

A Comparison of The SAT & The ACT

Both tests are equally acceptable in the college application process

The SAT

Exception: The SAT is accepted at all but 79 colleges.

Time

- 3:45 minutes – plus directions/breaks or @ 8:00 a.m.-12:45 p.m.

Test

- Writing – 60 minutes
Essay and multiple choice
- Critical Reading – 70 minutes
- Math – 70 minutes

Essay – students will think critically and write a response to a prompt which will either be a pair of quotations or a short paragraph adapted from some authentic text.

Multiple choice questions will deal with grammar, usage and improving paragraphs.

Math - Problems will involve number and operations algebra and functions, geometry, statistics, probability and data analysis. It will include expanded topics such as exponential growth, absolute value, negative and fractional exponents and function notation. Greater emphasis will be placed on graphs of linear functions and scatter plots. There will be 10 problems that students must solve and grid-in the answer.

Scoring

- Each section is scored on a scale of 200-800. For every **incorrect answer**, students lose a **percentage of points from the correct answers** in a section. All results from each testing are part of the report sent to colleges.

Cost \$41.50

Format

- The SAT is a test of critical thinking, problem solving and abstract reasoning based on the knowledge and skills developed by students in coursework. Experts describe the test as tricky with many distractions
- * It is necessary to check with the colleges of your choice regarding their testing requirements. There are a number of colleges that may require the SAT plus one to three Subject Tests.

The ACT

Exception: The ACT is accepted at all but 8 colleges.

Time

- 3:30 minutes – plus directions/breaks or @ 8:00 a.m.-12:15 p.m. 8-1 w/writing

Test

- English 45 minutes
- Math 60 minutes
- Reading 35 minutes
- Science 35 minutes
- *Writing (optional) 30 minutes

- **Writing /Essay** - Students will receive a writing prompt that briefly states an issue and describes two points of view. Students write in response to a question about their position on the issue.
- **Math** will include pre-algebra (14 questions), Algebra (19 questions), Geometry (23 questions), and Trigonometry (4 questions).

Scoring

- 1-36 on each section. Writing is scored separately. ***No penalty for guessing. A student's score is based on the total number of correct responses in each section.** Students have the option of choosing the results they want sent to the colleges.

Cost \$28 without the essay
\$42 with essay

Format

- The ACT is a curriculum-based test that measures a student's educational development in English, Math, Reading and Science. Experts describe this test as straightforward with few distractions.
- * While it is necessary to check with the colleges of your choice regarding their testing requirements, many colleges will accept the ACT or the ACT with writing in lieu of the SAT and Subject Tests.

Why give colleges a score they don't require? Take the regular ACT if you are applying to a school that doesn't require the writing test.

When deciding which test to take, students should consider their strengths and select the format they feel most comfortable with, along with their college requirements.