

Comparison of College Entrance Assessments

(SAT vs. ACT)

	SAT (formerly known as Scholastic Aptitude Test and now, simply the SAT)	ACT (American College Test)
Type of Assessment	a standardized test that measures literacy, numeracy, & writing skills that are needed for academic success	a national standardized test that serves as a measurement of aptitude & critical thinking
How many sections are there?	Three Sections (multiple choice): Reading, Writing and Language, & Math	Four Sections (multiple choice): English, Math, Reading, & Science
How long does the test take?	3 hours (without essay) with breaks	2 hours, 55 minutes (without essay) with breaks 3 hours, 40 minutes (with essay) with breaks
What is the timing of each section? How many questions are in each section?	Reading: 52 questions, 65 minutes Writing and Language: 44 questions, 35 minutes Math: no calculator—20 questions, 25 min; with calculator—38 questions, 55 min Optional essay: As of spring 2021, SAT no longer offers an essay option.	English: 75 questions, 45 min Math: 60 questions, 60 min Reading: 40 questions, 35 min Science: 40 questions, 35 min Optional essay: 1 prompt, 40 min
How is the test scored?	The Evidence-Based Reading & Writing sections are combined into one score that is worth up to 800 points. The Math section is worth up to 800 points. The composite score is simply the sum of both section scores for a maximum of 1600 .	Each subject is scored 1-36 . The average of all of your sections is your composite score. 36 is the maximum composite score. The optional essay score is separate & does not factor into your score on the 1-36 range. The essay score has subscores for the following domains: Ideas and Analysis, Development and Support, Organization, and Language Use & Conventions. Each of the subscores range from 2 to 12.
Where can I get more information & register for the test?	The College Board www.collegeboard.com *You do not need to register for tests taken at BHS during the school day.*	ACT, Inc. www.ACT.org *You do not need to register for tests taken at BHS during the school day.*
Similarities of SAT & ACT	- There is no penalty for guessing on either test. - Both test knowledge of math, English grammar, and reading comprehension. - Both tests can be superscored. Some colleges give the option to “superscore” test results meaning a student could pick his/her highest test score in a section from multiple testing dates. This ability to mix and match individual section scores from different testing dates typically yields a “superscore” that is higher than an ACT composite or SAT score from a single testing date.	
Differences of SAT & ACT	SAT - No science section - Non multiple choice items included - Math accounts for 50% of score - Everyday math formulas are provided - Can only use calculator with some problems	ACT - Science reasoning section - Entirely multiple choice items - Math accounts for 25% of score - Everyday math formulas are not provided - Can use calculator on all problems