



ACT

vs

(digital)

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SAT

Outline

 **01** / *Introduction*

 **02** / *SAT Timeline*

 **03** / *Similarities & Differences*

 **04** / *Trends & Predictions*

 **05** / *Which test is “better”?*

 **06** / *Test Prep Strategy*

Introduction

• Skills you need
• Scores you want

OVER 30 YEARS AS POTOMAC'S TEST PREP EXPERTS

BREAKTHROUGH
Test Prep

About Breakthrough

For over 30 years we've been helping students develop the confidence to excel at standardized testing and beyond.

We provide targeted one-on-one programs to make test prep as efficient, effective, and encouraging as possible – so that each student has the skills and strategies they need to reach their target scores.

www.bttp.me

SAT Timeline

1901

College Board begins administering essay exams

1926

First administration of the “Scholastic Aptitude Test”

1993

/1994

Much dithering over what “SAT” should stand for...
Antonyms removed, questions on reading passages increased from about 30% to about 50%, passages chosen to more closely resemble typical college-level reading



COLLEGE ENTRANCE EXAMINATION BOARD
SCHOLASTIC APTITUDE TEST

Form A1

SIGN YOUR NAME HERE AS YOU ORDINARILY SIGN IT:

PRINT YOUR NAME HERE:

(LAST NAME) (FIRST NAME) (MIDDLE NAME)

RESIDENCE: (STREET AND NUMBER) (TOWN OR CITY) (STATE)

NEW PLAN? EXAMINATION NUMBER:

WHAT INSTITUTION DO YOU PURPOSE ENTERING?

NAME OF EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTION AT PRESENT ATTENDED:

ADDRESS OF THIS INSTITUTION:

DATE OF BIRTH: (MONTH) (DAY) (YEAR) EXAMINATION CENTER:

READ THESE DIRECTIONS CAREFULLY

Do not break the seals of this booklet until the examiner tells you to. When the examiner says "Go," open the booklet and start work on sub-test one. Work steadily and as quickly as is consistent with accuracy. The time of each sub-test has been fixed so that very few can finish any one of them in the time allowed. Do not worry if you cannot finish all of the problems in each sub-test before time is called.

Follow the examiner's instructions exactly. Start work on a test when he says "Go," and stop work immediately when he says "Stop."

During the time allowed for each sub-test, you must work on that particular sub-test and no other. You will not be allowed to work ahead on a sub-test which has not been announced by the examiner, nor to go back and work on a sub-test that you have failed to finish. If, therefore, you finish any sub-test before time is called, re-check your work on that test.

Work steadily but do not press too hard for speed. Accuracy counts as well as speed. Do not penalize yourself by careless mistakes.

After reading these instructions, wait. Do not break the seals to open the booklet until the signal is given.

This folder contains as Test Ten, one copy of the Otis Self-Administering Tests of Mental Ability, Higher Examination Form A, copyright 1922 by the World Book Company, Tonawanda, New York, and reprinted here by special permission of the World Book Company.

- 3 _____
- 5 _____
- 7 _____
- 9 _____
- 13 _____
- 14 _____
- 15 _____
- 17 _____
- 19 _____
- 21 _____
- T _____

SUB-TEST THREE

FORM A

Each group contains six words. Three of these are related to each other in some definite way. Indicate which three are thus MOST CLOSELY RELATED by inserting the numbers of these words in the spaces at the right.

- silver₁, platinum₂, amethyst₃, coinage₄, emerald₅, sapphire₆ _ _ & _
- Bon Ton₁, Gossard₂, Djer Kiss₃, Del Monte₄, Mavis₅, Jonteel₆ _ _ & _
- orange₁, pear₂, lemon₃, grapefruit₄, prune₅, chocolate₆ _ _ & _
- Norway₁, Bulgaria₂, Denmark₃, Japan₄, Greece₅, Roumania₆ _ _ & _
- murder₁, adultery₂, jail₃, larceny₄, delinquent₅, church₆ _ _ & _
- minister₁, church₂, wedding₃, matrimony₄, divorce₅, nuptials₆ _ _ & _
- Victor₁, Steinway₂, Atwater-Kent₃, Edison₄, Congolcum₅, Acolian₆ _ _ & _
- anemia₁, tuberculosis₂, sickness₃, diphtheria₄, typhoid₅, doctor₆ _ _ & _
- Phoenix₁, Oakland₂, Pasadena₃, Seattle₄, Los Angeles₅, Reno₆ _ _ & _
- Tintex₁, Globe₂, Venus₃, Hammermill₄, Whiting₅, Old Hampshire₆ _ _ & _
- Columbus₁, Socrates₂, Beethoven₃, Wagner₄, Verdi₅, Corneille₆ _ _ & _
- barometer₁, summer₂, atom₃, rain₄, umbrella₅, muddy₆ _ _ & _
- program₁, history₂, dictionary₃, encyclopedia₄, directory₅, schedule₆ _ _ & _
- Rome₁, Marseilles₂, Paris₃, Leipsig₄, Spain₅, Berlin₆ _ _ & _
- chops₁, liver₂, round₃, fore-quarter₄, rump₅, sirloin₆ _ _ & _
- belt₁, textile₂, sleeve₃, lapel₄, men₅, collar₆ _ _ & _
- Etna₁, Warsaw₂, Fujiyama₃, Rhine₄, Atlantic₅, Kilauea₆ _ _ & _
- diet₁, chemical₂, nutrition₃, protein₄, carbohydrate₅, fat₆ _ _ & _
- rafter₁, refrigerator₂, furnace₃, lath₄, cottage₅, shingle₆ _ _ & _
- stalactite₁, cavern₂, limestone₃, geyser₄, reef₅, seaweed₆ _ _ & _
- Ayrshire₁, Pomeranian₂, Maltese₃, Plymouth Rock₄, Leghorn₅, Wyandotte₆ _ _ & _
- mark₁, lira₂, exchange₃, konig₄, ruble₅, reine₆ _ _ & _
- morrow₁, borrow₂, sadness₃, sorrow₄, future₅, riches₆ _ _ & _
- Honduras₁, Calcutta₂, Madagascar₃, Peking₄, Baltimore₅, Yokohama₆ _ _ & _
- Mutter₁, pater₂, sister₃, descendiente₄, madre₅, mere₆ _ _ & _

