



Frequently Asked Questions

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How is the SAT scored?

The final SAT score is the score totaled from the three sections of the SAT.

- the Math section
- the Critical Reading section
- the Writing section

Depending on a student's performance, a score between 200 and 800 points per section is possible. Therefore, the best a student can score on the SAT is a 2400.

As a rule of thumb, a student will

earn approximately 10 points per correct answer

– a student must answer at least one question correctly in a section to receive a score greater than 200

lose between 2.5 and 5 points per incorrect answer

– a student who makes an 'un-educated' guess may be losing valuable points.

neither earn nor lose points per unanswered question

– a student who omits *all* answers in a section will not receive a score greater than 200.

Differing slightly is the way the *writing section* is scored.

This section includes the *persuasive essay question*, and *multiple choice questions*. The *multiple choice questions* are scored in the 20-80 point range, similar to the way the PSAT sections are scored. The essay is scored by 2 people; each reader will score the student's essay with a score between 0 and 6, where 0 is the lowest score and 6 is the highest score. Therefore, the essay will receive a final score between 0 and 12. After the two scores in this section are determined, they are entered into a cross-chart to determine the final score in the *writing section*. Like the other two SAT sections, this score will fall into the 200 to 800 point range.

When all three section scores are totaled, if the total score ends in a digit between 1 and 4, it is rounded down to the nearest tenth. Conversely, if the total score ends in a digit between 5 and 9, it is rounded up to the nearest tenth. For example, a total score of 1202 will be recorded as a final score of 1200, while a total score of 1205 will be recorded as a final score of 1210.

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Can I cancel a test date?

Yes, however it is required to call at least 2½ weeks before the scheduled test date. Be advised that there is a fee to switch tests centers, test dates or test types (subject/reasoning).

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When you are ready. Most students begin in their Junior year, although many schools now encourage sophomores to take the PSAT. Ideally, you should review your PSAT results before taking your SAT. Traditionally students take the SAT into the fall of their senior year. Some colleges, especially those for which you may be considering early admissions, may have their cut-off date before the October SAT score return date - which means that the last SAT score that will be accepted is from June of the junior year. Check the requirements of the colleges early so you are ready. You also may want to begin testing early so you have more test dates available if you are not satisfied with your score. If possible, try to make at least one of your test dates in January or May of your junior year so you can get the Question and Answer service.

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The SAT is usually given in high schools. Check the SAT information booklet available in your high school guidance office, or online at www.collegeboard.com to find a test site near you. Be sure to register as early as possible to be assured of getting into the test site of your choice.

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A perfect SAT score is the one that gets you into the college of your choice. The top score for a section is 800 points. The total of three top scores is 2400. An 800 on a section does not necessarily mean that a student got every problem correct. Depending on the version of the test, students may omit questions or answer some incorrectly and still get an 800 for that section.

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It is your responsibility to sign up for the SAT. Your guidance office has some great publications provided by the College Board that will tell you everything you need to know. These are FREE booklets, so get them! One publication will have a registration form along with the test dates and the test centers. The other publication has sample questions, test tips and a practice test. These are important to you. Get them! You can fill out the form and send it in, or register on-line at www.collegeboard.com. This web site will also provide all the test dates and the test sites.

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This depends on the college. Check with the admissions office of the colleges you are interested in. Remember, even within a college, the accepted level of SAT score varies with the intended major. A student seeking admission to a college's journalism program may not need as high Math scores as a student applying to the same college's engineering program. But the verbal score of an English major would play more into his admissions than might the verbal score of a Physics major. It is best to do a little research about the schools and area of study you are interested in.

The SAT Test[Top](#) [Prev](#) [Next](#)**How soon do I receive my score?**

The scores are usually sent to your home address about 3 weeks after your test date. You can get your scores earlier on-line (no cost) or by phone (\$11). The earliest is usually the third Monday after your test by about 5 pm Eastern Standard Time.

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Yes! Use your calculator. It is to your advantage! Use your energy to model problems, then do the arithmetic with the calculator. You may use any calculator except those with alphabetical keyboards, those that talk or those which have paper tape (accounting type).

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Perhaps your child should not take the SAT! The SAT is currently required by more than 80% of four year colleges (some of these colleges may accept ACT scores instead). A quick check of a college admission's website page will reveal if the school requires SAT scores. If you do not know which colleges you wish to apply, taking the SAT is a good idea to avoid a last minute rush to prepare and take the test before admissions deadlines.

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You may take the SAT as often as you like. It is offered 7 times a year. Be sure to know the registration deadlines and if the SAT is being given in a location near you. Planning ahead is definitely a smart move, since you may not have room in your schedule, or access to the test as often as you'd like to take it. Be aware that the score report from ETS will list your last 6 scores. So, the admissions board will see all your scores. Most colleges will combine your highest math, writing, and critical reading scores when considering you for admission. Again, check with the colleges you are applying to. Many students take the test 2 or 3 times. More than 3 times may not be a bad thing, if you show improvement. So if you plan to take the test more than 3 times, be sure to review your performance on each test and prepare every time you retest.

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Only the college admissions board can answer that. Check their web site to know exactly what a school wants. Bear in mind that these scores are usually the average score of the students admitted the year before. That means that a score above or below the average can still gain admittance. Usually, the score requirements change a little from year to year, but the previous years average score is a good benchmark, as long as you realize that a few points below does not mean you will not be accepted. Beware the rumors surrounding scores. They can really cause a lot of unnecessary grief! Remember, your goal is to get into the college that will offer the best education for you.

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Currently, more than 80% of US colleges require some sort of standardized test. So that would be the SAT or the ACT. Check with the college admissions office to see which they require.

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The cost of the reasoning test (SAT I) is \$41.50. It is not possible to sign up by phone for a first test. It is only possible to sign up for a test with a registration number from a previous SAT test. Note that there is an additional cost to register by phone. Extra services provided by ETS at an additional cost.

Student Answer Service (SAS) - the SAS provides a list of a student's previous test answers.

The Question and Answer Service (QAS) - the QAS is the best value. Available only in January, May and October, this service provides a copy of a student's answers, the correct test answers, and a copy of the student's test. It is

recommended to sign up for this service when registering for the test in order to ensure prompt response.

Scores by Phone - It is possible to telephone approximately 12 days after a test date to receive a student's scores. It is required to provide a registration number and valid credit card number. The best option is visit the college board web site to access scores free of charge.

All prices are set by ETS, and are subject to change.
