th	July 28th	August 16th	September 15th
October 7th	September 8th	September 27th	October 20th–26th
November 4th	October 6th	October 25th	November 17th–23rd
December 2nd	November 3rd	November 22nd	December 15th–21st
2018 Test Dates	Registration	Late Registration	Multiple Choice Score Release <sup>††</sup>
March 10th <sup>†</sup>	February 9th	February 28th	March 23rd–29th
May 5th	April 6th	April 25th	May 18th–24th
June 2nd	May 3rd	May 23rd	July 11th
August 25th*	July 27th*	August 15th*	October 6th*
October 6th*	September 7th*	September 26th*	October 19th*
November 3rd*	October 5th*	October 24th*	November 16th*
December 1st*	November 2nd*	November 21st*	December 14th*
2019 Test Dates	Registration	Late Registration	Multiple Choice Score Release <sup>††</sup>
March 9th**	February 8th*	February 27th*	March 22nd*
May 4th*	April 5th*	April 24th*	May 17th*
June 1st*	May 3rd*	May 22nd*	July 10th*

PSAT		PSAT 10	
2017 Test Dates	Registration	2018 Test Dates	Registration
Primary: Wednesday, October 11th Saturday: October 14th Alternate: Wednesday, October 25th	Test date registration is determined by high school.	Date determined by high school within testing window: February 26th–April 27th	Test date registration is determined by high school.

You can register for the ACT at [actstudent.org](http://actstudent.org).

ACT			
2017 Test Dates	Registration	Late Registration	Multiple Choice Score Release <sup>††</sup>
September 9th	August 4th	August 18th	September 19th
October 28th	September 22nd	October 6th	November 7th
December 9th	November 3rd	November 17th	December 19th
2018 Test Dates	Registration	Late Registration	Multiple Choice Score Release <sup>††</sup>
February 10th	January 10th	January 19th	February 20th
April 14th	March 9th	March 23rd	April 24th
June 9th	May 4th	May 18th	June 19th
July 14th	June 15th	June 22nd	July 24th
September 8th*	August 10th*	August 24th*	September 18th*
October 27th*	September 28th*	October 12th*	November 6th*
December 8th*	November 9th*	November 23rd*	December 18th*

\* Dates are announced as tentative or are Compass estimates based on current policies. Please check [collegeboard.org](http://collegeboard.org) or [ACT.org](http://ACT.org) for the latest information.

<sup>†</sup> No Subject Tests offered in March

<sup>††</sup> SAT Essay scores are available approximately five days after multiple choice scores are released. ACT Writing scores are available about two weeks after multiple choice scores are released.

SAT Sunday administrations fall on the Sunday immediately after the Saturday administrations. The Sunday administrations are available only for religious reasons. The ACT offers Sunday and Monday testing for religious reasons on a center-by-center basis. More information can be found at [actstudent.org](http://actstudent.org).

## 2017–2018 Testing Policies and Fees

Policy or Fee	SAT	ACT	Subject Tests
Dates Offered	March, May, June, August, October, November, December	February, April, June, July*, September, October, December	6/year: not all subjects on all dates, none in March
Sunday testing for religious reasons	Available	Available	Available
Standard fee	\$45 + \$12 for Essay	\$42.50 + \$16 for Essay	\$26 base, \$26 per Listening test, \$20 per non-listening test
Late Registration Fee	add \$28	add \$27.50	add \$28
Change test date	add \$28	add \$25	add \$28
Change test center	add \$28	add \$25	add \$28
Change test type	add \$28	n/a	add \$28
Standby / Waitlist	add \$46	add \$51	add \$46
Scores released	within 3 weeks	without Writing: 2 weeks online with Writing: 5–8 weeks	within 3 weeks
Copy of test available	October, March, May, August dates	December, April, June dates	n/a
Fee for copy of test	\$18	\$20	n/a
Score reports included with registration	4	4	4
Additional reports	\$12 each	\$12 each	\$12 each
Score Choice	per test date	per test date	per test subject
Cancel Scores	Until Wednesday after test	Until Thursday after test	Until Wednesday after test
Remove Scores	Not offered	Upon written request	Not offered
Calculator	Algebra functions OK TI-89 allowed	No algebra functions TI-89 not permitted	For Math Subject Tests only (not for Physics)
Essay verification	For \$55, Score Verification Service will confirm that essay was not mis-scanned.	For \$40, Score Verification Service will confirm that essay was not mis-scanned	n/a

\*The July ACT test date will not be available until 2018.

### SAT Waitlist Status

In some cases, you can request Waitlist Status if you miss the last registration deadline or if your paper registration has been returned unprocessed without enough time to resubmit it. Waitlist Status may be available beginning from the last registration deadline up until five days before test day. Although every effort will be made to seat applicants who request Waitlist Status, the College Board cannot guarantee that students will be admitted to the test center on test day. Those on the Waitlist are seated after all regularly registered test-takers have been admitted and if sufficient test materials, staff, and seating are available.

### ACT Standby Requests

If you miss the late deadline to register for a test date or to request a test date or test center change, you may choose to sign in to your ACT account to request and pay for standby testing. Standby requests must be submitted during a limited “Standby Request Period” before the test date. Requests cannot be accepted after the last date listed for each test date below.

## Score Choice

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The College Board and ACT have adopted policies, generally referred to as “Score Choice,” designed to give students some control over how SAT, Subject Test, and ACT scores are reported. Colleges, however, have the final say over what scores applicants should submit and how those scores will be used. Students should carefully review the score-reporting policy of each college to which they plan to apply. Unfortunately, these policies are myriad and often confusing, but your college counselor and Compass directors can help you make sense of the idiosyncrasies and provide guidance tailored to your particular situation.

### How does Score Choice work?

SAT scores and ACT scores are reported on a test date basis only. You cannot, for example, send your ACT Science and Math scores from one sitting without also including your Reading and English scores from that test date. Although Subject Tests are each only one hour long, they are treated as distinct exams. If, for example, you take Literature, U.S. History, and Math Level 2 on the same day, you do not have to submit the results of all three tests.

### Will only my best scores be sent to colleges?

For the SAT, Score Choice is an option; by default, all scores will be sent. You must request the selective score option when sending score reports. For the ACT, you will be asked to specify which test dates you want reported to each school. In either case, it is your responsibility to ensure that the colleges to which you apply are sent the correct scores in a timely manner.

### What scores should I send?

If a college considers only your SAT cumulative or ACT composite from a single sitting, you may want to include only the test date with your best overall score. If the college “superscores,” or mixes and matches individual sub-scores from different test dates—the official policy or unofficial practice of many colleges—then you will want to include the test dates that produce your highest “superscore.”

### Is it true that some colleges want me to send all of my scores?

Yes. Some colleges prefer to see a student’s entire testing history. We recommend that you discuss the specifics of your situation with your college counselor and with Compass, as score reporting policies vary. For example, Stanford and Yale are among the schools that require students to submit all of their scores, partly to discourage excessive testing. The UCs also mandate that students send all test scores, but their primary concern is to ensure that students do not inadvertently fail to submit any scores that might present them in a more favorable light. Conversely, Harvard and MIT both state that students are free to use Score Choice. Of the 360 colleges we’ve profiled in this guide, less than six percent require that all test scores be submitted, approximately 23% recommend that all scores be submitted, and approximately 94% accept Score Choice.