SAT Timeline

2005

The "New SAT"!

- Max score now 2400 points
- Introduced essay
- Removed analogies

2012



Score Choice introduced

2016

Max score reverted to 1600

- Introduced evidence-based questions, optional essay.
- Shift away from obscure vocabulary to context/usage
- Answer choices reduced from five to four options
- Removed penalty for wrong answers**

SAT Timeline

2021 • Optional essay and Subject Tests removed

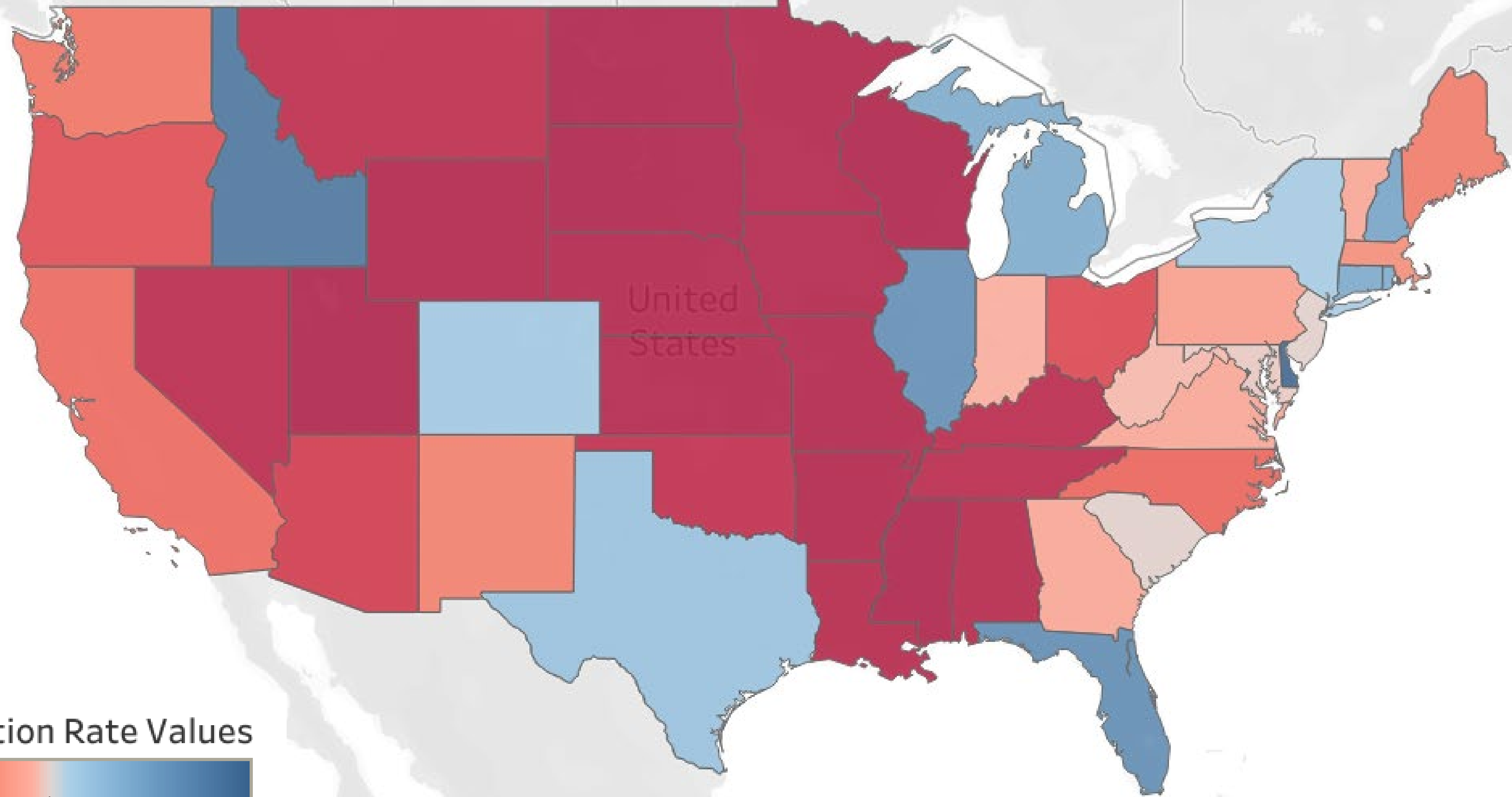
2023 • Introducing the Digital SAT!

