

College Entrance Exams

SAT/ACT

The SAT and ACT are entrance exams required by colleges and universities for admission. It is recommended to take the college entrance exams during the spring of your junior year so there is time during the fall of your senior year to retake if necessary.

All colleges and universities in Texas accept either exam. The majority of schools require a minimum score on the Act or SAT to be admitted. To find out the minimum score for the school you are interested in, check with the school's website, their current catalog, or admissions office.

What are the differences between SAT and ACT?

SAT attempts to measure your aptitude and ability in the three areas of math, critical reading, and writing. The test includes a 60-minute writing section; a critical reading section with long and short reading passages; and a math section with algebra, geometry, operations, and probability. Each section is reported as a score on the scale from 200-800.

ACT attempts to measure specific knowledge and curriculum in the four areas of English, math, science, and reading. Scores are reported in the form of sub scale scores for each section and the composite score that ranges from 1 to 36. Currently the national average composite score is 21.

Students also have the option on the ACT to take a 30-minute writing section. This writing section complements the English section. Scores are reported the same as above plus there will be two additional scores reported for the writing sub score and combined English/writing score. Students should contact the schools/colleges they are considering to determine if the writing test is required or visit www.act.org for a listing.

Which exam should I take?

It depends on your strengths. The SAT tries to measure ability, which supposedly does not change. On the other hand, the ACT tries to measure specific knowledge from curriculum so items may look familiar to you. Another factor to consider is that one-third of the SAT is math with only one-fourth of the Act is math.

The choice of which exam to take can only be made by you, because you should know which one is likely to show your strengths. It is recommended that you take both tests to see which one you perform better on.

How do I register for SAT and ACT?

Register online for SAT at www.collegeboard.com and for ACT at www.actstudent.org. You can complete all the registration information online. One advantage is your test center site is reserved immediately. Another advantage is that if you retake the exams you can access the registration information already saved. Keep in mind that with this registration method, you are required to pay with credit card, and you must upload a photo. After you register, you print the admission ticket.

How do I prepare for the SAT?

It is recommended for students to prepare for the ACT and/or SAT before they take the test. Students can take practice tests in order to become familiar with the format, types of questions, timing and directions. Practice tests are available in:

- Mrs. Schubach's office
- Online at registration websites for ACT and SAT
- Online at websites www.4tests.com, www.gocollege.com, www.collegefortexans.com, www.princetonreview.com, and www.number2.com