### Do these policies mean that students should test “early and often”?

While the College Board’s and ACT’s score reporting policies should remove some of the anxiety over retesting, they do not change the fact that most students will not peak on the exams until spring of junior year or fall of senior year. Taking an exam no more than two to three times is still the appropriate plan for most students. Most Compass students considering an exam as a “dry run” before January of junior year would be better served by a proctored practice test instead. The feedback our practice tests provide is more immediate and more detailed. Aside from the cost and time involved, unprepared performances can rattle a student’s confidence unnecessarily. Additionally, a student who takes the SAT or ACT numerous times could be forced to reveal this fact if he or she chooses to apply to any of the colleges that require students to submit their entire testing histories.



# Superscoring

Many in college admission talk about reading applications holistically and supportively; one way they can do this is by “superscoring” standardized tests. This means that if you take the SAT more than once, the admission office will take the highest section score across test administrations and assign you a new, higher total score. For instance, if you scored a 650 EBRW and 670 Math (Total 1320) in March and a 700 EBRW and 650 Math (Total 1350) in May, your superscore would be  $700 + 670 = 1370$ .

For the ACT, this process generally takes the form of taking your highest test scores across test administrations, but may not result in a new Composite score because colleges use test scores individually.

The following is a sampling of college superscore and Score Choice policies. For more schools and updates, please visit [compassprep.com/superscore-and-score-choice](https://compassprep.com/superscore-and-score-choice).

School	Superscore SAT	Superscore ACT	Score Choice Policy
Amherst College	●	●	☐
Boston University	●		☐
Brown University	●		☐
Colby College	●	●	☐
Colorado College	●		☐
Columbia University	●	●	☐
Cornell University	●	●	■
Dartmouth College	●		☐
Duke University*	●	●	☐
Georgetown University	●		■
Harvard University	●		☐
Harvey Mudd College	●	●	■
Indiana University, Bloomington	●	●	☐
Johns Hopkins University	●		☐
Lewis & Clark College	●		☐
Loyola University Chicago			☐
Massachusetts Institute of Technology	●	●	☐
Michigan State University			☐
Middlebury College	●	●	☐
Mills College	●		☐
New York University	●		☐
Northwestern University	●		☐
Occidental College	●		☐
Penn State University, University Park			☐
Princeton University	●		☐
Reed College	●		☐
San Francisco State University	●		☐
Smith College	●		☐
Stanford University	●	●	■
Tufts University	●	●	☐
University of Arizona			☐
University of California, Berkeley			■
University of Chicago†	●	●	☐
University of Michigan, Ann Arbor*	●	●	☐
University of Notre Dame	●		☐
University of Pennsylvania	●	●	☐
University of San Francisco	●	●	☐
University of Wisconsin, Madison			☐
Wellesley College			☐
Yale University**	●		■

Require all scores	■
Recommend all scores	☐
Accept score choice	☐

\* Duke University and University of Michigan consider the highest ACT Test Scores, but don't officially superscore.  
 † University of Chicago allows applicants to self-report test scores; official score reports are required only if the applicant is admitted and chooses to enroll.  
 \*\* Yale University "considers individual ACT subscores."

# 5 Steps to Securing Testing Accommodations

The College Board (the maker of the SAT, PSAT, SAT Subject Tests, and AP exams) and ACT (the maker of the ACT, PreACT, and Aspire) offer a variety of testing accommodations for students with disabilities. Commonly requested accommodations include varying increments of extended time, the use of a computer for typewritten essays, large-print test booklets for visually impaired students, and small group testing for students who have issues with distractibility or anxiety. The following table will help in navigating the testing accommodations request process.

## Deadlines for Submitting Requests for Accommodations

SAT & Subject Tests		PSAT & AP		ACT	
2017–2018 Test Dates	Documentation Deadlines	2017–2018 Test Dates	Documentation Deadlines	2017–2018 Test Dates	Documentation Deadlines
August 26, 2017	July 7, 2017	PSAT/NMSQT October 11, 14, and 25, 2017	August 22, 2017	September 9, 2017	August 18, 2017
October 7, 2017	August 18, 2017			October 28, 2017	October 6, 2017
November 4, 2017	September 15, 2017	PSAT 10 February 26–March 31, 2018	December 15, 2017	December 9, 2017	November 17, 2017
December 2, 2017	October 13, 2017			February 10, 2018	January 19, 2018
March 10, 2018	January 19, 2018	PSAT 10 April 1–April 27, 2018	February 19, 2018	April 14, 2018	March 23, 2018
May 5, 2018	March 16, 2018			June 9, 2018	May 18, 2018
June 2, 2018	April 13, 2018	AP Exams May 7–18, 2018	February 23, 2018	July 14, 2018	June 22, 2018

	College Board	ACT
<b>Step 1:</b> Determine if your student is eligible.	<p>To ensure approval for accommodations, a student's request should meet ALL of the following criteria:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The disability is documented by formal testing completed by a certified evaluator</li> <li>The disability directly affects performance on College Board's assessments</li> <li>The requested accommodations are specifically needed to perform to potential on College Board's assessments</li> </ul> <p>Students may be approved for accommodations on specific sections of the test rather than the entire test. Students who have a formal school-based plan, one that includes testing accommodations, will be automatically approved for similar accommodations on College Board exams.</p>	<p>A student is eligible for accommodations if:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The disability is diagnosed and documented by a credentialed professional</li> <li>The disability directly impacts performance on ACT's assessments</li> <li>Documentation for the disability includes information about current or prior accommodations made in similar settings, especially tests in school</li> </ul> <p>After reviewing these criteria, families should consider the two different accommodations packages: <b>National Extended Time</b> and <b>Special Testing</b>.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>National Extended Time</b> is most appropriate for students who require no more than 50% extended time on standardized tests.</li> <li><b>Special Testing</b> is a "catch-all" for any support request other than 50% extended time.</li> </ul>
<b>Step 2:</b> Gather the appropriate documentation.	<p>Eligibility for accommodations hinges on two kinds of documentation: (1) educational and/or neuropsychological testing completed by a school official or a private evaluator, and (2) a record of the requested accommodation(s) implemented by the school.</p> <p>College Board requires that all educational and/or neuropsychological testing be conducted within the last five years. Testing for visual disabilities must be conducted within two years of the request, while testing for other medical or psychiatric conditions must be completed within one year.</p>	<p>Eligibility for accommodations hinges on two types of documentation: (1) educational and/or neuropsychological testing completed by a school official or a private evaluator, and (2) a record of the requested accommodation(s) implemented by the school.</p> <p>ACT requires that all educational and/or neuropsychological testing be conducted within the last three years. Testing for visual impairments and psychiatric disorders must be completed within a year of the request.</p>