Rollout Timeline

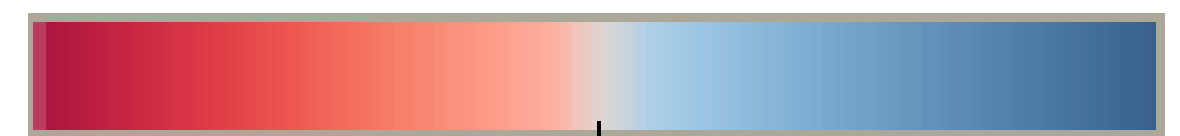
	October 2022	October 2023	March 2024
PSAT			
SAT			

College Board will offer an international digital SAT in March 2023.

SAT Participation



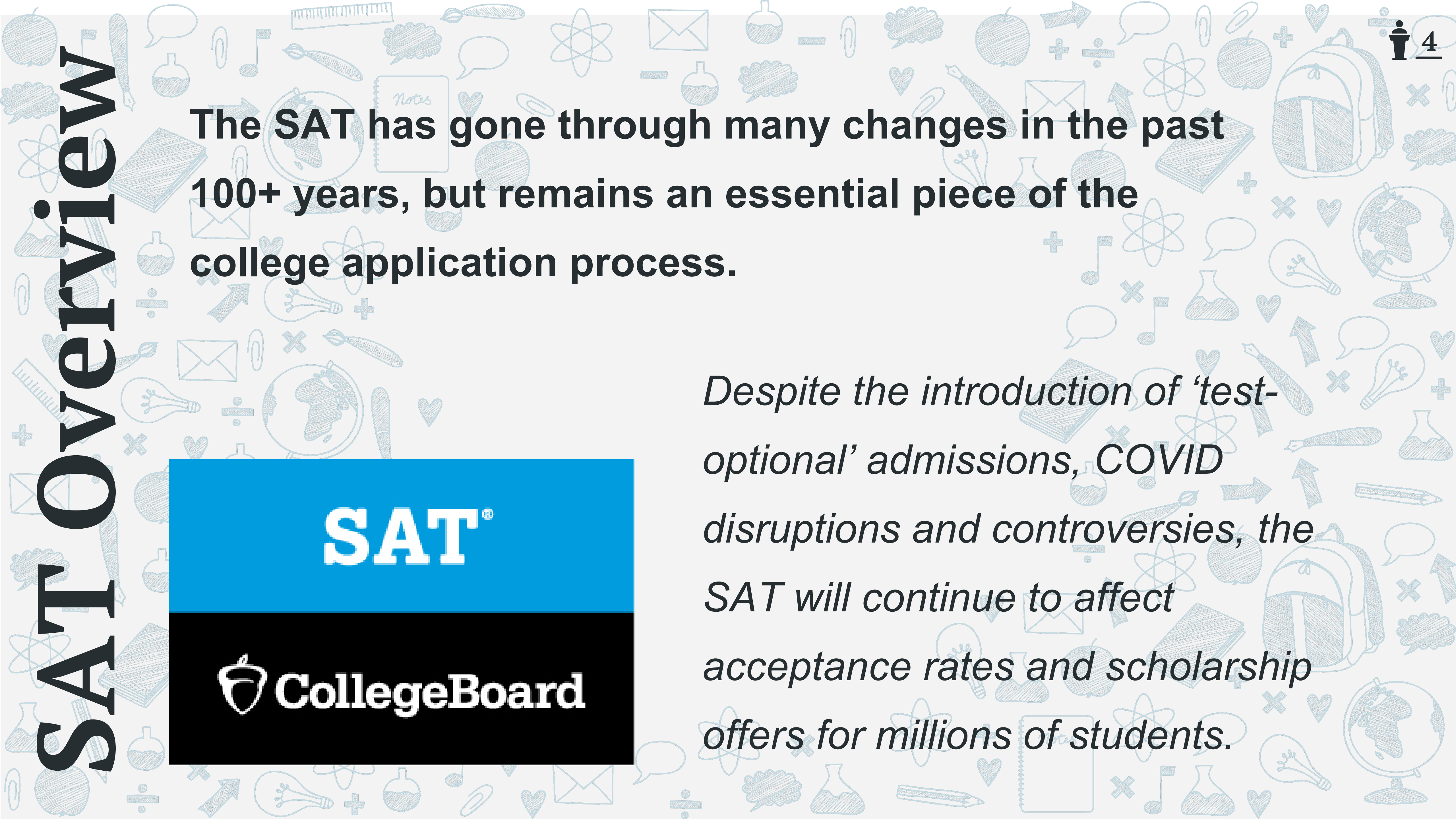
Participation Rate Values



0.0100

0.9600

Mexico



SAT Overview

The SAT has gone through many changes in the past 100+ years, but remains an essential piece of the college application process.



Despite the introduction of 'test-optional' admissions, COVID disruptions and controversies, the SAT will continue to affect acceptance rates and scholarship offers for millions of students.

Digital SAT Changes

Format Shift: Transition from paper to digital, eliminating the need for No. 2 pencils and bubble sheets.

Device Options: Test-takers can use either testing center computers or their own Wi-Fi-enabled devices, with specific requirements for operating systems and available space.

Accessibility: Options for bringing your own mouse or keyboard (for tablets), and provisions for those without personal devices.

