

SAT	vs.	ACT
Reasoning test	Type of Test	Content-based test
Critical Reading: 2, 25-min sections and 1, 20-min section; Math: 2, 25-min sections and 1, 20-min section; Writing: 1, 25-min essay, 1, 25-min section, and 1, 10-min section Total test time: 225 minutes; 3 hours and 45 minutes	Test Format	English: 1, 45-min section; Math: 1, 60-min section; Reading: 1, 35-min section; Science: 1, 35-min section; Writing: 1, 30-min essay (optional) Total test time: 205 minutes (with essay); 3 hours and 25 minutes
Reading, vocabulary, grammar & usage, writing, and math	Content Covered	Grammar & usage, math, reading, science reasoning, and writing (optional)
Tricky. Questions can be phrased in ways that make them difficult to decipher. SAT is titled SAT: A Reasoning Test. It is indeed a reasoning test. Yes, it covers some academic skills in reading, math and writing, but it is definitely about making the student work through critical thinking and reasoning.	Test Style	More straightforward. Questions may be long but are usually less difficult to decipher. Originally stood for "American College Testing," ACT is typically defined as a more straight forward academic skills' test with the majority of the reasoning and critical thinking testing falling in a section titled “science”.
Math, Critical Reading, and Writing scores will each range between a 200-800; total SAT score ranges between 600-2400	Scoring	English, Math, Reading, and Science scores will each range between 1-36. Composite ACT score is the average of your scores on the four sections; ranges between 1-36
Yes – you lose 1/4 of a point for incorrect answers (except on the grid-in math questions) ONLY GUESS if you can confidently eliminate 2 or more answers	Penalty for Wrong Answers?	No – you do not lose points for incorrect answers. Therefore, you should GUESS and leave no bubbles blank.
Yes – you can choose which set(s) of SAT scores to submit to colleges	Score Choice?	Yes – you can choose which set(s) of ACT scores to submit to colleges
Questions increase in difficulty level as you move through that question type in a section (except reading passage questions, which progress chronologically through the passage)	Difficulty Levels	Difficulty level of the questions is random
Arithmetic, data analysis, Algebra I and II, Functions, Geometry; formulas are provided in the test booklet	Math Levels	Arithmetic, Algebra I and II, Functions, Geometry, Trigonometry; no formulas are provided
With private schools and schools on the East and West Coasts; however, every four-year college in the US accepts SAT scores	Tends to be more popular?	With public schools and schools in the Midwest and south; however, every four-year college in the US accepts ACT scores
Seven times per year: January, March or April, May, June, October, November, and December	Offered when?	Six times per year: February, April, June, September, October, December
Typically, about 4 weeks before the test date	Registration deadline?	Typically, about 5-6 weeks before the test date