	College Board	ACT
<p><b>Step 3:</b> Submit a request.</p>	<p>The cornerstone of an accommodations request is the Student Eligibility Form (SEF). This form is essentially an abstract of the request that lists identifying information, a description of the disability, desired accommodations, and a summary of documentation. With SEF in hand, there are two ways a family can submit a request for accommodations:</p> <p><b>Option 1:</b> Submit the request online with the assistance of a designated SSD coordinator at the student’s school. In this case, the SSD coordinator completes half of the SEF without the student. If you already have a formal accommodations plan in school, your request will be greatly expedited by College Board.</p> <p><b>Option 2:</b> Independently submit the request without the assistance of the school. In this case, the family will need to complete the bulk of the SEF themselves.</p>	<p>In order to begin the approval process, ACT requires students to register for a test date online. While completing registration, families will be prompted to specify the type of accommodations for which they are applying: National Extended Time or Special Testing.</p> <p>When registration is finished, ACT will automatically email instructions explaining how the student should work in collaboration with a school administrator—also known as the Test Accommodations Coordinator (TAC)—to submit an online accommodations request. The online accommodations request system is called the Test Accessibility and Accommodations System (TAA).</p>
<p><b>Step 4:</b> Respond to decision letters or make appeals.</p>	<p><b>Unless “pre-approved by” SSD coordinators, accommodations requests will require up to 7 weeks for review.</b></p> <p><b>If accommodations are approved:</b> The family will be mailed an SSD Eligibility Letter that stipulates the specific accommodations approved for all College Board Tests. The letter will also include an SSD code, which the student must input while registering for all official test dates.</p> <p><b>If accommodations are denied:</b> The family may begin the appeal process when College Board denies accommodations or approves those that the family deems unsatisfactory. Usually, College Board requires additional testing or more specific evidence from a school or evaluator to permit the denied accommodation(s). It will take an additional <b>7 weeks</b> to process the appeal.</p> <p><b>NOTE:</b> Once a student’s request is approved, she may use the indicated accommodations for all College Board exams. She does not need to re-apply for accommodations for future test dates.</p>	<p><b>Accommodations requests will require up to 6 weeks for review.</b></p> <p>Once a decision has been reached regarding the request, the student’s Testing Accommodations Coordinator (TAC) will receive an electronic notification that explains why the request was approved or denied. TACs are required to contact students once decisions are listed in TAA.</p> <p><b>If accommodations are approved:</b>  <i>National Extended Time:</i> The TAC reviews the approved accommodations with the student. The TAC connects with the student’s test center and ensures that he is added to a special roster. After being added to the special roster, a student will receive an admission ticket that reflects the approved accommodations.  <i>Special Testing:</i> The TAC reviews the approved accommodations with the student and collaborates to make arrangements for testing within the applicable testing window.</p> <p><b>If accommodations are denied:</b> Depending on reasons for denial, a student may work with his TAC to submit additional documentation or apply for different accommodations in a “reconsideration request.”</p> <p><b>NOTE:</b> Even after a student has been approved for testing accommodations, he <b>MUST</b> notify his TAC after registering for EVERY subsequent exam date.</p>
<p><b>Step 5:</b> Use accommodation on test day.</p>	<p>After registering for an official College Board test with an SSD code, students can expect to have accommodations ready for them on test day. To err on the safe side, testers should bring their SSD Eligibility Letters to the test site.</p>	<p>A student with <i>National Extended Time</i> should print his registration ticket and bring it to the test center. Accommodations will be ready on test day. Students with <i>Special Testing</i> should have ironed out the logistics of exam day (date, time, room location, approved accommodations, etc.) with their TAC far in advance of the official test date. Many students with <i>Special Testing</i> will take the ACT at their home schools.</p>

## References and Resources

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### Testing Information

#### The College Board (SAT)

collegeboard.org  
(866) 756-7346 General Information  
(212) 713-8333 Students with Disabilities  
(888) 857-2477 Deaf or Hearing Impaired

#### American College Testing (ACT)

actstudent.org  
(319) 337-1000 General Information  
(319) 337-1270 Registration  
(319) 337-1313 Records (scores)  
(319) 337-1701 TDD  
(319) 337-1851 Extended Time  
(319) 337-1332 Special Testing

#### PSAT/NMSQT

collegereadiness.collegeboard.org/psat-nmsqt-psat-10  
(866) 433-7728 General Information  
(212) 713-8333 Students with Disabilities  
(609) 882-4118 Deaf or Hearing Impaired

#### The AP (Advanced Placement) Program

apstudent.collegeboard.org/home  
(888) 225-5427

#### International Baccalaureate (IB)

ibo.org

#### Compass Education Group

compassprep.com  
Although parts of the site are designed specifically for Compass students, we maintain a body of testing resources, admission links, and preparation tips for all students, parents, and counselors.

#### FairTest

##### (The National Center for Fair and Open Testing)

fairtest.org  
FairTest has an openly anti-testing agenda, but they also have useful information about test optional policies.

#### Peterson's College Admissions and Test Prep

petersons.com/college-search.aspx  
Free and fee-based test preparation, college search, and financial aid resources.

#### Number2.com

Free online test preparation. Its parent site, xap.com, also provides online application and essay tools.

#### KhanAcademy.org

In partnership with the College Board, Khan Academy provides free online test preparation for students taking the new SAT.

### Recommended Study, Reading, and Reference

*The Official SAT Study Guide* by the College Board. The only source of practice SAT exams written by the test makers.

*The Official Study Guide for all SAT Subject Tests* by the College Board. The only source of actual Subject Tests. A must for students trying to decide which Subject Tests to take.

*The Official ACT Prep Guide* by ACT. Basic test-taking strategies and a handful of sample ACTs (with essays) written by the test makers.

*Fair Game? The Use of Standardized Admissions Tests in Higher Education* by Rebecca Zwick. Zwick is a former ETS researcher and currently a professor at UCSB. A comprehensive and relatively objective assessment of the positive and negative influences of admission testing.

*Standardized Minds: The High Price of America's Testing Culture and What We Can Do to Change It* by Peter Sacks. With his subtitle, Sacks makes clear his position on testing. He lays out the case against high-stakes exams, and he supports colleges such as Bates, which has been test optional for more than 30 years.

*The Big Test: The Secret History of the American Meritocracy* by Nicholas Lemann. This book won't raise your test scores, but it does give a history of how psychometric testing and the SAT came to occupy such an important place in American education.

*College Admissions for the 21st Century* by Robert J. Sternberg. An overview of "Kaleidoscope" testing, a new initiative in undergraduate admissions in which open-ended questions give applicants and admission officers the chance to move beyond standardized tests.

*Choke: What the Secrets of the Brain Reveal About Getting It Right When You Have To* by Sian Beilock. Dr. Beilock, an expert on performance and brain science, reveals why athletes, students, and job applicants have lapses in performance when it matters. Test anxiety is comprehensively reviewed.

*SAT Wars: The Case for Test Optional College Admissions* by Joseph A. Soares. This book examines the predictive validity of college admission tests, alternative forms of assessment for college readiness, and the rationale behind the movement of schools going test optional.

## College Information

University of California Undergraduate Admissions  
admission.universityofcalifornia.edu

The California State University—Admissions  
(CSU Mentor)  
csumentor.edu

Independent California Colleges & Universities (AICCU)  
aiccu.edu

NCAA Eligibility Center  
ncaaeligibilitycenter.org  
One of your first stops if you plan to play varsity athletics in college.

Common Application  
commonapp.org  
Simplify your application process by taking a look at the common application used by over 500 colleges.

U.S. News and World Report Education Page  
usnews.com/education  
Whether you believe in rankings or think they are misleading, the U.S. News survey has an impact on how colleges, counselors, and students shape the debate. Lots of objective information apart from the “sound-bite” rankings.

Colleges That Change Lives  
ctcl.org  
A companion to the book of the same name. Profiles of quality schools that may not have the “prestige” or the cutthroat competitiveness of “name” schools.

National Survey of Student Engagement  
nsse.iub.edu  
The NSSE’s goal is to show the link between student engagement and a high-quality undergraduate experience. The site offers a searchable database of the scores earned by individual institutions.

CollegeConfidential.com  
There are articles from admission experts, but the forums are the real draw here. You will find discussions on almost every topic related to admission, college life, and standardized testing. College Confidential is one of the few forums to get enough traffic that questions almost always receive answers. Visitors should keep in mind that not all information is accurate and much is just supposition on the part of other students. But it’s also the place that you are most likely to find a cluster of testing experts.

