

SAT & ACT Overview with Test Taking Strategies

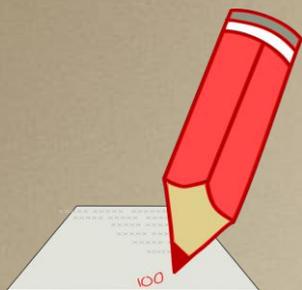
Goals

- To understand the structures of both the SAT and ACT test.
- To understand some of the differences between the SAT and ACT.
- To identify and learn to use several test taking strategies.



SAT Basics

Writing



- 44 Questions
- 35 minutes

Reading



- 52 Questions
- 65 Minutes

Math – no calculator



- 20 questions
- 25 minutes

Math – with calculator



- 38 Questions
- 55 minutes

** The Essay adds an additional 50 minutes and is not required of CSU applicants. UC applicants are required to take it.



ACT Basics

- English



- 75 questions
- 45 minutes

- Math



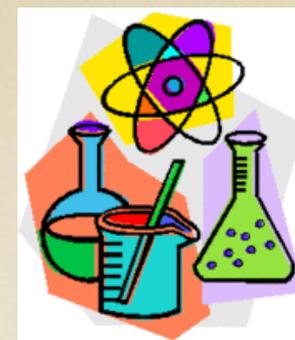
- 60 questions
- 60 minutes

- Reading



- 40 questions
- 35 minutes

- Science



- 40 questions
- 35 minutes

** The ACT with Writing adds an additional 40 minutes and is not required of CSU applicants. UC applicants are required to take it.



Scoring differences

ACT	SAT
<ul style="list-style-type: none">The best score you can earn is 36.Each section is scored individually (with a 36 as your best possible score).The scores from each section are added together then divided by 4 to get the Composite Score.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">The best score you can earn is 1600.800 points possible in math.800 points possible for combined Reading + Writing and Language.Scores from your math, reading, and writing and language section are combined for your Total Score.

FYI: If you're interested in comparing scores on the tests, search for **SAT-ACT Concordance** on the act.org website.



Key differences between the ACT and SAT

ACT	SAT
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 4 reading passages• Includes a science section	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 5 reading passages• No science section
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Can use a calculator on all math questions• Essay: Persuasive (and is 10 minutes shorter)• More questions, less time	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Can only use calculator on a specific math section• Essay: Rhetorical Analysis• More time, fewer questions

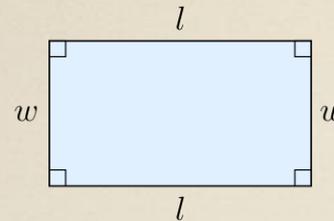
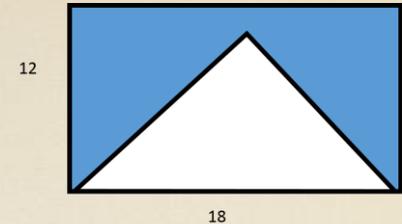
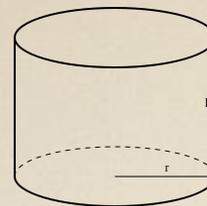
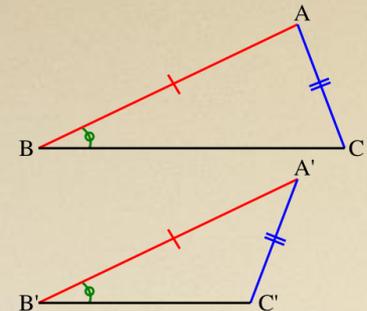
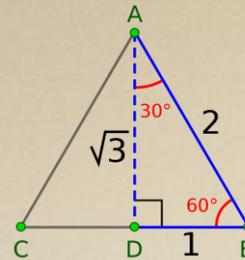
* FYI, You'll have roughly 60 more questions on the ACT than the SAT in about the same time.



Test Taking Strategies

Tip # 1: Know what to expect, don't be surprised.

- Special Triangles
- Triangle Congruency (SSS, SAS, ASA)
- Volume (rectangles, cylinders, cones, triangles)
- Area and perimeter (triangles, rectangles, circles)
- Laws of Exponents
- Order of operations
- Probability



