

SUMMIT EDUCATIONAL GROUP COLLEGE ADMISSION TESTING GUIDE

2016-2017



SUMMIT
EDUCATIONAL
GROUP

Focusing on the Individual Student



LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT

Dear Colleagues, Parents, and Students,

Not many events in a young person's life produce as much angst and confusion as do college admissions and standardized testing. The onslaught of information—and misinformation—can be overwhelming.

- What score do I need to get into College Z?
- How important are my test scores?
- Will colleges see only my best scores?
- How many times should I take the SAT or ACT?

Today's testing and admissions landscape is ever changing: The SAT underwent wholesale changes in 2016. To keep pace, the ACT has subtly and continuously evolved its test as well. More colleges are adopting test-optional and test-flexible policies. Subject Tests are being marginalized in the admissions process, required now by fewer than 15 US colleges.

At Summit, we pride ourselves on providing exceptional test preparation and tutoring, but we also strive to be a trusted resource for counselors and families navigating this process. Our complimentary annual College Admission Testing Guide is a valuable tool that will answer the above questions and many others. Hang onto it, and refer to it often as you make this journey.

When it comes to standardized testing, we have always counseled students and parents to maintain perspective and to craft a sensible, individualized testing plan early in the process—a plan that addresses which tests you're going to take, when you're going to take them, and how and when you're going to prepare for them. A good testing plan is customized to the student. It puts the student's well-being front and center, prioritizes school work, and doesn't give the tests more life than they deserve.

If you're looking for professional, thoughtful, personal guidance, expert tutors and teachers, and exceptional test preparation, we are here for you. We have been for nearly 30 years. We offer a variety of test preparation and tutoring programs, and I'm very proud that over 80% of our families are referred to us by their friends, school counselors, private consultants, learning specialists, and others. It means we're doing well by our students and families and the rest of our constituents.

Our commitment is to your testing success, on your terms. I encourage you to contact us. We'd be delighted to help in any way we can.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Charlie O'Hearn". The signature is fluid and cursive.

CHARLIE O'HEARN

President/Founder

Summit Educational Group

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MASSACHUSETTS

90 Bridge Street, Suite 200
Newton, MA 02458

CONNECTICUT / NEW YORK

237 Elm Street
New Canaan, CT 06840

800-698-8867
mytutor.com

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TEST PREPARATION BEST PRACTICES

It starts with a testing plan.

We have always counseled students and parents to maintain perspective and to craft a sensible, individualized testing plan early in the process—a plan that addresses **which tests** you're going to take, **when you're going to take them**, and **how you're going to prepare for them**. A good plan is customized for the student. It puts the student's well-being front and center, prioritizes school work, and doesn't give the tests more life than they deserve.

Foundations of Good Test Preparation

With a testing plan in place, you can focus on your preparation. While there are many different ingredients that go into a successful test preparation program, there are three key fundamentals: content mastery, strategy, and practice tests.



CONTENT MASTERY

Today's college admissions tests are curriculum-based tests that are built on a defined set of learning standards. Students who score best on the SAT and ACT have a firm grasp on the academic skills that are tested. You might have forgotten the neither/nor rule for subject-verb agreement, or perhaps you never learned the quadratic formula. Reviewing content areas, reinforcing necessary skills, and learning how to apply this knowledge to actual test questions is essential for improving your score.

Just as with a scrimmage or a dress rehearsal, the more your test preparation simulates the real thing the better. Taking practice tests under realistic conditions removes the mystery of the test, reduces anxiety, and increases confidence. Practice tests provide an opportunity to practice new strategies and skills, and they help build stamina and reinforce proper pacing. The results of these tests also provide a tool for tracking progress and assessing what areas still need improvement. Take at least 3 full-length, timed practice tests throughout the course of preparation.



PRACTICE TESTS

Successful test-takers not only possess the necessary academic skills but also understand how to take a standardized test. Pacing, process of elimination, working backward, and question type recognition are all strategies that will help students maximize their scores. Understanding the patterns of the test will allow you to be a proactive rather than reactive test-taker. Having an arsenal of tools at your disposal puts you in control of the test.