StudyAbroad.com  
A site devoted entirely to studying abroad for a summer, a semester, or an entire college career.

Cappex  
cappex.com  
Connect with colleges, check your admission chances, and apply for scholarships by creating a free profile.

Washington Monthly College Guide  
www.washingtonmonthly.com/college-guide  
This college guide approaches rankings not by what colleges can do for you, but by what colleges are doing for the country. It also offers a ranking of Best-Bang-for-the-Buck Colleges.

College Navigator  
nces.ed.gov/collegenavigator/  
An online college search tool with exportable results.

College Reality Check  
collegerealitycheck.com  
Created by *The Chronicle of Higher Education*, this site allows users to compare up to 5 colleges at a time. The goal of the website is to share facts and figures that students, parents, and counselors should weigh in making decisions about college.

## Recommended Study, Reading, and Reference

The College Board’s *College Handbook*. This guide or others like it by Peterson’s, Barron’s, and Chronicle provide short write-ups of virtually every college in the country. Available in most counseling offices.

*Fiske Guide to Colleges* by Edward B. Fiske. A subjective guide to competitive colleges based on student interviews and research.

*The College Admissions Mystique* by Bill Mayher. A fair, low-pressure guide for handling the college admission process.

*The College Application Essay* by Sarah Myers McGinty. Available at store.collegeboard.org.

*The Gatekeepers: Inside the Admissions Process of a Premier College* by Jacques Steinberg. A fascinating read and a useful reminder that admission officers are human, too.

*Admission Matters: What Students and Parents Need to Know About Getting Into College* by Sally P. Springer, Jon Reider, and Joyce Vining-Morgan. A guide to college admission that details the competitiveness of college applications, qualities of a good application, and steps for preparing for the college admissions tests.

*What You Don’t Know Can Keep You Out of College: A Top Consultant Explains the 13 Fatal Application Mistakes and Why Character Is the Key to College Admissions* by Don Dunbar with G.F. Lichtenberg. In this book, Dunbar explains what to do, and what not to do, to navigate the college admission process successfully.

*The Early Admissions Game: Joining the Elite* by Christopher Avery, Andrew Fairbanks, and Richard Zeckhauser. A study of Early Action and Early Decision programs at elite schools and the consequences of such programs.

*College Unranked* by The Education Conservancy. Follows through on the Conservancy’s mission to “reclaim college admissions as an educational process.” (educationconservancy.org)

*Where You Go Is Not Who You’ll Be: An Antidote to the College Admissions Mania* by Frank Bruni. Bruni is a bestselling author and columnist for the *New York Times* who argues that the Ivy League does not have a monopoly on prestigious careers post-college. Bruni’s thesis: a student’s efforts in and out of the classroom determine future success, not a diploma.

*Excellent Sheep: The Miseducation of the American Elite and the Way to a Meaningful Life* by William Deresiewicz. Former Yale professor William Deresiewicz argues that the emphasis of undergraduate education should shift from the inculcation of practical (“technocratic”) skills to the cultivation of self-awareness and self-reflection among students.

*College (Un)bound: The Future of Higher Education and What It Means for Students* by Jeffrey J. Selingo. Selingo is a contributing editor for *The Chronicle of Higher Education*. In this book, Selingo begins by criticizing the existing state of college education, which leaves students unprepared for a rapidly evolving job market. Selingo believes that technology, including online courses, learning software, and the unbundling of traditional degrees will create a new era of social mobility and opportunity.

*Harvard Schmarvard* by Jay Mathews. A Harvard graduate and education reporter, Mathews attempts to show parents and students that rankings and a “name” school aren’t everything. Useful admission advice and profiles of excellent, but less famous, colleges.

*Campus Visits & College Interviews* by Zola Dincin Schneider. A College Board publication on how to get the most from your college tours and talks with college representatives, as well as everything you should know about the interview process.

*Letting Go: A Parents’ Guide to Understanding the College Years* by Karen Coburn and Madge Treeger. A guide for parents coping with sending a child off to college.

*The Shape of the River* by William G. Bowen and Derek Bok. Bowen and Bok are former presidents of Princeton and Harvard, respectively. They take a probing and comprehensive look at the use of affirmative action in college admission.

*Admission* by Jean Korelitz. A novelist’s entertaining take on an admission officer’s life at Princeton University and the protagonist’s attempt to “build a better fruit basket.”

*College: What It Was, Is, and Should Be* by Andrew Delbanco. In this historical narrative, Delbanco traces the rise of college and describes the unique strengths of America’s colleges. He warns that college education is becoming a privilege reserved for the relatively rich and demonstrates why the promise of American democracy depends upon making such education available to as many young people as possible.

## Financial Aid

### U.S. Department of Education

[studentaid.ed.gov](http://studentaid.ed.gov)

The Student Guide gives information on grants, loans, and work-study programs.

### FAFSA

[fafsa.ed.gov](http://fafsa.ed.gov)

A required stop for students applying for aid.

### CSS/Financial Aid Profile

Some colleges require this form for awarding nongovernment aid. You can find and complete the form online at [student.collegeboard.org/css-financial-aid-profile](http://student.collegeboard.org/css-financial-aid-profile).

### Finaid.org and FastWeb.com

Two well-respected sites for scholarship and financial aid information.

### California Student Aid Commission

[www.csac.ca.gov/](http://www.csac.ca.gov/)

A California resource on financial aid, including the Cal Grant program.

## Learning Differences

### College Board Services for Students with Disabilities (SSD)

[collegeboard.org/students-with-disabilities](http://collegeboard.org/students-with-disabilities)

Information on receiving special accommodations for the PSAT, SAT, or AP.

### ACT Services for Students with Disabilities

[actstudent.org/regist/disab](http://actstudent.org/regist/disab)

### Association on Higher Education and Disability (AHEAD)

[ahead.org](http://ahead.org)

Professional association committed to students with disabilities (physical and learning) participating fully in the college experience.

### LD Online

[ldonline.org](http://ldonline.org)

Resources and links for a wide array of learning disabilities and attention deficit disorder.

### International Dyslexia Association

[dyslexiaida.org](http://dyslexiaida.org)

Information on reading disorders (especially dyslexia) and links to helpful resources for diagnosis and remediation.

### Association of Educational Therapists

[aetonline.org](http://aetonline.org)

Information on the practice of education therapy, how it differs from tutoring, and links to qualified educational therapists who specialize in various interventions for learning disabilities.

### Association of University Centers on Disabilities

[aucd.org](http://aucd.org)

### Recommended Study, Reading, and Reference

*K&W Guide to Colleges for Students With Learning Disabilities or Attention Deficit Disorder* by Marybeth Kravets and Imy Wax.

*Smart but Scattered* by Peg Dawson. The definitive resource for helping students cope with executive function difficulties. Strategies for school are addressed in detail.

*Proust and the Squid* by Maryanne Wolf. A dense but deeply informative book on how the brain processes text and the root causes of reading disorders. Wolf examines how the “reading brain” of the child has evolved over the last several hundred years.

