

## Comparison of the ACT and SAT

### What does the ACT measure?

The ACT is a curriculum-based test. The ACT is considered an achievement test and measures what students have *learned*; there is no penalty for guessing. The ACT measures knowledge in general subject areas and is accepted by virtually all colleges, but most popular in the South and Midwest.

There are four subject areas and an optional Writing portion. However, students are encouraged to take the Writing portion at least once as some colleges require.

### ACT Format

<u>ENGLISH</u> 45 minutes	<u>MATH</u> 60 minutes	<u>READING</u> 35 minutes	<u>SCIENCE</u> 35 minutes
<u>75 items</u>	<u>60 items</u>	<u>40 items</u>	<u>40 items</u>
Punctuation 10	Pre-Algebra 14	Prose Fiction 10	Data Representation 15
Grammar and Usage 12	Elementary Algebra 10	Humanities 10	Research Summaries 18
Sentence Structure 18	Intermediate Algebra 9	Social Sciences 10	Conflicting Viewpoints 7
Strategy 12	Coordinate Geometry 9	Natural Sciences 10	
Organization 11	Plane Geometry 14		
Style 12	Trigonometry 4		
<u>Writing (optional)</u> 30 minutes			

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### What does the SAT measure?

The SAT is considered an aptitude test that measures critical thinking and problem-solving. There is a penalty for wrong answers. It is designed to measure skills needed for success in college.

In addition to the general SAT, there are also SAT Subject tests with 20-specific tests in the areas of history, math, science, English and foreign language. Students should check with the particular college or department of interest to determine if a SAT Subject test is required or recommended.

### SAT Format

<u>Critical Reading</u> 70 minutes	<u>Mathematics</u> 70 minutes	<u>Writing</u> 60 minutes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Extended reasoning</li> <li>• Literal Comprehension</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Numbers and operations</li> <li>• Algebra I and II and functions</li> <li>• Geometry and measurement</li> <li>• Data analysis, statistics and probability</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identifying sentence errors</li> <li>• Improving sentences</li> <li>• Improving paragraphs</li> <li>• Student-written essay</li> </ul>
<b>Each area has a score range of 200-800.</b>		