

# Comparative Features of the ACT and SAT 2011–2012

	<b>The ACT</b> (ACT, Inc.)	<b>SAT</b> (College Board)
<b>Test Fee:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• \$34.00</li> <li>• \$49.50 (with writing)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• \$49.00</li> </ul>
<b>Test Purpose:</b>	Designed to measure academic achievement in the areas of English, mathematics, reading, and science.	Designed to measure critical reading, writing, and mathematical reasoning skills.
<b>Test Content:</b>	<p><b>ACT English Test (75 items, 45 minutes)</b></p> <p>Usage/Mechanics</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Punctuation (13%)</li> <li>• Basic Grammar and Usage (16%)</li> <li>• Sentence Structure (24%)</li> </ul> <p>Rhetorical Skills</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Strategies (16%)</li> <li>• Organization (15%)</li> <li>• Style (16%)</li> </ul> <p><b>ACT Mathematics Test (60 items, 60 minutes)</b></p> <p>Pre-Algebra and Elementary Algebra (23%, 17%) Intermediate Algebra and Coord. Geometry (15%, 15%) Plane Geometry and Trigonometry (23%, 7%)</p> <p><b>ACT Reading Test (40 items, 35 minutes)</b></p> <p>Arts and Literature</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Prose Fiction (25%)</li> <li>• Humanities (25%) (art history, art, music, philosophy, theater, architecture, dance, religion/ethics, literary criticism)</li> </ul> <p>Social Studies and Natural Sciences (25%, 25%)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• History, Political Science, Biology, Chemistry, Physics, Physical Sciences</li> </ul> <p><b>ACT Science Test (40 items, 35 minutes)</b></p> <p>Interpretation analysis, evaluation, reasoning, and problem-solving skills in Biology, Earth/Space Sciences, Chemistry, and Physics</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Data Representation (38%)</li> <li>Research Summaries (45%)</li> <li>Conflicting Viewpoints (17%)</li> </ul> <p><b>ACT Writing Test (Optional) (1 prompt, 30 minutes)</b></p> <p>Measures writing skills emphasized in high school English classes and in entry-level college composition courses. Consists of one 30-minute essay.</p>	<p><b>SAT Writing (Mandatory) (60 minutes)</b></p> <p>Multiple Choice (35 minutes) Essay (25 minutes)</p> <p><b>SAT Mathematics (70 minutes)</b></p> <p>Arithmetic (20%) Algebra (35–40%) Geometry (25–30%) Data Analysis (10–15%)</p> <p><b>SAT Critical Reading (70 minutes)</b></p> <p>Sentence Completion Critical Reading in Humanities, Social Narrative (80% nonfiction) 80% Extended Reasoning 10% Literal Comprehension 10% Vocabulary Elementary Analogies Adding Short Passages</p> <p><b>No Science Test</b></p>
<b>Method of Scoring:</b>	Scores based on number of right answers. No penalty for guessing.	Scores adjusted for guessing. Correct answers carry full weight while a chance-level penalty is applied for each incorrect answer.

## The ACT (ACT, Inc.)

## SAT (College Board)

<b>Test Score Scales:</b>	<p><b>ACT English Test: 1–36</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Usage/Mechanics: 1–18</li> <li>• Rhetorical Skills: 1–18</li> </ul> <p><b>ACT Reading Test: 1–36</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Arts and Literature: 1–18</li> <li>• Social Studies and Sciences: 1–18</li> </ul> <p><b>ACT Mathematics Test: 1–36</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pre-Algebra and Elementary Algebra: 1–18</li> <li>• Inter. Algebra and Coordinate Geometry: 1–18</li> <li>• Plane Geometry and Trigonometry: 1–18</li> </ul> <p><b>ACT Science Test: 1–36</b></p> <p><b>ACT Composite: 1–36</b> (average of four test scores—does not include writing)</p> <p><b>ACT English and Writing: 1–36</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Essay Subscore: 2–12</li> </ul>	<p><b>SAT Writing: 200–800</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Multiple Choice: 20–80</li> <li>• Essay: 2–12</li> </ul> <p><b>SAT Critical Reading: 200–800</b></p> <p><b>SAT Mathematics: 200–800</b></p> <p><b>No Science Test</b></p> <p><b>SAT Total: 600–2400</b> (sum of SAT Critical Reading, Math, and Writing Scores)</p>
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<b>Student Information:</b>	<p><b>Student Profile Section</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Background (Demographics)</li> <li>• High School Courses and Grades</li> <li>• Admission/Enrollment Information</li> <li>• Educational Plans, Interests, and Needs</li> <li>• Special Educational Needs, Interests, and Goals</li> <li>• College Extracurricular Plans</li> <li>• High School Information and Extracurricular Activities</li> <li>• Out of Class Accomplishments</li> <li>• Evaluation of High School Experience</li> </ul> <p><b>Educational and Career Planning</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ACT Interest Inventory</li> <li>• World-of-Work Map</li> <li>• College Majors and Programs</li> </ul>	<p><b>Student Descriptive Questionnaire</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Background (Demographics)</li> <li>• Educational Background</li> <li>• High School and Community Activities</li> <li>• Sports</li> <li>• Student Plans for College</li> </ul>
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<b>Common Uses:</b>	<p>Admissions Talent Identification Academic Advising Freshman Course Placement Decisions Awarding Course Credit, Especially in English and Math Courses Awarding Scholarships (not sole criterion)</p>	<p>Admissions Talent Identification Academic Advising Awarding Scholarships (not sole criterion)</p>
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<b>Research Services:</b>	<p>Class Profile Service Prediction Research Service Course Placement Service Retention Research Service</p>	<p>Class Profile Service Validity Research Service</p>
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Please Note: Every effort has been made to represent the ACT and SAT information accurately and concisely. All information has been drawn from official publications of the organizations offering the tests.