# Diagnostic Testing: Best Practices

The best test preparation always includes a proper practice test regimen. While any exposure to test content is better than nothing, there are some important aspects of practice testing that students should experience to derive maximum value from their effort:

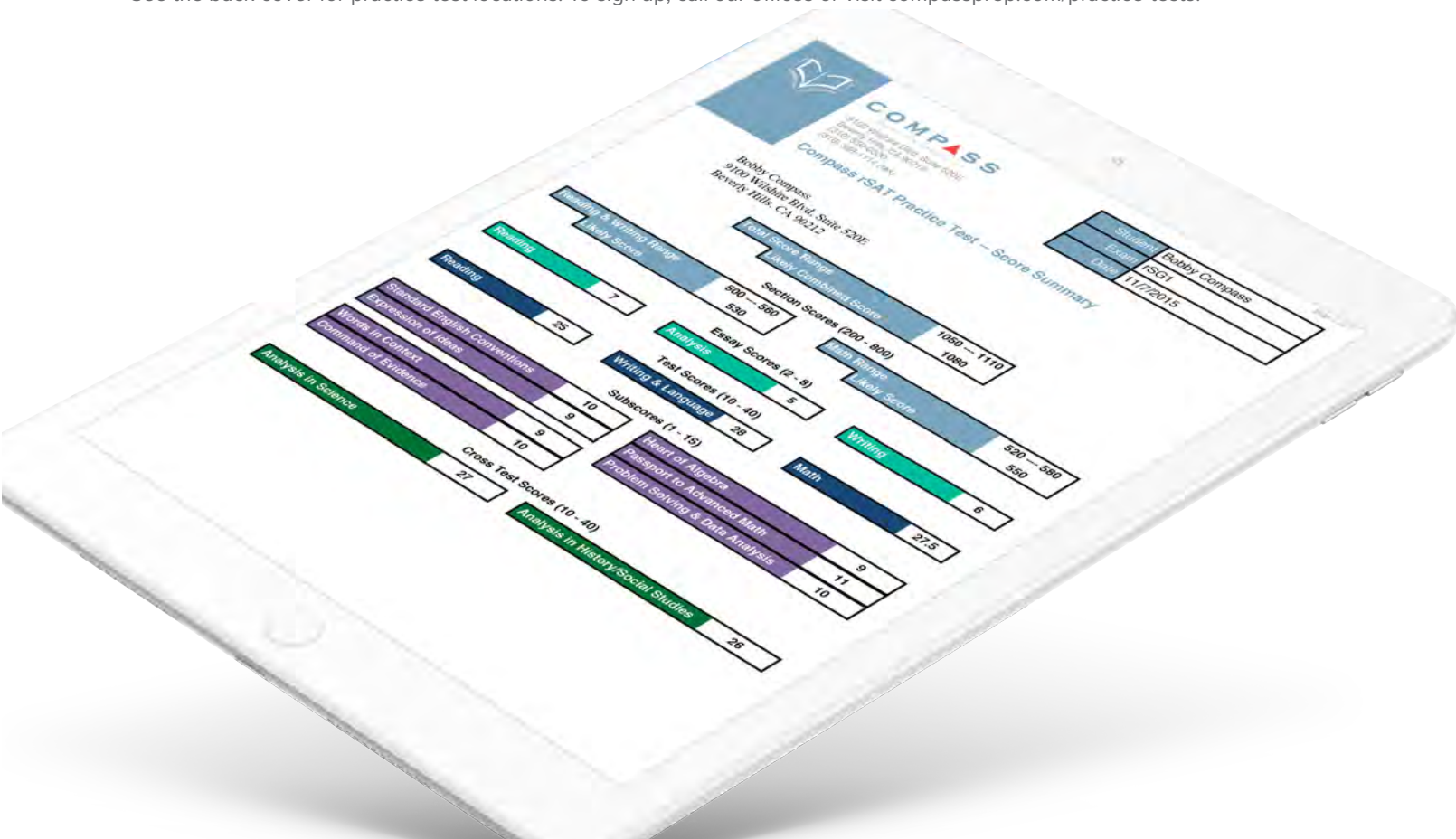
1. Tests should be full-length exams published by the actual test makers
2. Tests should be proctored under strict timing and testing conditions
3. Approved testing accommodations should be provided
4. Detailed diagnostic reports should be produced and then carefully reviewed
5. Subsequent diagnostic testing should occur at regular intervals throughout the test preparation process

Compass hosts proctored practice test sessions every weekend at a variety of locations throughout Northern and Southern California. We also offer online proctored practice test sessions. Our practice tests provide detailed portraits of testing strengths and weaknesses, allowing us to individualize our initial recommendations for students and make course corrections for our active clients.

Our most successful students tend to be those who are diligent with practice tests, completing 3–5 full-length tests over the course of several months and carefully reviewing their diagnostic reports with their tutors.

We offer practice tests and detailed diagnostic score reports for the ACT, the SAT, the PSAT, all SAT Subject Tests, and the high school admission tests (HSPT, ISEE, SSAT).

See the back cover for practice test locations. To sign up, call our offices or visit [compassprep.com/practice-tests](http://compassprep.com/practice-tests).



## Online Tutoring with Compass

Over the last decade, Compass and the global market inevitably discovered one another and have been brought together by technology. Online tutoring is now commonplace and is a viable and necessary solution for more and more families.

### BENEFITS OF ONLINE TUTORING

**FLEXIBILITY:** Online tutoring can accommodate the schedules of the busiest students. Our online tutors are accustomed to teaching at all hours across a variety of time zones. Online tutoring provides an unparalleled level of convenience.

**WORLD CLASS TUTORS:** Our elite team of online tutors is handpicked from our established base of in-person instructors. Online tutors have proven track records of success at Compass, and our directors take great care to make the perfect tutor match.

**REMOTELY PROCTORED TESTS:** Students can sign up for regular online proctored practice test sessions. We use video conferencing software to allow our live proctor to monitor students as they practice the way they will take the real test: with paper and pencil. See the following page for more information.

### HOW IT WORKS



#### VIDEO CONFERENCING AND INTERACTIVE WHITEBOARD

Video conferencing software connects you to our tutors through computers or tablets. As you chat with your tutor, you feel like you're in the same room together even when you're thousands of miles apart. A shared whiteboard allows you to work on problems together in real-time.



#### STATE-OF-THE-ART DOCUMENT CAMERA

Each of our online programs includes a high-definition document camera for you to keep. Combined with video conferencing software, the camera is a powerful tool for your tutor to closely track your work in real-time.



#### INDUSTRY-LEADING CURRICULUM

Our SAT and ACT course materials are designed to be explored with the guidance of Compass tutors. From strategies to question sets, our course books provide material for lessons and homework assignments. These materials are exclusively available to our clients.



# Online Practice Tests

We recommend that students take practice tests under conditions as close to those of the real test as possible. Very rarely does a student's home provide a serious testing environment. It can be a challenge for students to administer practice tests to themselves—phones ring, siblings distract, and kitchen timers can be ignored for the sake of finishing one last problem. Though Compass offers a wide range of testing opportunities, sometimes students simply have to take the test at home. In these cases, we have two options to help improve the in-home testing experience.

## ONLINE PROCTORED TESTS

Every weekend, Compass offers a variety of online testing sessions with a live proctor. Through video conferencing software, we create a virtual classroom where students are both timed and monitored by a proctor. Before the test, Compass will mail students a paper copy of the test booklet and answer sheet. On the day of the test, a student clicks the link in her confirmation email to be prompted to join the testing session. Once a student has finished her test, she can simply take a photograph of the answer sheet and email it to [testing@compassprep.com](mailto:testing@compassprep.com). All essays are graded by our trained readers. Students and their parents are notified when scores become available a few days after the session.

Our testing schedule offers morning test sessions for both west and east coast testers.