Adaptive Testing: The exam will adapt to the test-taker's performance, offering a more personalized assessment.

SAT[®]

CollegeBoard

Digital SAT Changes

Duration and Structure: A shorter test duration of 2 hours and 14 minutes, with a more streamlined format.

Immediate Scoring: Scores will be available within days, allowing for quicker decision-making regarding college applications.

Enhanced Security: Unique digital test forms for each student to prevent cheating and ensure the integrity of the exam process.

Calculator Policy: Calculators are allowed throughout the Math section, with an onscreen calculator provided for those without their own.

SAT[®]

CollegeBoard

Digital SAT Changes

Content and Timing Adjustments:

The Reading and Writing section will feature shorter passages with single-question responses, aiming for conciseness and directness.

The Math section will focus on clarity and direct problem-solving, moving away from reading-intensive word problems.

SAT[®]

CollegeBoard

SAT Reading & Writing

Two modules, each taking 32 minutes and comprising 27 questions.

The reading passages in the digital SAT will be shorter than those on the paper exam, and instead of answering multiple questions in response to a single passage, you'll now answer only one.



SAT Reading & Writing

The new SAT will feature a greater range of topics, tones, and styles than the analog test, with more questions stemming from the humanities and a few poetry questions added (often by authors from the early 1900s and before).

However, **the passages and their corresponding questions will be grouped by the skill set they're testing rather than by the reading topic.** You can expect each Reading and Writing module on the digital SAT to assess these skills:



SAT Reading & Writing

1. Information and Ideas (12–14 questions): Use details from brief texts, tables, and infographics to determine the main idea, choose the best evidence to support a claim, answer comprehension questions, or infer the most logical way to complete an excerpt.

2. Craft and Structure (13–15 questions): Define words and phrases that appear in lines of poetry or sentences of prose, evaluate how passages are making arguments, or connect ideas presented in two excerpts (e.g., determining whether one idea builds on another or whether two paragraphs are making similar or different claims).



SAT Reading & Writing

3. Expression of Ideas (8–12 questions): Select the transitional word or phrase that makes the author’s meaning clearer for readers, or use a short set of provided notes to decide which of the answers achieves a particular purpose (e.g., which answer represents a comparison, or which answer represents a contrast).

4. Standard English Conventions (11–15 questions): Choose answers that reflect your knowledge of conventional grammar and mechanics.

The order and number of these types of questions will differ because, according to the College Board, each student will receive a unique test form.



SAT Math

Math is now 70 minutes long, with 44 questions divided equally between two modules.

Calculator is permitted for the entire section.

The digital SAT no longer tests reading skills in the Math section. The paper version of the Math section sometimes includes harder-to-understand word problems.



SAT Math

1. Algebra (previously called Heart of Algebra; 13–15 questions): Develop, analyze, or solve linear equations and inequalities as well as systems of equations.

2. Advanced Math (previously called Passport to Advanced Math; 13–15 questions): Create, interpret, or solve a variety of problem types, such as quadratic equations, polynomial operations, or absolute-value equations.



3. Problem Solving and Data Analysis (no name change; 5–7 questions): Answer prompts about ratios, rates, or proportions; convert units; calculate percentages; analyze data with one or two variables; or infer data and evaluate claims from statistics.

4. Geometry and Trigonometry (previously called Additional Topics in Math; 5–7 questions): Solve problems involving perimeter, area, or volume; angles, triangles, or trigonometry; and circles. The digital SAT will have nearly double the number of geometry and trigonometry questions as the paper version (15% of the section as opposed to the previous 8%).



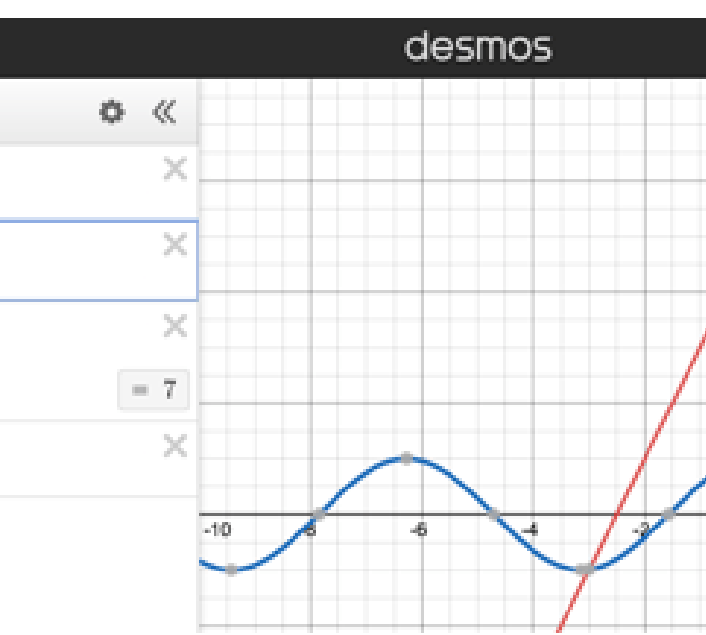
Desmos Onscreen Calculator

If you own and regularly use a personal handheld calculator, you're allowed to bring it to the test if it's an approved device.

