

Standardized Tests

The SAT, ACT, and SAT Subject Tests



Why take standardized tests?

It is required for most college applications

Admissions panels will take these scores into account when evaluating applicants

Scholarships may also ask for this information

Earning a certain score on these tests will qualify a student for Bright Futures

The SAT

Frequency: 7 times/year

Duration: 3 hours, 50 minutes

Sections: Math, Evidence-Based Reading and Writing, Optional Essay

Cost: \$68 (\$52 without Essay)

- *Students who qualify for free and reduced lunch can obtain a fee waiver from their guidance counselor*

Max. Score: 800/section (Essay reported separately)

Reading

52 multiple-choice questions
65 minutes

Passage themes include literature, history, social studies, and the natural sciences

Tested Skills:

- Determining the meaning of words in context
- Deciding why an author included a certain detail
- Finding the main idea of a whole passage
- Comparing two passages
- Pinpointing information on a graph

Writing & Language

44 multiple-choice questions
35 minutes

Identify and correct grammatical
errors in sentences and passages

Think like an editor

Math

58 multiple-choice questions and 1
set of “extended-thinking” grid-in
questions
80 minutes

Calculator-allowed: 38 questions
No-calculator: 20 questions

Algebra I and II, Arithmetic,
Probability, Data Analysis, Plane
Geometry, Coordinate Geometry,
Trigonometry

- Largest Portion: Algebra
- Smallest Portion: Plane Geometry
and Trigonometry

Essay

1 Essay
50 Minutes

Read a text (typically a speech or editorial) and discuss how the author effectively builds an argument

Written formally (no “I” or “you” personal pronouns)

Introduction-body-conclusion

Optional, but highly recommended, as many schools require it for their application when submitting standardized tests

Superscoring

SAT and ACT

Some universities accept it,
while others do not.

This feature allows you to choose your best scores from each section of each test respectively and combine them.

Ex. SAT Reading 600 , SAT Math 500 - Superscore is 1100

The ACT

Frequency: 6 times/year

Duration: 3 hours; 3 hours 40 minutes including essay

Sections: English, Math, Reading, Science, Writing (optional)

Cost: \$55-\$70

- *Students who qualify for free and reduced lunch can obtain a fee waiver from their guidance counselor*

Max. Score: 36

English

75 multiple-choice questions
45 minutes

Five passages on topics ranging from historical essays to personal narratives

Decide if portions of a passage are grammatically correct

Add to, cut, reorder, and evaluate text based on multiple-choice options

Math

60 multiple-choice questions
60 minutes

Pre-algebra, Algebra, Geometry,
Trigonometry

Largest Section: Algebra

Smallest Section: Trigonometry

Reading

40 multiple-choice questions
35 minutes

Four reading passages, about 800 words each, always in this order:

1. prose fiction
2. social science
3. humanities
4. natural science

10 questions after each passage on directly-stated information and implied meaning from the text

Science

40 multiple-choice questions
35 minutes

40 questions about 7 passages

Topics include content from biology, chemistry, physics, and the Earth/space sciences such as astronomy, geology, and meteorology

Most questions involve analyzing graphs and information already presented

Will include 3-4 outside knowledge questions

Writing

1 essay
40 minutes

Evaluate multiple perspectives on the given prompt

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

Your perspective may be in full agreement with any of the others, in partial agreement, or wholly different

Optional, but highly recommended as many schools require it for their application when submitting standardized tests

SAT Subject Tests

20 SAT Subject Tests

Five general subject areas: english, history, languages, mathematics and science

1 Hour

Multiple-choice

200-800 point scale

SAT Subject Tests

SAT Subject Tests are on the same days and in the same test centers as the SAT

Language with Listening tests are only offered in November

You can take one, two, or three Subject Tests on any test date

You cannot take the SAT and an SAT Subject Test on the same day

SAT Subject Tests

Math Level 1

Math Level 2

Biology E/M

Chemistry

Physics

Literature

U.S. History

World History

Spanish

Spanish with Listening

French

French with Listening

Chinese with Listening

Italian

German

German with Listening

Modern Hebrew

Latin

Japanese with Listening

Korean with Listening

How to Prepare for Standardized Tests

Taking full practice tests

- This will help you build the stamina you need to take the test and see your score range

Answering practice questions

- This will help you practice with specific sections and types of questions

Reading study tips and test material

- Practice helps, but it's also important to study the content that will be on the tests and learn the tips and tricks to solving problems and moving quickly

You can use practice books or find [tests and tips online](#)