## VIDEO TESTING

When students can't make an in person or online test session, they can always turn to our proctor videos. These are available at: [compassprep.com/testing-videos](https://compassprep.com/testing-videos) In these videos, a proctor will read instructions and offer 5-minute warnings; an on-screen timer will count down remaining time in each section. We currently support the following tests:

- ACT
- ACT with 50% Extra Time Accommodation
- PSAT
- SAT
- SAT with 50% Extra Time Accommodation
- SAT Subject Test

These videos take the guesswork out of self-proctoring at home.



[compassprep.com/testing-videos](https://compassprep.com/testing-videos)

## The Compass Team

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Compass directors are experts in the field of college admission testing rather than the sales associates found at many test prep companies. Compass directors have years of tutoring experience of their own as well as in-depth knowledge of how to handcraft and support successful test preparation programs. While we invest heavily in providing parents, students, and counselors with the resources to make good admission testing decisions, it is the individualized guidance of our directors and their insightful collaboration with our clients that allow us to achieve consistently stellar outcomes.



**Sara Dalhed**  
**Managing Director**  
**Southern California**

Sara's two decades of test prep experience truly shine as she leads our talented and dedicated Southern California team of directors. Sara is widely known by college counselors for her integrity and dependability in providing the highest level of care and delivering successful outcomes for our clients.



**Lia Lackey**  
**Managing Director**  
**Northern California**

Lia began SAT and ACT tutoring while completing her B.A. in Architecture at UC Berkeley. She also worked with the Sacramento County Office of Education to develop science achievement exams for California high schools. Throughout her career in management and advising, Lia has maintained a passion for education.



**Torsten Sannar**  
**Senior Director**  
**Southern California**

Torsten holds a Ph.D. in Theater History from UC Santa Barbara and a B.A. from Claremont McKenna College. He has more than 20 years of test preparation experience and enjoys drawing upon his creativity to help families navigate the admission landscape. Torsten helps oversee the Southern California team of directors.



**Karen Schuster**  
**Senior Director Emeritus**  
**Northern California**

Karen has more than 20 years of experience in test prep. Masters Degrees in Biology and International Relations, paired with her non-traditional background in education, make her a unique asset to Compass, where she now—even in retirement—provides support for independent counselors.



**Matt Steiner**  
**Senior Director of Outreach**

Prior to joining Compass, Matt obtained an M.A. in Social Sciences from the University of Chicago. He has a decade of experience in the field of test preparation, working as both an instructor and administrator for multiple tutoring firms in Los Angeles. In his role as the Senior Director of Outreach, Matt enjoys building partnerships with schools.



**Ash Kramer**  
**Senior Director of Product and Curriculum**

With a career in test prep and higher education that began in the late 1990s, Ash has held a variety of educational roles from tutor to administrator. She is currently a Ph.D. candidate in English at the University of Southern California. At Compass, she is lucky to lead a brilliant team creating the very best learning materials for students and their tutors.



**Sean Angus**  
**Director**  
**Southern California**

Sean graduated from Tufts University in Boston with degrees in English and Entrepreneurial Leadership Studies. While at Tufts, Sean played lacrosse and wrote for the school newspaper. He tutored all levels of high school math and the SAT, ACT, and Subject Tests for 10 years.



**Vibhuti Bhagwati**  
**Accountant and Bookkeeper**

Vibhuti earned her B.A. in Commerce from the University of Mumbai. She has worked in finance for more than 10 years and has been a part of the Compass team for seven. She handles all bookkeeping and accounting responsibilities for both the Northern and Southern California offices.



**Ravi Bhatia**  
**Director**  
**Southern California**

Ravi received a B.A. in Political Science and Film & Media Studies from UC Santa Barbara. Prior to joining the director team, Ravi tutored more than 100 Compass students. He also taught SAT classes for first-generation students in LA and San Diego and served as a volunteer reader of college admission essays for local nonprofit 826LA.



**Kari Brashinger**  
**Administrative Coordinator**  
**Southern California**

Kari relocated to Los Angeles from Chicago and joined Compass in 2011. Kari is an integral member of the operations team, and when she is not helping parents and students, she is pursuing her degree in Education at California State University, Los Angeles.



**Christine Carey**  
**Program Manager**  
**Northern California**

Christine received a B.A. in Film, Theater and Communication Arts, and later an M.B.A., from the University of New Orleans. Originally a verbal tutor, Christine transitioned to a full-time role. She now coordinates tutors, families, and directors to ensure students can realize their test-day potential.



**Tucker Cobey**  
**Manager of Practice Testing**  
**Southern California**

In addition to seven years of experience in the education sector, Tucker holds a B.A. in Western Classics from St. John's College Annapolis and an M.A. in Eastern Classics from St. John's College Santa Fe. A former Compass tutor, he now coordinates all of Compass' practice test administrations.



**Megan Drennan**  
**Quality Assurance Analyst**  
**Southern California**

Megan holds a B.A. and M.A. in Anthropology/Archaeology and has had the opportunity to participate in digs worldwide. She now brings her attention to detail to her role as QA Analyst, helping to ensure a quality software experience for Compass employees and students.



**Ryan Kenney**  
**Software Developer**

Ryan discovered his passion for software development and earned a degree in computer science. After graduating, Ryan went on to build various online learning and training management software systems before bringing his experience to Compass.



**Arisa Kim**  
**Director of Instruction**  
**Southern California**

Arisa has almost 20 years of experience in the field of test preparation. She graduated *cum laude* from Pomona College and received her J.D. from UC Berkeley. Currently, she serves as Compass' Director of Instruction, overseeing the tutor hiring process and providing support after training.



**Bryan Kramer**  
**Director of Operations**  
**Southern California**

Bryan holds a B.A. in Cinema and Television from the University of Southern California. Before joining Compass, he was an account manager for luxury, boutique hotels in Los Angeles. At Compass, he provides critical logistical support for tutors and directors, ensuring that all programs run smoothly.



**Jon Lee**  
**Director**  
**Southern California**

Jon began his test preparation career in 2002. He holds a Master of Music degree from CSU, Los Angeles, where he was also a professor. Prior to joining Compass, Jon spent five years overseeing tutors for the Guardian Scholars Program at LA City College, supporting students who are current and former foster youth.



**Sarah Masonwood**  
**Administrative Coordinator**  
**Northern California**

Sarah graduated with a B.A. in Sociology and Anthropology from the University of Redlands. Before joining Compass, she built her administrative and customer service skills in the travel industry. As part of the Compass operations team, she enjoys working with parents, tutors and directors to support student programs.



**Sue McLaughlin**  
**Director of Recruiting and**  
**Staff Development**  
**Northern California**

Sue graduated from Brown University with a B.A. in Modern Culture and Media. With a background in training and a passion for education, Sue was thrilled to join Compass as a verbal tutor. Now, Sue oversees one-on-one programs and enjoys the opportunity to work with both families and tutors.



**Christopher O'Sullivan**  
**Director of School**  
**Partnerships and Events**  
**Northern California**

After receiving his M.A. in History, Chris joined Compass as a tutor and an instructor of classroom programs. Chris now brings his boundless energy and years of education experience to the role of Director of School Partnerships and Events for the Northern California office.



**Hillary Sciarillo**  
**Director**  
**Northern California**

After earning degrees in English Literature and Spanish from Drew University, Hillary started working as a verbal tutor in 2003. She brings years of experience teaching in the Marin County school system and enjoys working corroboratively with families to create personalized, one-on-one programs.



**Meryl Seward**  
**Program Manager**  
**Northern California**

Meryl received degrees in Environmental Analysis and Studio Art from Pomona College. Meryl has tutored hundreds of Compass students and has trained our tutors. As Program Manager, she ensures clients are thoughtfully paired with tutors and experience the highest level of service.



