

ACT/SAT Similarities & Differences

| | ACT | Similarities | SAT |
|-------------------------------------|---|--|--|
| How are they scored? | English, Math, Reading, Science, each from 1-36 Composite is a simple average No guessing penalty Ohio University \approx 24 Ohio State \approx 29 Ivy League \approx 33 | Optional Essay Graded on a Curve (doesn't matter when you take it!) | Math is half the test, Grammar/Reading the other half, each section scored between 200-800 Composite is from 400-1600 Ohio U. \approx 500's section scores Ohio State \approx 600's Ivy League \approx 700's |
| What do they cover? | No math formulas given Science | Similar Grammar Algebra, Geometry Reading Comprehension Essay Writing Critical Thinking | Math formulas provided Math more focused on algebra Evidence-based reading questions |
| Who tends to be good at each test? | Look at ASPIRE results If students has 504 plan or I.E.P. (test is easier with extended time than SAT) Student is speedier | High literacy and critical thinking skills coupled with low test anxiety. | Look at PSAT results Student has test anxiety Student likes to take more time |
| How to prepare better for each one? | Memorize Math Formulas Work on timing | Only perfect practice makes perfect: use excellent materials and constantly refine your thought process. Read more, do well in school, problem solve! Order the tests you take when you register: great diagnostic tool! | Focus deeply on algebra Work on analyzing how writers make an argument for the essay. |
| College Importance? | Usually do NOT superscore (i.e. take the best score from each section, come up with highest total average). Default is to send in best score Middle of the U.S.A. is more familiar | Universally accepted. A few schools don't require either! SAT Writing/ACT essay, it depends! Tests are $\frac{1}{4}$ to $\frac{1}{3}$ of total admission consideration Can take a few times, no problem! Can generally choose which scores to send (some top schools may require all scores). Some elite schools want SAT Subject tests as well (take at end of courses). | Usually DO superscore. Default is to send in all scores Coasts of the U.S.A. are more familiar |