STRATEGY

COMPARISON OF THE SAT AND THE ACT

	SAT	ACT	KEY DIFFERENCES
FORMAT AND LENGTH	5 sections Writing & Language; Reading; 2 Math; Essay Total testing time: 3 hours, 50 minutes (includes essay)	5 sections English; Math; Reading; Science; Writing Total testing time: 3 hours, 35 minutes (includes essay)	The SAT has a stronger emphasis on math, whereas the ACT has a stronger emphasis on science. Overall testing time and section lengths are similar. SAT questions generally require more critical thinking, but the SAT also provides 30-40% more time per question.
SCORING	Total Score: 400-1600 Evidence-Based Reading and Writing: 200-800 Math: 200-800 Essay (not added into total score): 2-8 in each of three domains	Composite Score: 1-36 (average of 4 test scores) English: 1-36 Math: 1-36 Reading: 1-36 Science: 1-36 Writing (not averaged into composite score): 2-12	The ACT Composite Score is averaged, so a change in one test score may not be reflected in the Composite. The ACT Composite is divided into relatively few possible scores, so an increase of one point can represent a significant difference in abilities. The SAT Total Score is the sum of the test scores.
WRITING & LANGUAGE/ ENGLISH	Revise and edit a piece of writing Standard English grammar and usage Punctuation Logical structure Effective rhetoric	Revise and edit a piece of writing Standard English grammar and usage Punctuation Logical structure Effective rhetoric	The SAT Writing & Language and ACT English Tests are similar in format and content. The SAT has more emphasis on rhetoric and typically has more complex passages, but offers about 33% more time per question than the ACT does. The SAT also includes questions relating to data graphics.
MATH	Pre-algebra through basic trigonometry 12 Grid-In questions (no answer choices) Strong emphasis on Algebra Calculator prohibited on one section	Pre-algebra through basic trigonometry Extensive range of concepts tested Formulas not provided 5 answer choices per question (rest of test has 4)	The SAT and ACT Math Tests cover similar ranges of concepts. The ACT requires a broad, basic knowledge of many concepts. The SAT requires a deep knowledge of a core set of concepts, particularly algebra. The SAT offers about 38% more time per question than the ACT does.
READING	4 single passages and 1 paired passage 2 passages include diagrams/charts 2 vocabulary-in-context questions per passage 2 evidence questions per passage	4 single or paired passages Consistent order of subject areas: Literary Narrative and Prose Fiction, Humanities, Social Sciences, Natural Sciences	The ACT Reading Test emphasizes basic reading comprehension but challenges students with its speed. The SAT Reading Test emphasizes defining vocabulary in context, understanding the role of the author, and defending answers with textual evidence. The SAT typically contains more complex passages, but offers about 43% more time per question.
SCIENCE	The SAT does not have a stand-alone Science section, but 21 science questions are included throughout the Math, Reading, and Writing & Language Tests	40 questions distributed over 6 or 7 passages Emphasis on charts, diagrams, etc. Science is a reasoning test—rarely requires prior specific science knowledge	The ACT Science Test measures interpretation, analysis, evaluation, reasoning, and problem-solving skills. The test uses scientific language and reasoning, but rarely requires any specific knowledge from your academic science classes. While there are science questions throughout the SAT, there is no specific Science section.
ESSAY	50 minutes Analyze a passage and evaluate author's reasoning and rhetoric Student opinions discouraged Scored on 2-8 scale on each of three domains: Reading, Analysis, Writing	40 minutes Evaluate three perspectives on a contemporary issue Student opinions encouraged Scored on 2-12 scale on each of 4 domains: Ideas & Analysis, Development & Support, Organization, Language Use & Conventions	The ACT essay emphasizes crafting and comparing arguments. The SAT essay emphasizes understanding and analyzing how arguments are crafted. The ACT allows for more creativity, whereas the SAT requires strong analytical reading skills and provides more time to write the essay.

SAT MATH VS ACT MATH

Both the SAT and ACT cover a similar range of math concepts from pre-algebra to trigonometry. The ACT requires a basic understanding of a greater number of concepts and terms, whereas the SAT requires a deeper understanding of fewer concepts, particularly in algebra. Unlike the SAT, the ACT does not provide

a list of common formulas. Also, while only one of the SAT's Math sections allows the use of a calculator, a calculator is allowed on the entire ACT Math Test.

