

SAT vs. ACT

Colleges accept both tests equally. So which test is the right one for your student? With the recent changes to the SAT, the two tests are more similar than ever - with a couple major differences.

LENGTH

The SAT is 3 hours long.
(Including the essay, 3 hours and 50 minutes.)

The ACT is 2 hours and 55 minutes long. (Including the essay, 3 hours and 35 minutes.)

SCORING & FORMAT

SAT scores range from 400 to 1600.
3 sections: evidence-based reading and writing, math, optional essay.

ACT scores range from 1 to 36.
5 sections: English, math, reading, science, optional essay.

QUESTION STYLE

SAT questions are generally more sophisticated and require more thought to answer.

ACT questions are more straightforward (but the test is *much* faster-paced).

CONTENT

The SAT doesn't include a science section. Math questions test algebra 2 and statistics concepts.

The ACT has a science section (no outside knowledge required). Math includes more geometry and trig than the SAT does.

Many students perform similarly on the SAT and ACT. However, for some students one test is much better than the other. It makes sense to try both tests to maximize your chances of getting your best score possible. At a minimum, consider taking diagnostic SAT and ACT tests and then comparing scores to see which test is a better fit.

If your student is interested in preparing for his or her tests with AJ Tutoring, we offer free diagnostic tests at our office. Please call (650) 331-3251 for more information!

SAT-ACT Concordance Table

SAT Total (400-1600)	ACT Composite (1-36)	SAT Total (400-1600)	ACT Composite (1-36)	SAT Total (400-1600)	ACT Composite (1-36)
1600	36	1250	26	900	17
1590	35	1240	26	890	16
1580	35	1230	25	880	16
1570	35	1220	25	870	16
1560	35	1210	25	860	16
1550	34	1200	25	850	15
1540	34	1190	24	840	15
1530	34	1180	24	830	15
1520	34	1170	24	820	15
1510	33	1160	24	810	15
1500	33	1150	23	800	14
1490	33	1140	23	790	14
1480	32	1130	23	780	14
1470	32	1120	22	770	14
1460	32	1110	22	760	14
1450	32	1100	22	750	13
1440	31	1090	21	740	13
1430	31	1080	21	730	13
1420	31	1070	21	720	13
1410	30	1060	21	710	12
1400	30	1050	20	700	12
1390	30	1040	20	690	12
1380	29	1030	20	680	12
1370	29	1020	20	670	12
1360	29	1010	19	660	12
1350	29	1000	19	650	12
1340	28	990	19	640	12
1330	28	980	19	630	12
1320	28	970	18	620	11
1310	28	960	18	610	11
1300	27	950	18	600	11
1290	27	940	18	590	11
1280	27	930	17	580	11
1270	26	920	17	570	11
1260	26	910	17	560	11

Developing a testing plan for your student

For most students, freshman and sophomore year should be focused on academics and exploring academic and extracurricular interests. By the end of junior year, students should have completed a full round of testing: the PSAT in October, the SAT and/or ACT in the spring, and 2-3 SAT subject tests as appropriate. Students can then retake the SAT or ACT in the fall of their senior year.

AJ Tutoring offers a comprehensive 9-session SAT or ACT prep that covers all content and strategies students need to do their best on the test. After completing the full SAT prep, students often meet with their tutors for 3-4 additional sessions to prepare for the ACT. Our tutors also support students with prep for the PSAT, SAT subject tests, and AP exams, as well as their academic coursework.

2016-17 Testing Dates

SAT

Oct. 1	Jan. 21
Nov. 5	Mar. 11**
Dec. 3	May 6
	Jun. 3

** No subject tests offered on this date

ACT

Sept. 10	Feb. 11
Oct. 22	Apr. 8
Dec. 10	Jun. 10