

SAT vs. ACT

	SAT	ACT
Format	Digital only via a College Board app	Paper-and-Pencil or Online
Supported Computers	Bring Your Own Device: Windows laptop or tablet, Mac laptop, iPad, or school-managed Chromebook	(1) The test center's computer, or (2) Bring Your Own Device: Windows, Chromebook (personal or school-managed), or Macbook computers (no iPads)
Total Time	2 hours and 24 minutes (includes 10-minute break)	2 hours and 20 minutes (includes 15-minute break) 3 hours with science 3 hours and 40 minutes with science and writing
Sections	2 Sections, Each with 2 Stages Reading and Writing (R&W) R&W Stage 1 (32 min, 27 questions) R&W Stage 2 (32 min, 27 questions) Break (10 min) Math Math Stage 1 (35 min, 22 questions) Math Stage 2 (35 min, 22 questions)	3 Required Tests, 2 Optional Tests English (35 min, 50 questions) Math (50 min, 45 questions) Break (15 min) Reading (40 min, 36 questions) Optional Science (40 min, 40 questions) Optional Essay (40 min, 1 prompt)
Structure	Stage Adaptive The difficulty of a section's second stage is based on performance in the first stage; the test tailors the second stage to the student.	Static The test does not change based on a student's performance.
Test Scores	400–1600 Total Score 200–800 Reading and Writing 200–800 Math No new SAT-ACT Concordance is necessary.	1–36 Composite Score: rounded average of English, math, and reading scores 1–36 each test: English, math, reading, and science
Other Scores	No subscores or cross-test scores	STEM score is presented as the rounded average of math and science scores when both are taken. ELA score is presented as the rounded average of English, reading, and writing when all tests are taken.
Unscored Questions	Both the Reading and Writing and the Math tests will have 4 unscored questions mixed in with the scored questions	Each section includes unscored questions mixed in with the scored questions: English (10 unscored), math (4 unscored), reading (9 unscored) and science (6 unscored)
Accommodations	All timing accommodations are available. Students whose accommodations require a paper test are able to take a paper-and-pencil test.	For information on how to request testing accommodations, visit www.compassprep.com/accommodations-requests-sat-vs-act
Score Reports	Available days after the exam Students no longer have access to their questions and answers	Available 2 weeks after the exam Students can order My Answer Key to receive a digital copy of the multiple-choice test questions for certain administrations.
Security	Students have unique tests—an algorithm builds question sets out of a large pool of questions tagged based on qualities ranging from content area to difficulty.	A limited number of form codes are used each administration. Students sign an agreement to keep test questions confidential and are prohibited from using recording devices.

READING AND WRITING/ENGLISH

	SAT	ACT
Timing	64 minutes, evenly divided between 2 stages	English: 45 minutes Reading: 35 minutes
Passage Format	54 passage & question sets One short reading passage (25-150 words) per question	English: 5 medium-length passages (300–350 words), each with 15 questions Reading: 4 long passages (~750 words), each with 10 questions
Reading Organization	Reading questions are in the first half of each stage and are organized by domain and then question type: 1. Craft and Structure (Words in Context, Text Structure and Purpose, Cross-Text Connections) 2. Info and Ideas (Central Ideas and Details, Command of Evidence, Inferences)	The four passages are broken into two types: literary narrative and informational.
Question Organization	Difficulty increases within each question type	Random
Writing/English Organization	Writing questions are presented in the second half of each Reading and Writing stage and are organized by domain and then question type: 1. Standard English Conventions 2. Info and Ideas (Rhetorical Synthesis, Transitions)	The five passages are written to appear like typical high-school level writing Topics range from history reports to personal narrative
Question Organization	Difficulty increases within each question type	Chronological—questions follow the order of the passage

MATH AND SCIENCE

	SAT	ACT
Math Timing	70 minutes, evenly divided between 2 stages	50 minutes
Math Format	44 questions: 33 multiple-choice questions intermixed with 11 student-produced response questions	45 questions
Math Content Areas	Math content has not changed from the paper SAT but domains have been renamed: 1. Algebra 2. Advanced Math 3. Problem Solving and Data Analysis 4. Geometry and Trigonometry	ACT organizes questions into 3 overlapping areas and 5 question types 1. Preparing for Higher Math: Number & Quantity, Algebra, Functions, Geometry, Statistics and Probability 2. Integrating Essential Skills 3. Statistics & Probability
Math Question Organization	Difficulty increases within each stage.	Difficulty increases within the section.
Calculator Use	Approved calculators or the testing application's built-in calculator can be used on all math questions.	Approved calculators can be used on the Math Test only. A built-in calculator may be available for students taking the online ACT.
Science	Reading, Writing, and Math questions ask students to interpret graphs and data tables	35-minute section: 6 long passages with graphs and 40 questions