But **built into the Bluebook testing application is a Desmos graphing calculator that you can use on the entire Math section.**

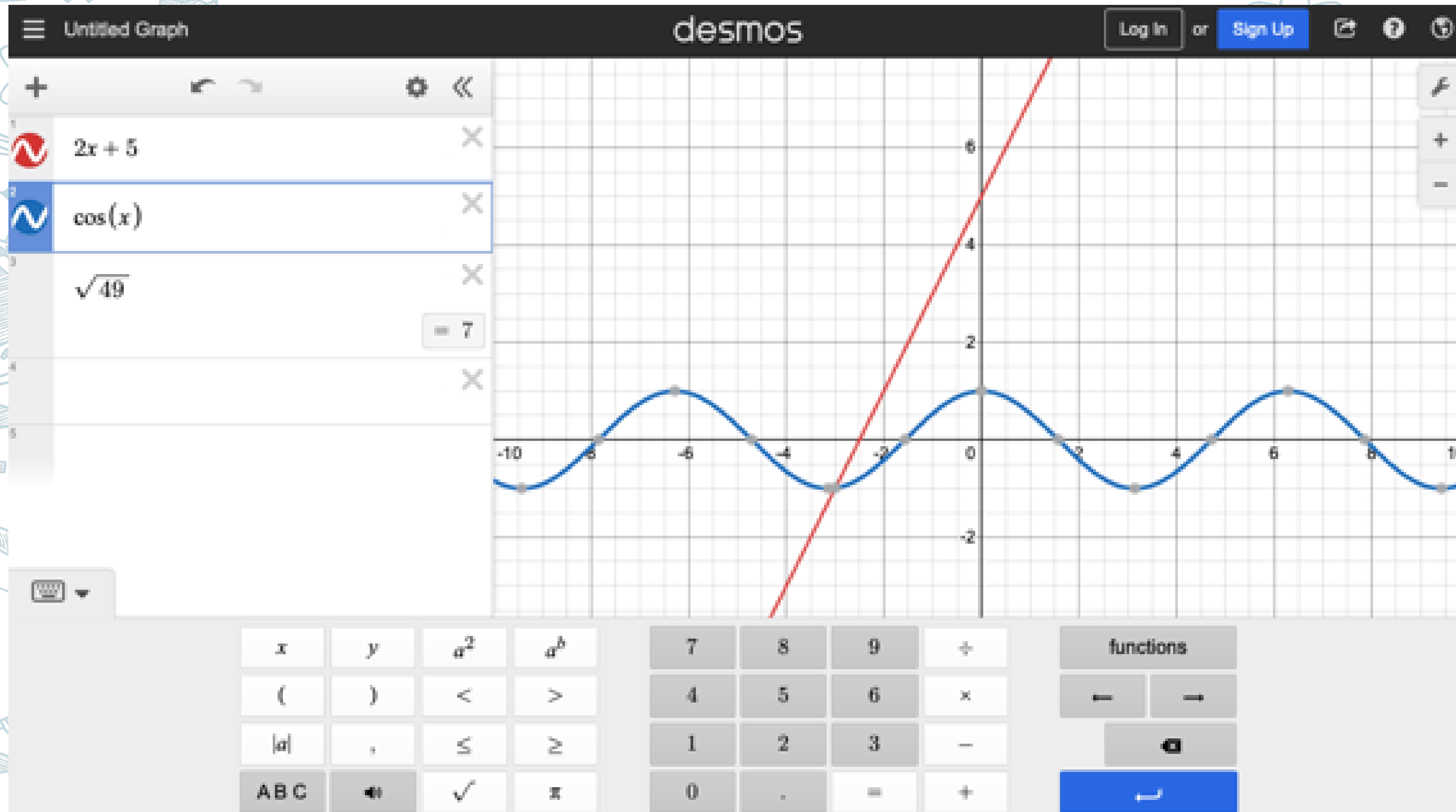
It allows you to graph lines and curves, plot points, locate x- and y-intercepts, and complete various other calculations.

If you're planning to use the Desmos calculator, experiment with the device online and in practice tests to familiarize yourself with its various capabilities well before test day.



NEW TOOLS

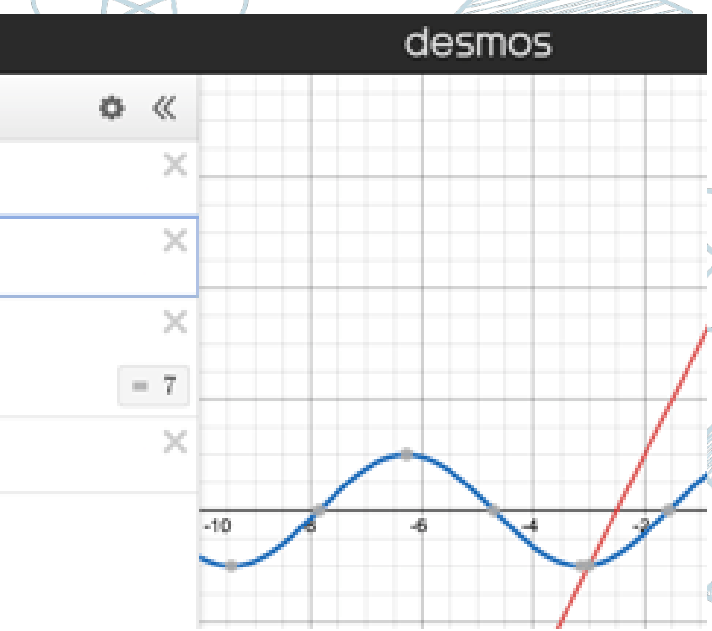
Desmos Onscreen Calculator



The Online Notepad

In Bluebook, you won't be able to mark up graphs, charts, or diagrams in the test. But **the digital SAT features an online notepad if you tend to do scratch work when completing math problems.** Alternatively, you can bring a pen or pencil, and the proctor will provide paper if requested.

