

# SAT<sup>®</sup> VS. ACT<sup>®</sup>

## THE FACTS



# SAT<sup>®</sup>

## TEST STRUCTURE

# ACT<sup>®</sup>

Offered 7 times per year\*

### FREQUENCY

Offered 6 times per year\*

Critical Reading, Math & Writing  
(including Essay)

### SUBJECTS

Reading, Math, Science, English &  
Optional Essay

3 hours and 45 minutes

### LENGTH

2 hours and 55 minutes (plus optional  
30-minute Essay section)

10 Sections

### SECTIONS

4 Sections plus optional Essay  
section

## SCORING

Sum of 3 independent subjects

### FINAL SCORE

Composite – Average of 4 subjects

2400 (800 per subject)

### MAXIMUM SCORE

36 Composite and 36 per subject

-1/4 of a point on multiple choice  
no penalty for free response questions

### WRONG ANSWER

No penalty

No penalty

### OMITTED ANSWER

No penalty

Accounts for approximately 1/3 of  
the Writing score

### ESSAY GRADE

Not included in composite score.  
Graded separately

In many cases, students can submit  
a “**Super Score**” where the best  
score in each subject, regardless of  
which attempt, is combined to form  
their best overall score.

## SCORE SUBMISSION

Students can submit their best  
composite score from a particular  
sitting for the exam.

\* SAT is offered 6 times and ACT is offered 5 times for students living outside the United States. ACT is also offered only 5 times for students residing in NY

## SAT<sup>®</sup> VS. ACT<sup>®</sup> TESTROCKER'S TOP 3 SUGGESTIONS

1. Many colleges and universities around the country are now accepting both tests. Therefore, we recommend taking both as it will provide another way to present a more competitive application if you are able to do better on one versus the other.
2. Because you can submit a “super score” to many schools, attempting the SAT more than 1 time can be very beneficial to your final score. Therefore, we recommend taking the SAT multiple times, but limiting the attempts to 3 as you will most likely plateau at that point.
3. When taking the ACT, it is better to attempt the optional Writing section as some schools will require it and will not accept your composite score if you did not complete the writing section. Also, because you can only submit the composite score of one particular attempt, we recommend you attempt the ACT a maximum of 2 times.

Visit [www.blog.testrocker.com/act-vs-sat](http://www.blog.testrocker.com/act-vs-sat) to learn more

# SAT<sup>®</sup> VS. ACT<sup>®</sup>

## W H A T ' S O N I T ?



### SAT<sup>®</sup>

### READING

### ACT<sup>®</sup>

Passages and sentence completion with an emphasis on vocabulary.

#### TOPICS

Passages only

Passages are complex. Questions are not straightforward. Answer choices are very similar. Also, 18-20 sentence completion questions with tough vocabulary

#### DIFFICULTY

Questions are very straightforward. However, the 4 passages and 40 questions are difficult to complete in just 35 minutes

### MATH

Arithmetic Operations, Algebra, Geometry, Statistics and Probability

#### TOPICS

Arithmetic Operations, Algebra, Geometry, Statistics, Probability, Trigonometry, Logarithms, Complex Numbers and Matrices/Circle & Ellipse Equations

Questions are tricky. Language traps are incorporated along with a deeper requirement of understanding of concepts

#### DIFFICULTY

Volume of questions is difficult to complete. Additional topics provide added difficulty for some students

### WRITING

Identifying errors in grammar and usage

#### TOPICS

Usage/mechanics and rhetorical skills

Grammar errors are identified through sentence correction, which is more difficult

#### DIFFICULTY

Volume of questions is difficult to complete. Grammar errors are identified through passage correction

### ESSAY

Essay prompts focus on taking a position on social and moral issues

#### TOPICS

Essay prompts focus on topics that are related to students' school-life experiences

Prompts are more difficult. Students have to take a position on an issue that can extend beyond their schooling environment

#### DIFFICULTY

The prompts are more relatable to students' lives and are generally less difficult to begin and finish in the allotted time

### SCIENCE

#### TOPICS

Skills required in analyzing natural science based passages: Interpretation, Analysis, Evaluation, Reasoning, and Problem Solving

**No Science Section**

#### DIFFICULTY

Volume of questions is made difficult to complete by the incorporation of science topics. However, the science section is not very hard if students use the problem-solving skills needed to master the rest of the ACT

For a free diagnostic test and sample questions visit [www.testrocker.com](http://www.testrocker.com)

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