ASVAB Fact Sheet

ENLISTMENT TESTING PROGRAM

www.Official-ASVAB.com

Introduction

The purpose of this Fact Sheet is to provide you with information about the military enlistment test, the Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery (ASVAB). ASVAB scores are used to determine if you are qualified to enlist in the military and to assign you to an appropriate job in the military. The information provided here will help you prepare to take the ASVAB.

Most ASVAB testing is conducted at a Military Entrance Processing Station (MEPS). If you do not live near a MEPS, you may take the ASVAB at a satellite location called a Military Entrance Test (MET) site. The ASVAB is administered by computer at all MEPS, and by paper and pencil (P&P) at most MET sites. Regardless of whether you take the ASVAB by computer or P&P, your scores should be very similar.

The Computerized ASVAB

The computerized ASVAB (called the CAT-ASVAB) is an adaptive test, which means that the test adapts to your ability level. The computer software selects items that are suitable for you based on your responses to earlier items in the test. Because the CAT-ASVAB is targeted toward your ability level, it is possible to administer a shorter test than is used in the P&P administration. More details on how the CAT-ASVAB works are given on page 3.

You are allowed to complete the CAT-ASVAB at your own pace. That is, when you complete a test in the battery, you can immediately move on to the next section without waiting for everyone else to move on. You may leave the test room as soon as you are finished with all of the tests. Although each test has a fixed number of questions and a time limit (see page 3), most examinees finish the test before the time limit is reached. The average examinee takes about 1 1/2 hours to complete the CAT-ASVAB.

You are not able to review or change your answers once you have submitted an answer on the CAT-ASVAB. If you are running out of time, it is best to continue trying to answer as best as you can rather than filling in random guesses for the remaining items, as the CAT-ASVAB has a penalty for guessing.

The Paper and Pencil ASVAB

The paper and pencil ASVAB (called the P&P-ASVAB) is a traditional test, which means that everyone takes the same set of questions at the same pace. The number of test questions and time limits for each test are shown on page 3. In all, it takes about 3 hours to complete the P&P-ASVAB.

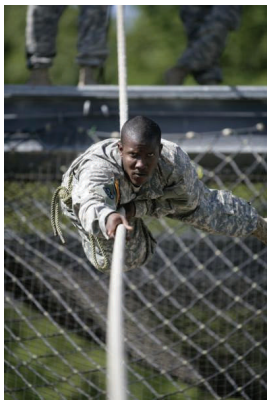
You are allowed to review your answers on the P&P-ASVAB. However, you cannot go back to an earlier test section or proceed to the next test until instructed to do so. If you run out of time on the P&P-ASVAB, it is to your advantage to fill in random guesses for the remaining items, as there is no penalty for guessing.

Inside this fact sheet:

The ASVAB Tests	*2*
ASVAB Test Lengths and Time Limits	*3*
How the CAT-ASVAB Works	*3*
Frequently Asked Questions	*4*

The ASVAB is administered via both computer and paper and pencil.

Roughly 70% of military applicants take the test via computer.



The CAT-ASVAB was implemented after 20 years of extensive research and evaluation.

It was the first large-scale adaptive test battery to be administered in a high-stakes setting.

The ASVAB Tests

The ASVAB tests are designed to measure aptitudes in four domains: Verbal, Math, Science and Technical, and Spatial. The table below describes the content of the ASVAB tests. The tests are presented in the order in which they are administered.

Test	Description	Domain
General Science (GS)	Knowledge of physical and biological sciences	Science/Technical
Arithmetic Reasoning (AR)	Ability to solve arithmetic word problems	Math
Word Knowledge (WK)	Ability to select the correct meaning of a word presented in context and to identify best synonym for a given word	Verbal
Paragraph Comprehension (PC)	Ability to obtain information from written passages	Verbal
Mathematics Knowledge (MK)	Knowledge of high school mathematics principles	Math
Electronics Information (EI)	Knowledge of electricity and electronics	Science/Technical
†Auto Information (AI)	Knowledge of automobile technology	Science/Technical
†Shop Information (SI)	Knowledge of tools and shop terminology and practices	Science/Technical
Mechanical Comprehension (MC)	Knowledge of mechanical and physical principles	Science/Technical
Assembling Objects (AO)	Ability to determine how an object will look when its parts are put together	Spatial

†AI and SI are administered as separate tests in the CAT-ASVAB, but combined into one single score (labeled AS). AI and SI are combined into one test (AS) in the P&P-ASVAB. Scores on the combined test (AS) are reported for both the CAT-ASVAB and P&P-ASVAB.

ASVAB Test Lengths and Time Limits

CAT-ASVAB		
Test	Test Length	Time Limit
GS	15 Questions	12 Minutes
AR	15 Questions	55 Minutes
WK	15 Questions	9 Minutes
PC	10 Questions	27 Minutes
MK	15 Questions	31 Minutes
EI	15 Questions	10 Minutes
AI	10 Questions	7 Minutes
SI	10 Questions	7 Minutes
MC	15 Questions	22 Minutes
AO	15 Questions	18 Minutes
Total	135 Questions	198 Minutes

