

COMPARING THE TESTS:
CURRENT SAT • NEW SAT • ACT

	Current SAT	New SAT (March 2016)	ACT
Format & Length	<p>10 relatively short sections:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 3 Reading • 3 Math • 2 Writing • 1 Essay • 1 Experimental (unscored) <p>5 answer choices for multiple choice questions</p> <p>Total Time: 3 hrs 45 mins</p>	<p>5 sections:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 Reading • 1 Language & Writing • 2 Math • 1 Essay (optional) <p>4 answer choices for multiple-choice questions</p> <p>Total 3 hrs w/o essay; Time 3 hrs 50 mins w/essay</p>	<p>5 sections:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 English • 1 Math • 1 Reading • 1 Science • 1 Essay (optional) <p>5 answer choices for multiple-choice math; 4 for other sections</p> <p>Total 2 hrs 55 mins w/o essay Time 3 hrs 35 mins w/essay</p>
Scoring	<p>Combined score: 600-2400 (sum of first 3 scores below):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reading: 200-800 • Math: 200-800 • Writing*: 200-800 • Essay: 2-12 <p>* Writing score includes both the Essay & multiple-choice Writing questions</p> <p>Scoring:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All questions worth 1 point • ¼ point penalty for wrong multiple-choice answer 	<p>Combined score: 400-1600 (sum of first 2 scores below):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reading & Writing: 200-800 • Math: 200-800 • Essay: 2-8 (3 scores: Reading, Writing, Analysis) <p>12 additional scores:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 3 Test Scores: Reading, Writing, Math • 2 Cross-Test Scores: Analysis in Science, Analysis in History/Social Studies • 7 Subscores: Expression of Ideas, Standard English Conventions, Command of Evidence, Words in Context, Heart of Algebra, Problem Solving & Data Analysis, Passport to Advanced Math <p>Scoring:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No penalty for wrong answers 	<p>Composite score: 1-36 (average of first 4 scores below):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • English: 1-36 • Math: 1-36 • Reading: 1-36 • Science: 1-36 • Essay: 1-36 (plus 4 subscores) <p>4 subscores & indicators:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • STEM Score • Career Readiness Indicator • English-Reading-Writing Score • Text Complexity Indicator <p>Scoring:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No penalty for wrong answers
Reading	<p>7 reading passages, 70 minutes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 3 regular passages • 2 “Mini” passages • 1 paired regular passage • 1 paired “Mini” passage • 48 questions <p>Content:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Natural science • Art/culture • History/social science • Narrative <p>Sentence Completions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 19 vocabulary questions 	<p>5 reading passages, 65 minutes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 4 regular passages • 1 paired passage • 52 questions <p>Content:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • US & world literature • History & social studies • Science <p>Includes informational graphics</p>	<p>4 reading passages, 35 minutes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 3 regular passages • 1 paired passage • 40 questions <p>Content (always in this sequence):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prose fiction • Social science • Humanities • Natural Science
Writing/English	<p>Identify & correct errors in 43 stand-alone sentences and 1 writing passage, 35 minutes — 49 questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Grammar & usage • Punctuation • Rhetoric 	<p>Revise & correct errors in 4 writing passages, 35 minutes — 44 questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Grammar and usage • Punctuation • Structure • Rhetoric <p>Includes informational graphics</p>	<p>Revise & correct errors in 5 writing passages, 45 minutes — 75 questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Grammar and usage • Punctuation • Structure • Rhetoric

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Math	<p>Content:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Arithmetic Reasoning • Algebra 1 & 2 • Geometry • Data Analysis, Statistics, Probability <p>Structure:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 70 minutes • 44 multiple-choice questions • 10 grid-in questions • Math formulas provided (at start of each section) • Calculator allowed 	<p>Content (Algebra is King!):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Algebra 1 & 2 • Geometry • Trigonometry • Statistics, Probability • Emphasis on word problems & questions in real-world context <p>Structure:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 80 minutes • 45 multiple-choice questions • 13 grid-in questions • Math formulas provided (at start of each section) • 1st math section: no calculator • 2nd math section: calculator OK 	<p>Content:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pre-Algebra • Algebra 1 & 2 • Geometry • Statistics, Probability • Trigonometry <p>Structure:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 60 minutes • 60 multiple-choice questions • No math formulas provided • Calculator allowed • Questions more straight-forward than SAT
Essay	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Required • 25 minutes • Focused on grasp of English language rather than quality of reasoning or veracity of facts • Fairly universal topic 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Optional • 50 minutes • Closely read, analyze, and write about a 650-750-word source document: how does the author build an argument? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Optional • 40 minutes • Read a background paragraph on a complex issue, analyze and evaluate 3 perspectives, create your own perspective
Science	N/A	<p>Infused in all sections of the test and reported as a separate "cross-test score"</p>	<p>Tests reasoning, not knowledge, and the ability to interpret tables, graphs, and charts in the context of topics from these fields:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Biology • Physics • Chemistry • Earth/space science <p>Structure:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 6 passages • 40 questions • 35 minutes
Test Dates (2015-2016)	<p>Oct 3, 2015 * Nov 7, 2015 Dec 5, 2015 Jan 23, 2016 *</p> <p><i>* Question & Answer Service available</i></p>	<p>Mar 5, 2016 May 7, 2016 * June 4, 2016</p> <p>New PSAT: Oct 14, 2015 Oct 28, 2015</p> <p><i>* Question & Answer Service available</i></p>	<p>Sept 12, 2015 Oct 24, 2015 Dec 12, 2015 * Feb 6, 2016 April 9, 2016 * June 11, 2016 *</p> <p><i>* Test Information Release available</i></p>

In the final analysis ...

Redesigned SAT has 61 fewer questions than ACT & approx 20 seconds more per question (on average) than ACT.
Don't let the extra time fool you: SAT demands closer reading throughout, while ACT is more straightforward.