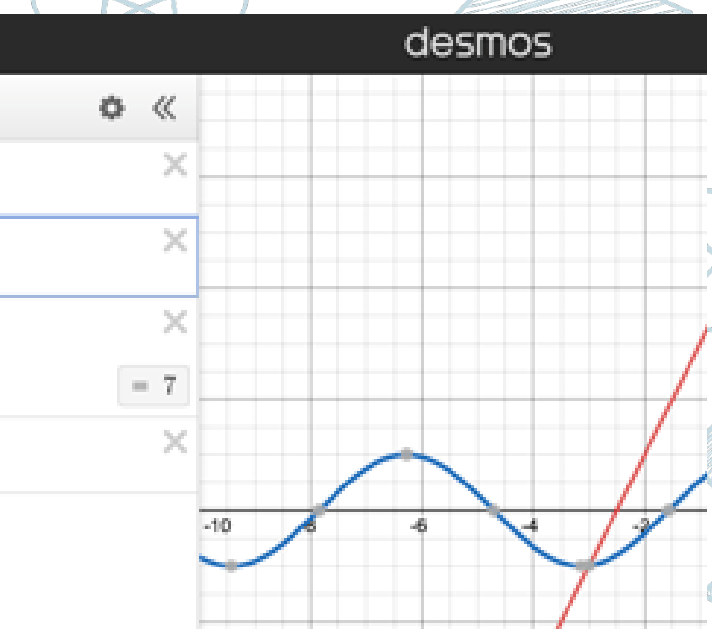
You won't receive credit for any of your scratch work. But using the online notepad or provided paper can be useful for sketching out calculations or double-checking your solutions.



NEW TOOLS

Mark-for-Review and Strikethrough Tools

In older digital versions of certain standardized tests, such as the GRE, test takers were required to answer one question at a time before moving forward; you could not return to earlier questions, even in the same section. On the digital SAT, however, you can move back and forth between questions as long as they are in the current module.

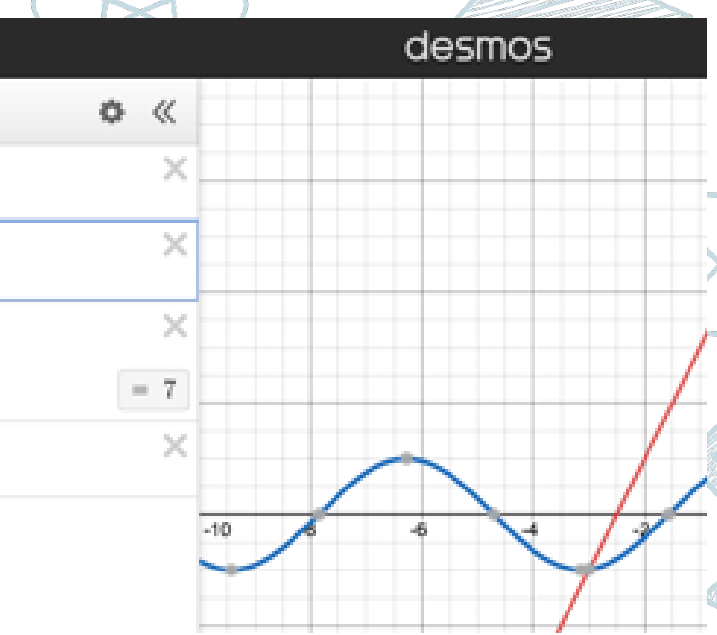


NEW TOOLS

The new format also features a tool that allows you to mark questions that you want to return to:

You can also strike through answer options you know to be incorrect.

Strike through the incorrect options, mark the question for review, and then come back to it later when you have more time to think through it.



must generally have led to with regard to family r

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Section 1, Module 1: Reading and Writing Questions ×

Current Unanswered For Review

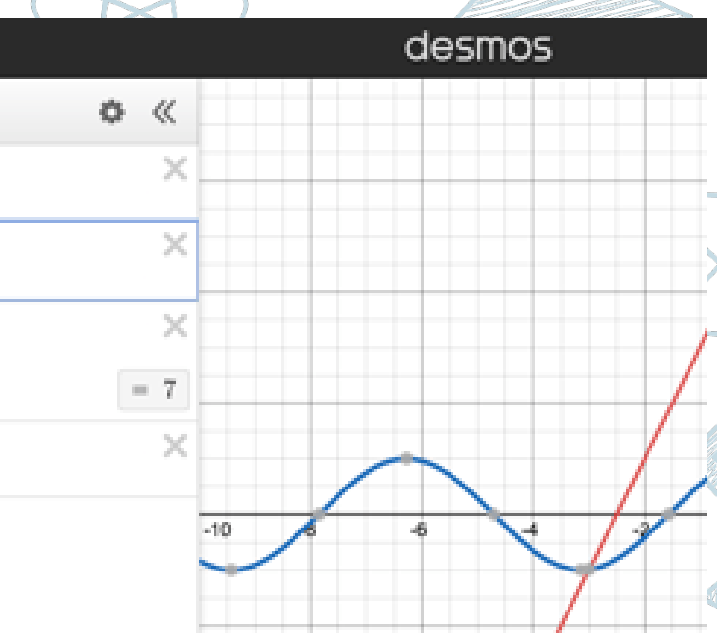
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27			

[Go to Review Page](#)

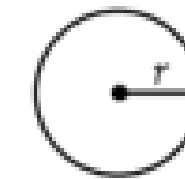
Question 6 of 27 ▾

Math Reference Popout

For the Math section, you won't have to memorize common formulas because during the test, you'll be able to access a reference popout. It includes reminders such as how to calculate the circumference or area of a circle, the hypotenuse of a right triangle, and the volume of cylinders and cones.