The following table shows how often, on average, math topics appear on the SAT and ACT.

RELATIVE FREQUENCY

AREA	TOPIC	SAT (58 TOTAL QUESTIONS)	ACT (60 TOTAL QUESTIONS)
PRE-ALGEBRA	Number Properties	Not tested	0-2
	Fractions	1-3	1-3
	Percents	1-2	1-2
	Ratios	0-2	1-2
	Proportions	1-4	1-2
	Exponents	1-2	1-2
	Radicals	2-3	0-2
	Digits & Scientific Notation	Not tested	0-1
	Units & Conversion	1-3	0-1
	Sets	Not tested	0-2
	Sequences	Not tested	0-2
	Logic	Not tested	0-1
	Imaginary & Complex Numbers	1-2	0-1
DATA	Combinations & Probability	1-2	1-3
	Statistics	1-3	1-3
	Data Relationships	2-5	0-1
	Data Collection and Conclusions	1-2	0-1
ALGEBRA	Algebraic Expressions	2-3	2-3
	Linear Equations & Inequalities	2-5	2-4
	Absolute Value	0-1	1-2
	Systems of Equations	2-6	0-2
	Slope	0-2	0-1
	Midpoint & Distance	0-1	1-2
	Graphs of Linear Equations & Inequalities	2-3	3-4
	Graph Transformations	Not tested	0-2
	Creating Linear Models	1-4	0-2
	Interpreting Linear Models	2-4	0-1
	Vectors	Not tested	0-1
	Logarithms	Not tested	0-1
	Matrices	Not tested	0-1
	Functions	2-3	1-2
	Quadratic Equations	1-3	0-2
	Higher-Degree Polynomials	1-4	0-1
	Conic Sections	1-3	1-2
Nonlinear Models	3-4	0-1	
PLANE & 3D GEOMETRY	Angles	0-2	1-2
	Parallel & Perpendicular Lines	0-2	0-2
	Triangles	0-1	4-6
	Quadrilaterals	0-2	3-4
	Circles	1-2	2-3
	Volume & Surface Area	0-1	1-2
TRIGONOMETRY	Trigonometry	0-2	4

SAT WRITING & LANGUAGE VS ACT ENGLISH

The SAT Writing and Language Test & the ACT English Test both assess your ability to edit and revise essays. The ACT slightly emphasizes conventions of standard written English, whereas the SAT emphasizes the expression of ideas.

The ACT English Test has passages that are shorter in length and resemble essays that might be written by a high school student. SAT passages, on the other hand,

are well-written essays ranging in complexity from grades 9-10 to early college level. The following table shows how often, on average, English topics appear on the SAT and ACT. Note that the ACT English Test has almost twice as many questions as does the SAT Writing & Language Test.

RELATIVE FREQUENCY

AREA	TOPIC	RELATIVE FREQUENCY	
		SAT (44 TOTAL QUESTIONS)	ACT (75 TOTAL QUESTIONS)
CONVENTIONS OF USAGE	Pronouns	2-4	3-6
	Subject-Verb Agreement	1-2	1-3
	Comparisons	1-3	0-1
	Adjectives versus Adverbs	Not tested	1-2
	Idioms	1-2	1-3
	Diction	0-2	0-2
SENTENCE STRUCTURE	Fragments	1-2	4-6
	Run-Ons	0-1	5-6
	Parallelism	1-2	1-3
	Verb Tense	1-3	2-4
	Modifiers	1-2	2-4
PUNCTUATION	Periods	0-2	2-4
	Semicolons	1-2	0-2
	Colons	0-2	0-2
	Commas	2-5	5-8
	Apostrophes	1-2	2-4
EXPRESSION OF IDEAS	Supporting Main Idea	3-5	2-4
	Author's Intent	Not tested	4-6
	Organization of Ideas	1-3	3-5
	Adding Relevant Information	1-4	2-3
	Deleting Irrelevant Information	0-2	3-4
	Transitions	3-8	5-8
	Maintaining Style & Tone	3-5	6-8
	Wordiness	1-3	5-7
Data Graphics	1-2	Not tested	

CONCORDANCE TABLE

Concordance tables are necessary to compare scores between different tests. With the recent changes in the SAT test, the College Board has provided a number of concordance tables and tools so that everyone understands what these new scores mean.

