

SAT vs. ACT

What is the difference between SAT and ACT? They're both standardized tests and they both factor into the college admission process. Take a side by side glance at these important exams.

SAT

March 2005

Paragraph length critical reading passages, an essay, and more challenging math (some Algebra 2 questions). No more analogies or quantitative comparisons.

Seven times per year

10 Section Exam:
3 Critical Reading, 3 Math, 3 Writing and 1 Experimental. The Experimental section is masked to look like a regular section

Math: Up to 9th grade basic geometry and algebra 2.

Science: None

Reading: Sentence completions, short and long critical reading passages, reading comprehension.

Stresses vocabulary: More questions testing grammar, usage, and word choice.

Yes

200-800 per section, added together for a combined score. A 2400 is the highest possible combined score.

Yes. If a student requests a score report be sent to specific colleges, the report will include the scores the student received on every SAT taken

vs.

When is it changing?

What are the changes?

When is it administered?

What is the test structure?

What is the test content?

Is there a penalty for wrong answers?

How is the test scored?

Are all scores sent to colleges?

ACT

February 2005

Addition of an optional writing test (essay)

Six times a year

4 Section Exam:
English, Math, Reading and Science Reasoning. An Experimental section is added to tests on certain dates only and is clearly experimental.

Math: Up to trigonometry.

Science: Charts, graphs, conflicting viewpoints.

Reading: Four passages; one each of prose fiction, social science, humanities and natural science.

Stresses grammar.

No

1-36 for each subject, averaged for a composite score. A 36 is the highest possible composite score.

No. There us a 'Score Choice' option. Students can choose which colleges will receive their scores and which scores the colleges will see.