

Test Prep Guide

Preparing for the SAT and ACT standardized exams can be one of the most stressful times in your life. It is a good idea to study as much as possible and prepare well in advance. Take a sample test to help pace yourself and become familiar with the levels of difficulty. Knowing the associated costs, testing format and utilizing prep courses and study materials will also help you perform well on these standardized exams.

SAT I & SAT Subject Tests

SAT

Overview: The SAT, formally known as the Scholastic Aptitude Test, is a four hour standardized exam used for college admissions in the United States. The exam measures critical thinking and analytical skills that are needed for success in college. The SAT consists of three major sections: critical reading, mathematics, and writing.

Scoring Format: Scores are reported on a scale from 200-800. Additional subscores are reported for the essay (ranging from 2-12) and for multiple-choice writing questions (on a 20-80 scale). The SAT deducts points for incorrect answers but there is no penalty for questions left blank. If you don't know the answer to a question, just leave it blank.

Costs: 2008-09 registration fee \$45

When to take the test: During your junior and/or senior year in high school.

SAT Subject Tests

Overview: The SAT subject test is a one-hour test that evaluates your proficiency in a particular subject area.

Tests are offered in five subject areas: English, Math, History, Science and Foreign Language.

Scoring Format: Scores are reported on scale from 200-800, subscores are reported on a scale from 20 to 80.

Costs: 2008-09 basic registration fee: \$20.00

When to take the test: Soon after you have finished the relevant course work (can be as early as freshman or sophomore year, depending on your school's curriculum and your progress).

FastTip: Additional fees may be assessed if registering by phone or if you wish to make changes to your exam date, late registration fees and more. Fee waivers are also available for SAT & Subject Tests. Visit www.collegeboard.com to learn more about fees and fee waivers associated with the SAT I & SAT Subject tests.

For more information on the SAT I & Subject Tests, visit www.collegeboard.com.

ACT

Overview: The ACT, originally known as the American College Testing program, is a three-hour standardized exam used for college admissions in the United States. The exam measures achievement in English, Math, Reading and Science. The ACT Plus includes a 30-minute writing test.

Scoring format: Scores on each section are averaged to create a composite score. A perfect score is 36. The ACT does not deduct points for incorrect answers. If you don't know the answer to a question, you are better off guessing than leaving the question blank.

Costs: (Exam with writing component) \$44.50, (Exam without writing component) \$30.00

When to take the test: Spring of your junior year or Fall of your senior year (or both, if you want to try and beat your first score). For more information on the ACT exam visit www.actstudent.org.

Study Materials/Additional Costs

Study materials include software, traditional prep courses, books and online prep courses. Begin by utilizing as many **free** prep courses as possible and seek assistance from your counselor or at the library. If you need additional assistance or support, there are free prep courses available online for the SAT at www.collegeboard.com, and the ACT at www.actstudent.org. There are often fees associated with taking courses in a traditional classroom setting. These courses typically span a 10-week period, meeting once a week, and can range from \$500 to \$1,000. Books offer test-taking strategies, expert advice and practice tests which can cost between \$10 and \$50.

SAT I & Subject Tests

Upcoming Test Dates:

I. Test Date: October 4, 2008

Regular Registration Deadline: September 9, 2008

Late Registration Deadline: September 16, 2008

II. Test Date: November 1, 2008

Regular Registration Deadline: September 26, 2008

Late Registration Deadline: October 10, 2008

ACT

Upcoming Test Dates

I. Test Date: September 13, 2008

Regular Registration Deadline: August 12, 2008

Late Registration Deadline: August 13-22, 2008

II. Test Date: October 25, 2008

Regular Registration Deadline: September 19, 2008

Late Registration Deadline: September 20-October 3, 2008