

# SAT vs. ACT

## SAT or ACT? Do you know which test is right for you?

Colleges accept both tests equally, so the choice is up to you! The ACT and SAT generally test the same types of content. The biggest differences are that the ACT has a Science Test and the SAT has one Math section for which you cannot use a calculator.

Here's what you need to know to compare the exams.

	SAT	ACT
<b>Why Take It</b>	Colleges use SAT scores for admissions and merit-based scholarships.	Colleges use ACT scores for admissions and merit-based scholarships.
<b>Test Structure</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reading</li> <li>• Writing &amp; Language</li> <li>• Math</li> <li>• Essay (Optional)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• English</li> <li>• Math</li> <li>• Reading</li> <li>• Science Reasoning</li> <li>• Essay (Optional)</li> </ul>
<b>Length</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 3 hours (without essay)</li> <li>• 3 hours, 50 minutes (with essay)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 2 hours, 55 minutes (without essay)</li> <li>• 3 hours, 40 minutes (with essay)</li> </ul>
<b>Reading</b>	5 reading passages	4 reading passages
<b>Science</b>	None	1 science section testing your critical thinking skills (not your specific science knowledge)
<b>Math</b>	Covers: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Arithmetic</li> <li>• Algebra I &amp; II</li> <li>• Geometry, Trigonometry and Data Analysis</li> </ul>	Covers: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Arithmetic</li> <li>• Algebra I &amp; II</li> <li>• Geometry and Trigonometry</li> </ul>
<b>Calculator Policy</b>	Some math questions don't allow you to use a calculator.	You can use a calculator on all math questions.
<b>Essays</b>	Optional. The essay will test your comprehension of a source text.	Optional. The essay will test how well you evaluate and analyze complex issues.
<b>How It's Scored</b>	Scored on a scale of 400–1600	Scored on a scale of 1–36