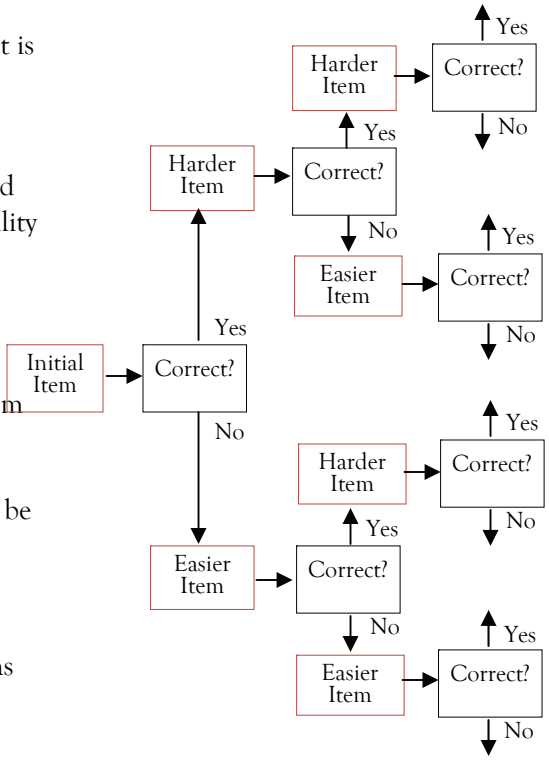
P&P-ASVAB		
Test	Test Length	Time Limit
GS	25 Questions	11 Minutes
AR	30 Questions	36 Minutes
WK	35 Questions	11 Minutes
PC	15 Questions	13 Minutes
MK	25 Questions	24 Minutes
EI	20 Questions	9 Minutes
AS	25 Questions	11 Minutes
MC	25 Questions	19 Minutes
AO	25 Questions	15 Minutes
Total	225 Questions	149 Minutes

How the CAT-ASVAB Works

In the CAT-ASVAB, you receive a test that is tailored toward your abilities. Items are selected for administration from a pool of items. After each item is administered, information is collected and evaluated, and the item best suited for your estimated ability level is selected to be administered next.

The item selection process for the CAT-ASVAB is illustrated in the figure to the right. Typically, if you answer an item incorrectly, an easier item is selected to be administered next. If you answer correctly, then a harder item is selected to be administered next.

The branching used in the CAT-ASVAB ensures that you will be administered items best suited to your abilities.

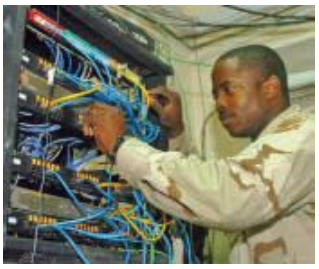


Typically in the CAT-ASVAB, if an examinee answers an item incorrectly, an easier item is selected to be administered next.

Likewise, if an examinee answers an item correctly, then a harder item is selected to be administered next.

Frequently Asked Questions

Are there two entrance exams—ASVAB and AFQT?



No, there is only one exam—the Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery—ASVAB for short. The ASVAB has 10 tests. Your scores from four of the tests—Word Knowledge (WK), Paragraph Comprehension (PC), Arithmetic Reasoning (AR), and Mathematics Knowledge (MK)—are combined to compute your score on what is referred to as the Armed Forces Qualification Test (AFQT). Scores on the AFQT are used to determine your eligibility for enlistment in the Army, Navy, Air Force, or Marine Corps. Scores on all of the ASVAB tests are used to determine the best job for you in the military.

My AFQT score is 62. What does this mean?

AFQT scores are reported as percentiles between 1-99. An AFQT percentile score indicates the percentage of examinees in a reference group who scored at or below that particular score. For current AFQT scores, the reference group is a sample of 18 to 23 year old youth who took the ASVAB as part of a national norming study conducted in 1997. Thus, your AFQT score of 62 indicates that you scored as well as or better than 62% of the nationally-representative sample of 18 to 23 year old youth.

On average, the CAT-ASVAB takes about half the time of the P&P-ASVAB.

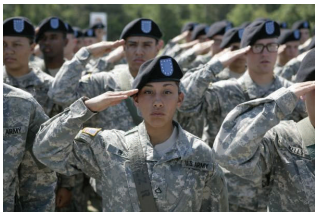
There are plans to administer the CAT-ASVAB in more sites where the P&P-ASVAB is currently administered.

How often can I take the ASVAB?

After you take your initial ASVAB, you must wait one calendar month to retake the test. You must wait an additional calendar month to retest a second time. After that, you must wait 6 calendar months to retake the ASVAB. Your scores may be used for enlistment for up to 2 years from the date of testing.

I've heard that the ASVAB administered on the computer is harder/easier than the paper and pencil ASVAB. Is this true?

The CAT-ASVAB may seem harder or easier than the P&P-ASVAB because the CAT-ASVAB is tailored to your specific ability level. The P&P-ASVAB contains some very easy and very hard questions, but most are of average difficulty. The CAT-ASVAB software adjusts to your ability level and administers questions that are best suited for you. If you are above average ability, you will receive questions that are above average difficulty. Hence, the CAT-ASVAB may appear more difficult than the P&P-ASVAB. If you are below average ability, you will receive questions that are below average difficulty. Hence, the CAT-ASVAB may appear easier than the P&P-ASVAB. Even though the questions differ in difficulty across the CAT-ASVAB and P&P-ASVAB, the reported scores are statistically linked across the two methods of administration. Thus, you would be expected to receive a similar score regardless of whether you take the CAT-ASVAB or the P&P-ASVAB.



Where can I find more information about the ASVAB?

Visit the official ASVAB website at www.Official-ASVAB.com.