**Amber Stiles**  
**Director**  
**Southern California**

Amber most recently lived in Tokyo, where she taught English at Komazawa University. After earning a B.A. in Russian Studies from San Francisco State University, she tutored for AmeriCorps and taught ESL in Spain, France, and Japan. She finds satisfaction in helping students reach their goals.



**Chris Teare**  
**Director**  
**Northern California**

Chris earned his B.A. in Modern Literature with an emphasis in Spanish from UC Santa Cruz. He worked in education for many years before earning his Ed.M. in Educational Neuroscience from the Harvard Graduate School of Education. Before becoming a Director, he served as a Compass verbal tutor.



**Corey Weidenhammer**  
**Software Lead**

Corey obtained his B.S. in Computer Science and B.A. in Psychology from the University of Maryland, Baltimore County, where he also served as a teaching assistant and tutor. He has been building software and leading development teams for over 10 years. At Compass, he manages all aspects of software development.



**Meghan Williams**  
**Director of Operations**  
**Northern California**

Meghan graduated with a B.A. in History from UC Berkeley. Meghan joined Compass as a tutor and quickly became an integral part of the team. She now works closely with Compass clients, tutors, and directors as the Director of Operations.



**Laryssa Wirstiuk**  
**Product/Marketing Assistant**  
**Southern California**

A published writer, Laryssa was formerly a writing instructor at Rutgers University. She has a B.A. in Writing from Loyola University Maryland and an M.F.A. in Creative Writing from the University of Maryland, College Park. At Compass, Laryssa supports marketing efforts and helps maintain accuracy of testing resources.

# Compass Tutors

## Number of U.S. News Top 25 Universities Represented by Compass Tutors: 25

Every company claims to have the best tutors. Compass is a company of tutors—an environment carefully constructed to be the pinnacle of the profession. Positions at Compass are coveted, with a competitive selection process intentionally resembling admission at the highly selective colleges from which our tutors earned their degrees. Compass tutors enjoy an industry-leading level of ongoing support and professional development opportunities. We are as responsive to their needs as we are to those of our students. Below is a sample of our outstanding team of tutors.

**Adrian W.**

University of Southern California, B.A. Music  
University of Southern California, M.A. Music

**Ajarae K.**

Harvard University, B.A. Biological Anthropology

**Alexandra B.**

Boston University, B.A. English

**Alison D.**

Haverford College, B.A. Philosophy  
University of California, Los Angeles, Ph.D. Culture and Performance

**Amir R.**

University of California, Berkeley, B.S. Civil Engineering

**Andrew M.**

Oberlin College, B.A. French and B. Music Composition

**Ashling Q.**

University of California, Berkeley, B.A. Integrative Biology

**Ben Z.**

Duke University, B.A. Theater, History, and Film

**Brian R.**

Cornell University, B.A. Economics and Philosophy

**Carolyn C.**

Stanford University, B.A. Music  
Stanford University, M.A. Modern Thought and Literature  
University of California, San Diego, Ph.D. Music

**Charlotte W.**

Vassar College, B.A. Theater  
University of California, Los Angeles, M.F.A. Screenwriting

**Christina C.**

University of California, Berkeley, B.S. Molecular Environmental Biology

**Chuti T.**

Northwestern University, B.A. Political Science and Economics

**Conor L.**

Dartmouth College, B.A. Psychology

**Cristina C.**

Vassar College, B.A. Biopsychology

**Daniel K.**

Hampshire College, B.A. Environmental Health Science and Policy  
University of California, Irvine, Ph.D. Environmental Health Science and Policy

**Daniel M.**

Cornell University, B.A. English Literature

**Daniel R.**

Sonoma State University, B.A. Liberal Studies and English  
New York University, M.A. Humanities and Social Thought  
Pomona College, Ph.D. English and Cultural Studies

**Daniella C.**

Duke University, B.S. Neuroscience

**David P.**

Stanford University, B.A. Human Biology

**Debbie F.**

Brown University, B.A. Theater Arts and English

**Devinder A.**

Tufts University, B.S. Civil Engineering

**Dulcie H.**

Pomona College, B.A. Geology and Physics  
Stanford University, Ph.D. Geophysics

**Eric B.**

Princeton University, B.A. Music  
University of Chicago, Ph.D. Music

**Erica L.**

Yale University, B.A. Archaeological Studies  
Harvard University, M.A. Anthropology

**George Y.**

Stanford University, B.A. History and Economics  
University of California, Los Angeles, M.B.A.

**Grant H.**

University of California, Berkeley, B.A. English and Art History

**Greg K.**

Columbia University, B.A. Music and Russian Literature

Percentage of Compass Tutors with Graduate Work or Degrees: 63%

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## Number of Ivy League Graduates Rejected Each Year by Compass: 115

**Hilah L.**

Boston University, B.A. Art History  
Columbia University, M.A. History of Art

**Hilary F.**

Northwestern University, B.A. Theater

**Jackie C.**

University of Southern California, B.A. Chemical Engineering

**James H.**

University of Cambridge, B.A. Archaeology and Anthropology

**Jennifer M.**

Wellesley College, B.A. Music and Italian

**Justin B.**

University of Maryland, B.A. Journalism and Government and Politics  
University of California, Davis, J.D.

**Karim E.**

Yale University, B.A. Economics

**Kate C.**

University of Paris, Sorbonne, B.A. Philosophy  
University of Paris, Sorbonne, M.A. Linguistics

**Katharine S.**

Yale University, B.A. History

**Kavish G.**

Northwestern University, B.A. Biological Sciences

**Kelsey F.**

Columbia University, B.A. Chemical Engineering

**Kyung P.**

Stanford University, B.S. Biomechanical Engineering  
University of Washington, Ph.D. Bioengineering

**Lisa G.**

Stanford University, B.A. Psychology

**Malika W.**

Stanford University, B.A. Drama and Urban Studies  
University of Southern California, M.F.A. Acting

**Matt M.**

Princeton University, B.A. English, Film, and Literature

**Megan H.**

Hendrix College, B.A. English and Chemistry  
University of Virginia, M.A. English  
University of Southern California, Ph.D. English (in progress)

**Muffy M.**

Brown University, B.A. Anthropology and American Studies  
University of Stockholm, M.A. Social Studies

**Noa B.**

University of California, Berkeley, B.A. Rhetoric  
University of California, Los Angeles, Ph.D. Comparative Literature

**Rachel N.**

University of California, Santa Cruz, B.A. History  
University of St. Andrews, M.A. Ancient History

**Regan P.**

Columbia University, B.A. English  
University of Iowa, M.F.A. Creative Writing

**Robert H.**

Yale University, B.A. English  
University of California, Los Angeles, J.D.

**Russel H.**

Duke University, B.A. English

**Sara Joe W.**

Harvard University, B.A. Sociology  
University of Southern California, M.F.A. Film Production

**Sarah D.**

Clemson University, B.A. English and Education  
Clemson University, M.A. English  
The Royal Holloway, University of London, Ph.D. English

**Sarah K.**

University of Connecticut, B.A. Applied Mathematics

**Sean W.**

Wesleyan University, B.A. Neuroscience and Behavior  
Wesleyan University, M.A. Neuroscience

**Stephanie H.**

University of Southern California, B.A. Neuroscience

**Terri J.**

Meredith College, B.S. Mathematics  
University of California, Los Angeles, Ph.D. Statistics (in progress)

**Tohoru M.**

Massachusetts Institute of Technology, B.S. Chemical Engineering

**Van T.**

Stanford, B.A. English

Percentage of Applicants who are Hired: < 5%

## Compass Speakers

Compass occupies a unique space within the test prep and academic communities. We have earned an exceptionally high level of trust by school leaders. We are the first—and usually the only—test preparation company invited by elite schools to provide advising seminars for parents, practice testing for students, and professional development events for faculty and administration.

