1. Map Your ACT Senior Timeline

Because early college deadlines (Early Action/Decision) land on **November 1**, time is your most critical variable.

- **Target Test Dates:**
    1. **September / October:** Primary focus for seniors. October is typically the absolute last test date accepted for Early Action/Decision applications.
    2. **December:** Final deadline for Regular Decision applications (January/February deadlines).
- **Action Steps:**
    1. Check the official test policies for every college on your list to verify their latest accepted test date.
    2. Account for score processing: ACT multiple-choice scores are typically released **2 to 3 weeks** after the test date (writing scores take an extra 1–2 weeks).

2. Account Setup & Registration

1. **Create/Log Into Your MyACT Account:** Go to my.act.org and set up or access your profile.
2. **Register Online:**
    - Select your preferred test format (the ACT is available in both paper and computer-based formats at various centers).
    - Select whether to take the optional **Writing (Essay)** section. *(Check your target colleges—most no longer require the Writing section, so you can likely skip it and save time/money).*
    - Upload an acceptable headshot photo.
    - Pay the registration fee ($69 for the core test) or enter an **ACT Fee Waiver code** provided by your high school counselor (covers two free tests and free score reports).
3. **Score Recipients:** You can select up to **4 colleges** to receive your scores for free, but seniors should only select these if confident in their baseline score.

3. Understand the ACT Structure & Pace

Unlike the SAT, the ACT includes a dedicated **Science** section and is known for being a very "fast-paced" exam.

Section	Questions	Time Allotted	Time per Question
English	50 Questions	35 Minutes	~42 seconds
Math	50 Questions	45 Minutes	54 seconds
Reading	36 Questions	40 Minutes	~66 seconds
Science	40 Questions	35 Minutes	~52 seconds
Writing *(Optional)*	1 Prompt	40 Minutes	40 minutes

Key Difference from SAT: The ACT Science section does **not** test advanced biology or chemistry recall; it tests your ability to quickly interpret graphs, charts, tables, and experimental setups.

4. Prep Strategy for Seniors

With only a few weeks to prepare, your strategy must focus on efficiency and time management.

1. **Take an Official Diagnostic Test:** Download a free, official practice test directly from the ACT website or MyACT portal. Take it strictly timed to identify your natural pacing flaws.
2. **Master the Pacing:**
    - **English:** Focus on grammar rules (subject-verb agreement, punctuation, sentence fragments).
    - **Math:** Unlike the SAT, the ACT Math section covers more advanced trigonometry and geometry. Bring an approved graphing calculator (e.g., TI-84).
    - **Reading:** Don't read passages word-for-word first. Passage-map or skim, then jump directly to the questions.
    - **Science:** Go straight to the graphs and charts before reading the text. Treat it like a visual reading comprehension section.
3. **Use Free Resources:**
    - **Official ACT Practice Tools:** Utilize the free practice tests and question sets on act.org.
    - **CrackACT / Online Question Banks:** Practice individual timed sections to build speed.

5. Test Day Checklist

Night Before

- **Admission Ticket:** Print your admission ticket directly from your MyACT account.
- **Photo ID:** Government-issued ID or official school ID card.
- **Testing Gear:** Approved calculator with fresh batteries, two sharpened No. 2 pencils with good erasers (if taking paper format).
- **Snack & Water:** For the single break between Math and Reading.

Morning Schedule

- **7:45 AM:** Arrive at the test center. Doors shut at 8:00 AM sharp.
- **8:30 AM - 12:15 PM:** Testing window (runs until ~1:00 PM if taking the Writing section).

6. Score Reporting & Superscoring

1. **Check Your Score:** Scores arrive online in your MyACT portal.
2. **Superscoring:** Most colleges accept the **ACT Superscore**, which takes your highest individual section scores across multiple test dates to create the highest possible composite score.
3. **Send Official Scores:** Send your scores immediately to colleges via MyACT once you verify they meet your targets.