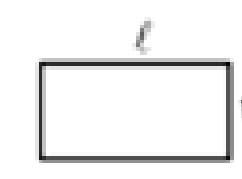


Reference

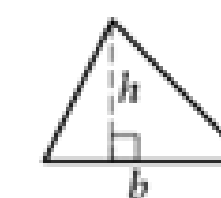


$$A = \pi r^2$$

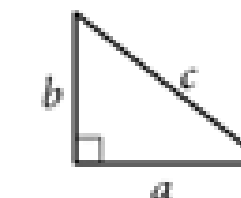
$$C = 2\pi r$$



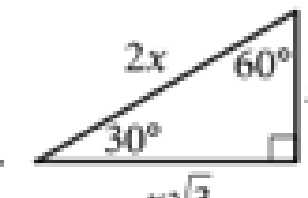
$$A = \ell w$$



$$A = \frac{1}{2}bh$$

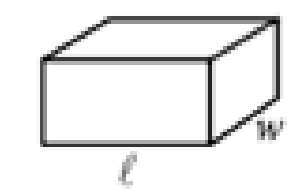
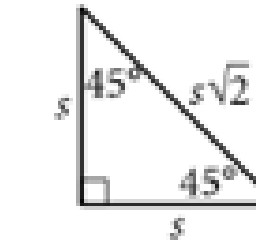


$$c^2 = a^2 + b^2$$



$$x\sqrt{3}$$

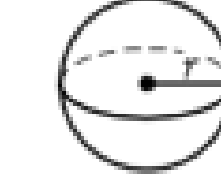
Special Right Triangles



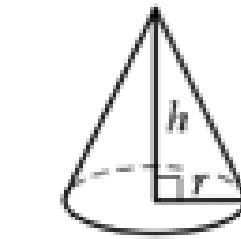
$$V = \ell wh$$



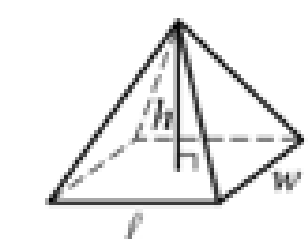
$$V = \pi r^2 h$$



$$V = \frac{4}{3}\pi r^3$$



$$V = \frac{1}{3}\pi r^2 h$$



$$V = \frac{1}{3}\ell wh$$

The number of degrees of arc in a circle is 360.

The number of radians of arc in a circle is 2π .

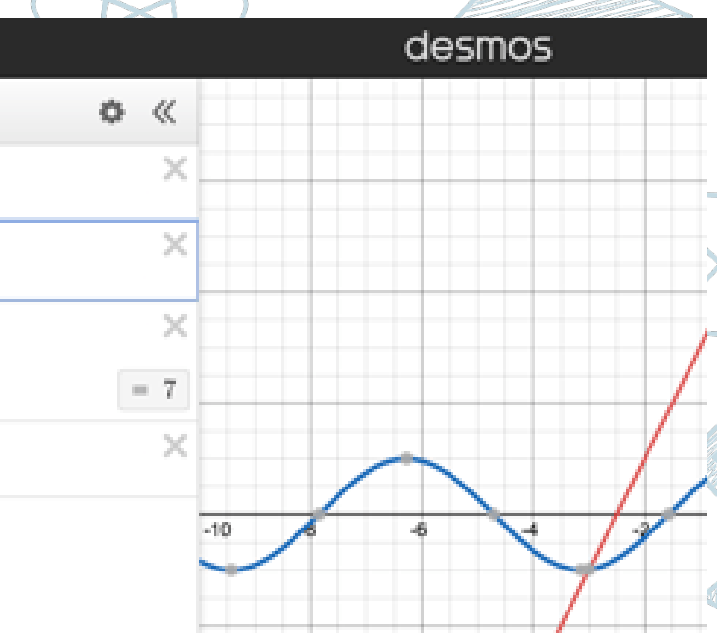
The sum of the measures in degrees of the angles of a triangle is 180.

Countdown Clock

The digital SAT format will feature a countdown timer at the top of your testing screen so that you'll know how much time is remaining in any given stage.

If the clock causes you anxiety, you can choose to hide it. Whether on screen or hidden, you'll be alerted when you have five minutes remaining on the module.