New SAT scores can be compared to both old SAT scores and ACT scores. College admissions officers and others will use concordance tables for admission and placement.

ACT TO SAT CONCORDANCE TABLE

ACT COMPOSITE SCORE	NEW SAT TOTAL 400-1600	ACT COMPOSITE SCORE	NEW SAT TOTAL 400-1600	ACT COMPOSITE SCORE	NEW SAT TOTAL 400-1600	ACT COMPOSITE SCORE	NEW SAT TOTAL 400-1600
36	1600	28	1340	20	1050	14	800
35	1590		1330		1040		790
	1580		1320		1030		780
	1570		1310		1020		770
	1560	1300	1010	760			
34	1550	27	1290	19	1000	13	750
	1540		1280		990		740
	1530	26	1270		980		730
	1520		1260	970	720		
33	1510	25	1250	18	960	12	710
	1500		1240		950		700
	1490		1230		940		690
32	1480		1220	17	930		680
	1470	1210	920		670		
	1460	1200	910		660		
	1450	1190	900		650		
31	1440	24	1180	16	890		640
	1430		1170		880		630
	1420		1160		870		620
30	1410	23	1150		15	860	11
	1400		1140	850		600	
	1390		1130	840		590	
29	1380		22	1120	830	580	
	1370	1110		820	570		
	1360	1100		810	560		
	1350	21	1090				
	1080						
	1070						
	1060						

For lower score ranges, there is not enough data to produce a valid concordance between the new SAT and ACT. For additional concordance tools and tables, please visit www.collegeboard.org.

ABOUT SUMMIT EDUCATIONAL GROUP

Experience Matters

For more than 25 years, Summit Educational Group has been preparing students to maximize their scores on standardized tests. Summit's customized One-on-One, In-Home Tutoring service helps students prepare for the SAT, ACT, PSAT, SAT Subject Tests, SSAT, ISEE, and even academic subjects. Our proven approach centers on both skill-building and test-taking strategies to help students reach their full potential.

Personalized Service

We deliver exceptional service to all of our families. From the first phone call, we make certain to understand the needs and score goals of the student. After recommending the appropriate program, we'll match him or her with a highly skilled tutor. Maintaining strong relationships with our clients and those who recommend our services is important to us, so we encourage and actively solicit feedback throughout the Summit experience.

Expert Tutors

We carefully match each student with an expert tutor to ensure the best fit possible. A tutor who understands the student, engages and motivates, makes the lessons fun, and builds confidence makes all the difference. This individualized approach allows students of all learning styles to achieve their testing and academic goals. What's more, our tutors come directly to the family's home, or to a school campus, to work with students at their convenience.

Online Tutoring

In addition to our in-home tutoring, our world class test prep and academic programs are now available anywhere you are. Through an online whiteboard and Skype, our expert tutors will bring their expertise to you, anywhere in the world. You will receive the exact same personalized service and can expect the same stellar results on test day.

Summit Portal

This valuable tool allows families to manage their tutoring programs online. They can monitor homework records, score practice tests, view results, and submit feedback.

Classroom Programs

Whether it is SAT, ACT, or SSAT prep, the answer is simple: no other company offers the quality, results, and care found in a Summit program. We currently partner with many of the most demanding independent and public schools in New England. But no two schools are alike, and neither are any two Summit programs. We know that every school has a unique student body with different needs, and we'll work with them to customize the best program for their students and culture.

Course Materials and Services

Summit has developed, and continues to perfect, a suite of proven, results-driven course materials which helps students improve critical thinking skills and develop effective test-taking strategies, leading to higher scores. Our course books, test analysis, and professional development have helped hundreds of schools and tutoring companies worldwide generate higher test scores for their students.

Practice Testing

Each program begins with a diagnostic test and detailed score report that identifies strengths and areas for improvement. This allows our tutors to customize their instruction accordingly. Real practice tests throughout the program allow students to practice what they've learned and provide valuable information on how they're progressing. We also offer free proctored practice tests in the community, affording students the opportunity to take "dress rehearsal" tests, so they know exactly what to expect on the real thing.

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