$$x^{-2} = (x^{-1})^2 = \left(\frac{1}{x}\right)^2 = \frac{1}{x^2}$$

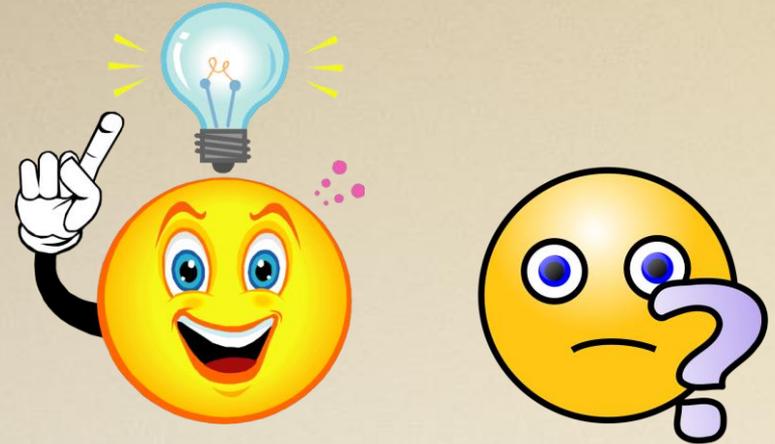
$$= (x^2)^{-1} = \frac{1}{x^2}$$



Test Taking Strategies...continued

Tip #2: Know what you know.
Acknowledge what you don't.

- Spend your time on the questions you know how to do.
- Don't spend time trying to solve problems you don't know how to do.
- Remember -- you earn points for answering correctly, not showing your work. If you can make an educated guess, GO FOR IT!



** FYI: You can earn a respectable score by getting about 60% of the questions right on each section.



Test Taking Strategies...continued

Tip #3 Understand what the question is asking before you try to answer it. Identify the question type, if possible.

- Remember - Not every question will be clear in what it is asking.
- Be sure to look for **keywords** that give you clues about what the question is asking or what you'll be solving for.
- For the reading section, we'll touch on three easy question types to recognize:
 1. Vocabulary in Context
 2. Main Idea/ Point of View
 3. Making Inferences



Vocabulary in Context

How to recognize these questions:

- Short, clear and direct.
- Make a specific line reference.
- Ask for a closest synonym (most often).

What makes these tricky?

- Often test words that have multiple meanings.
- Require students to understand **HOW** a word is being used.
- Tests secondary meanings of words.

She didn't rise, blushing, as a young girl at Geneva would have done; and yet Winterbourne, conscious that he had been
25 very bold, thought it possible she was offended. "With your mother," he answered very respectfully.

Question 2 of 10

As used in line 24, "conscious" most nearly means

- A responsive.
- B informed.
- C aware.
- D watchful.



Main Idea/ Point of View



How do I know if a question is asking about the main idea? Look for these key words:

- Author's message
- Main idea
- Main point
- Primary purpose
- Summarizes

Which choice best summarizes the passage?

- A It captures a conversation between two tourists in Switzerland.
- B It describes the relationship between two friends.
- C It paints a picture of life in Switzerland.
- D It highlights the unconscious thoughts of an American traveler.

Making Inferences

Inference questions ask you to make reasonable assumptions about what might be true based on evidence and details provided in the text.

May often use some form of these words:

- Infer
- Gather
- Conclude
- Assume

FYI: If you've identified a question as an inference type, you can eliminate answers that are explicitly stated in the text.

Question 3 of 10

Based on the interaction between Miss Miller and Winterbourne, it can reasonably be inferred that Winterbourne

- A feels comfortable expressing his feelings for Miss Miller.
- B is extremely excited to go to the castle with Miss Miller.
- C is engaging with Miss Miller only in order to be polite.
- D has reservations about joining Miss Miller to the castle.



Math Strategies

Tip #4: Use every tool you can to solve a problem. This might require **guesstimating**, **substitution**, and **process of elimination**.

1. Decode:

“each” means multiply (x)

“and” means +

“was” means =

2. Rewrite:

$$6.5 (S) + 2 (D) = \$836.50$$

A food truck sells salads for \$6.50 each and drinks for \$2.00 each. The food truck's revenue from selling a total of 209 salads and drinks in one day was \$836.50.

How many salads were sold that day?

A) 77
 B) 93
 C) 99
 D) 105

3. Estimate the number of salads. I recommend an easy number like 100.

$$6.5(100) + 2(100) = \$850 \rightarrow \text{too much.}$$

Now you can eliminate answers that round to 100.

4. Eliminate: If you know that 100 salads was just a bit too much, which answer makes the most sense?

5. Check: Substitute your answer into your rewritten equation

$$6.5(93) + 2(116) = \$836.50$$



Resources for practice

- Khan Academy <https://www.khanacademy.org/>
- ACT Academy: <http://www.act.org/content/act/en/products-and-services/the-act/test-preparation.html#practice-tests>
- Humboldt County Library: <http://libcat.co.humboldt.ca.us/search~S13>
- Visit your school library to check out test prep books.
- Visit your school counselor to get a test prep booklet.



Thank You !

Humboldt State University TRIO Talent Search

<http://talentsearch.humboldt.edu/>

Don't forget to submit your evaluations!