The screenshot shows the Bluebook Exams interface. At the top, the title bar reads "Bluebook Exams". Below it, the section information is "Section 1, Module 1: Reading and Wr..." with a timer showing "29:22" and a "100% BB" score indicator. There are buttons for "Directions", "Hide", "Annotate", and "More". A "Notes" tab is visible on the left. The main content area displays a reading passage from Jane Austen's *Sense and Sensibility*. The passage text is: "The following text is from Jane Austen's 1811 novel *Sense and Sensibility*. Elinor lives with her younger sisters and her mother, Mrs. Dashwood. Elinor, this eldest daughter, whose advice was so effectual, possessed a strength of understanding, and coolness of judgment,". To the right of the passage is a question: "6 Mark for Review According to the text, what is true about Elinor?". Below the question is a multiple-choice option: "A Elinor often argues with her mother but fails to change her".



ACT Timeline

Initially developed as a competitor to the SAT, while the ACT it remains less popular overall (particularly in Maryland) it is just as widely accepted by admissions departments at every college in the country.

Because the primary difference between SAT and ACT comes down to time, in our experience the majority of students achieve their best results on the SAT – but by no means all!



ACT Timeline

1959

First administered in Iowa & Midwest

1980



Scores recentered, average adjustment of 2pts

2005

Added 30-minute optional essay

ACT Timeline

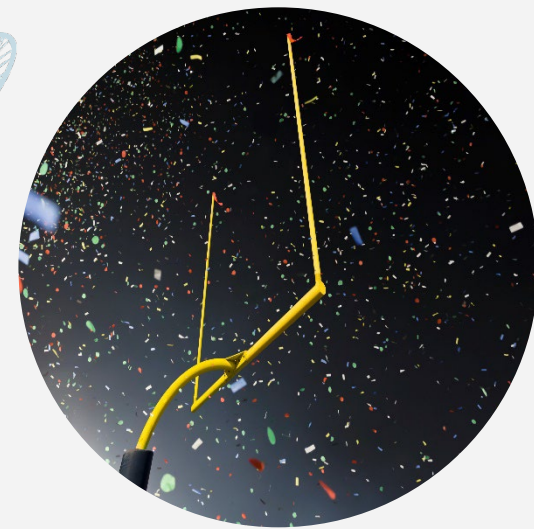
ACT Timeline

2015

● Essay extended to 40 minutes

2021

● Superscoring Introduced



ACT Format



English

45 minutes, 75 questions

5 long passages (600-800 words), 15 questions.

US/World Lit, History, Science, Social Studies, Science



Math

60 minutes, 60 questions

Roughly in order of difficulty

- Pre-algebra: about 20-25%
- Elementary algebra: 15-20%
- Intermediate algebra: 15-20%
- Coordinate geometry: 15-20%
- Plane geometry: 20-25%
- Trigonometry: 5-10%



Reading

35 minutes, 40 questions

4 passages (600-800 words), 10-10 questions.

Prose Fiction / Literature, Social Science, Humanities, Natural Science



Science

35 minutes, 40 questions

Data Representation, Research Summaries, Conflicting Viewpoints

Good to know

01 / *Test Dates*

Both the ACT and SAT are offered multiple times per year, registration is straightforward and can be completed up to a week or so in advance.

For full schedules see:

www.collegeboard.com

www.act.org

02 / *Accommodations*

College Board and ACT offer a variety of testing accommodations for students with disabilities.

The most popularly requested accommodations for ADHD / LD include extended time, breaks, and small group testing – and must be diagnosed by specific professionals.

For full details see:

<http://www.rtinetwork.org/>

Good to know

03 / *Retakes*

Students can (theoretically) retake the SAT as many times as they like, up to 12 max on the ACT).

A majority of students (well over 50%) improve ACT or SAT scores when they take it a second time!

04 / *Superscoring*

The vast majority of colleges use “Superscoring” – for students who take the test more than once, admissions will take the highest section score from each .

*On the ACT this may not result in a new composite score as most colleges take section scores separately. For a full explanation and up-to-date college list:

<https://www.compassprep.com/superscore-and-score-choice/>

Which test is “better”?

Get Started

60-Second ACT vs. SAT Assessment

ACT/SAT Skill Set Assessments

What Type of Learner is Your Teen?

Parent and Student Profiles.

60-second ACT vs SAT Assesment

*Below are 11 either/or options for you to select from. Go with your gut – don't over-analyze!
If you don't understand an option, go with your initial instinct – there are no 'right' or
'wrong' answers, just what fits you better.*

I am stronger in: *

- Analyzing information to justify a choice
- Drawing a conclusion when directly stated.

I have a knack to be better able at: *

- Reading a paragraph and zeroing in on the point.
- Scanning through a multi-paragraph passage to find specific information.

I am normally a reader who: *

- Needs more time to process information.
- Can quickly go through a long passage and identify the point.

I consider my strength to be more: *

- A strong writing style
- A strong understanding of grammar and mechanics

I believe that I need to be able to: *

- Attempt every question.
- Random guess quickly toward the end.

I tend to be stronger in: *

- Algebra and systems of equations
- Geometry, as I have memorized the most relevant formulas.

I believe I am better at: *

- Interpreting charts and graphs.

Test Prep Strategy

Get a strong start by taking challenging courses

READ MORE! 15 minutes of leisure reading per day will dramatically improve grades AND test scores. Opinion columns, editorials, movie reviews, anything well-written and structured will help with efficient reading skills

Sign up for our six-session Efficient Reading Course. Students learn to increase their reading speed and how to vary pace according to content – the earlier the better!

Questions? Schedule a complimentary test prep strategy session and we'll be happy to help!

www.bttp.as.me/strategy