### WHAT DO SCHOOL COUNSELORS SAY ABOUT COMPASS?

#### Lick-Wilmerding

*"I trust only Compass to speak to the sophisticated audience at my school about college admission tests and preparation. I love seeing the looks on their faces when they hear what Compass has to say."*

– Krista Klein,  
Co-Director of College Counseling

#### Sir Francis Drake

*"I receive nothing but positive feedback from Compass' testing presentations. Their speakers have a natural way of putting families at ease, which is so important given the angst around standardized tests."*

– Lisa Neumaier,  
College & Career Specialist

#### University High School

*"I ask only Compass to speak to our students each year. Their events are informative, insightful, relevant, reassuring, even amusing. They are the best I've seen on college admission testing."*

– Jon Reider,  
Director of College Counseling

### Our expert speakers share up-to-date insights on the following and more:

- ▶ SAT or ACT? How do I choose?
- ▶ How important are the SAT and ACT essays?
- ▶ What is behind the ACT's surging popularity?
- ▶ Do I need to take SAT Subject Tests? Which ones?
- ▶ Why has the SAT scale reverted back to 1600?
- ▶ How many times should I take the SAT or ACT?
- ▶ How do I interpret my PSAT scores?
- ▶ What is a reasonable timeline for test preparation?

#### Marlborough

*"Compass is an invaluable resource for us. Their approach to testing is smart and reasonable. Their testing events are of the highest quality—useful, comprehensive, well-researched, and delivered with compelling and fresh insight."*

– Laura Hotchkiss,  
Director of Upper School

#### Harvard-Westlake

*"We only receive positive feedback from families who have prepared with Compass. In a service industry that often feels 'transactional,' Compass makes a student's well-being and his or her specific needs the focal point."*

– Tamar Adegbile,  
Former Upper School Dean

#### Windward

*"When we refer families to Compass, we know that we are connecting them to professionals who can manage the entirety of the admission testing process. Students often say how much they love their tutors and how much their scores have improved."*

– Molly Branch,  
Co-Director of College Counseling



## Institutions that Invite Our Support



<p> <b>Alliance for Minority Affairs</b>            Archbishop Riordan High School            The Archer School for Girls            The Athenian School            The Bentley School            Beverly Hills High School            The Branson School            Brentwood School            The Buckley School            Breakthrough SF            Brooklyn Friends School            Campbell Hall            Cardinal Newman High School            Castilleja School  <b>CHAMPS Charter High School</b>            The Chapin School            City Honors High School            College Bound Today            The College Preparatory School            Constitutional Rights Foundation            Convent of the Sacred Heart High School            Crystal Springs Uplands School            CTY College Pathways            Dominican University            Dougherty Valley High School            Eagle Rock High School            Flintridge Preparatory School  <b>Galileo Academy of Science and Technology</b>            The Harker School            Harvard-Westlake School            Head-Royce School  <b>Higher Educational Consultants Association</b>            Horace Mann School, New York            Immaculate Heart High School  <b>Independent Educational Consultants Association</b>            Jsserra Catholic High School            Juma Ventures            Junipero Serra High School            Kehillah Jewish High School            The King's Academy            Lick-Wilmerding High School            Louisville High School            Malibu Boys &amp; Girls Club            Malibu High School            Marin Academy            Marlborough School            Marymount High School         </p>	<p> <b>Mira Costa High School</b>            Monta Vista High School            Montebello Unified School District            National Charity League—Pasadena            Northwood High School            Notre Dame High School, San Jose            The Nueva School            Oaks Christian School            Oakwood School            Pacific Ridge School            Palisades Charter High School            Palos Verdes High School            Peninsula High School            Polytechnic School            Presentation High School            Providence High School            Sacred Heart Preparatory            Saint Francis High School            Saint Ignatius College Preparatory            Saint Mary's College High School            San Domenico School            San Marino High School            San Ramon Valley High School            Santa Margarita Catholic High School            Shalhevet School            Share, Learn &amp; Connect—WACAC            Sierra Canyon School            Sir Francis Drake High School            Sonoma Academy            St. Monica Catholic High School            Stuart Hall High School            Summerbridge            Tamalpais High School  <b>UC Berkeley Counseling Certificate Program</b>            UCLA Lab School            University High School            University of Rochester Office of Admissions            University of Southern California Office of Admissions            Upward Bound            The Urban School            Viewpoint School            Vistamar School            Wesley School  <b>Western Association for College Admission Counseling</b>            The Westridge School for Girls            Wildwood School            Windward School         </p>
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PREPARING FOR

# TEST DAY



## THE WEEK BEFORE THE TEST

- ▶ If you are in the habit of staying up very late, use a few days to transition to an earlier bedtime. It helps if you don't eat anything after 8pm, and if you don't use electronics during the hour before bedtime.
- ▶ Finish your homework by Thursday night, and put off as much as you can until after the test.
- ▶ Eat healthy, balanced meals. These should include lean protein and fiber but not too much sugar or starch.

## THE DAY BEFORE THE TEST

- ▶ For today only, do as little studying as possible.
- ▶ Relax and do fun things. Watch a comedy, get a massage, or do whatever helps you unwind.
- ▶ A light workout is a good idea, but a grueling one is not.
- ▶ Gather your test day necessities:
  - *Directions to the test site*
  - *Your ADMISSION TICKET*
  - *PICTURE ID*
  - *Calculator with fresh batteries*
  - *Watch*
  - *Snacks and drinks*
- ▶ Get another good night's sleep.

## ON TEST DAY

- ▶ Get up at least two hours before the test so that your brain has time to wake up.
- ▶ Do something active for 10 minutes—a light run or stretching exercises—to wake up your body. Then take a refreshing shower to help wake up your mind.
- ▶ Eat a medium-sized, healthy breakfast. Drink tea or coffee only if they are part of your normal routine.
- ▶ Try a few easy/medium practice problems to “warm-up” your mind, but don’t worry about checking your answers.
- ▶ Use your favorite music to help get you in a relaxed yet alert mood.
- ▶ Get to the testing site early, so you are not stressed about finding your testing room.
- ▶ Locate the restroom. Don’t get lost during your 5-minute break looking for the restroom.
- ▶ Sit in the front if you can. You’ll have a clear view of the clock and proctor, rather than the back of someone’s head.

## FINAL REMINDERS

- ▶ **NO CELL PHONES**  
Not on silent. Not on vibrate. Not on breaks. They need to be off the ENTIRE time, or better yet, leave them at home.
- ▶ **KNOW YOUR TIME**  
Make sure the proctor clarifies what he or she is using to keep the official time: is it her watch or the clock in the room? Proctors are NOT required to give you 5 minute warnings, so don’t expect them. KEEP YOUR OWN TIME. If you think your proctor made a mistake, speak up right away. After the test is over, it’s over.





**Global | Online**

(800) 685-6986

**Southern California**

9100 Wilshire Blvd, Suite 520E

Beverly Hills, CA 90212

(800) 925-1250

**Northern California**

1100 Larkspur Landing Circle, Suite 280

Larkspur, CA 94939

(800) 620-6250

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