

THE SAT **VS** THE ACT



Digital, adaptive



More time per question



Short, single-question reading passages



Scores back within days



Overall
Time

Reading &
Writing
(baseline module)

32m

Reading &
Writing
(adaptive module -
easier or harder)

32m

Math
(baseline module)

35m

Math
(adaptive module -
easier or harder)

35m

200 - 800
points

200 - 800
points

TOTAL POINTS | 400 - 1600



Reading & Writing



Math

Time per Question



Paper, fixed format*



Faster Paced



Longer reading passages



Scores back in 2 to 3 weeks



Overall
Time

1-36

35m

Reading

1-36

45m

English

1-36

60m

Math

1-36

35m

Science

TOTAL POINTS | 1 - 36



Reading



English



Math



Science

* There will be an option to take the ACT on a computer at select test centers starting in late 2023 and early 2024, but the computer-based test will be identical to the paper test in length and format.

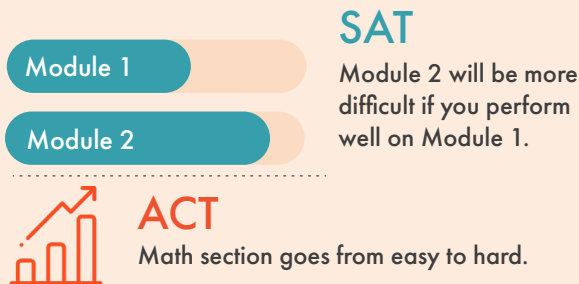
MATH

Number of Questions

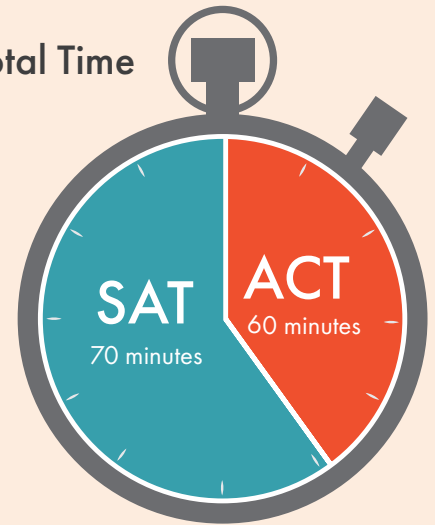
SAT
44

ACT
60

Question Difficulty



Total Time



Time Per Question



Formulas

The **SAT** provides a reference of common formulas in the testing application.

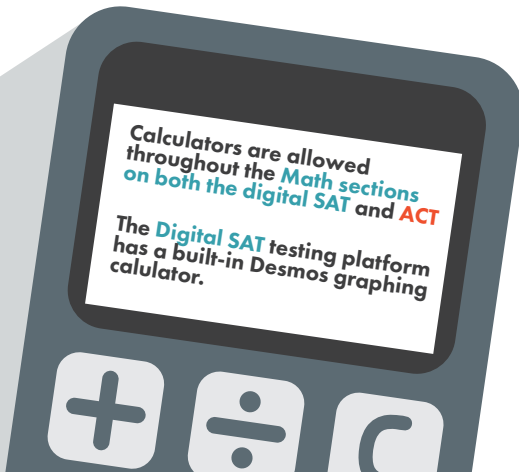
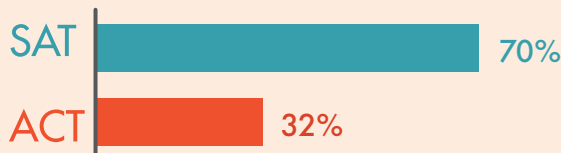
The **ACT** does not provide formulas for reference.



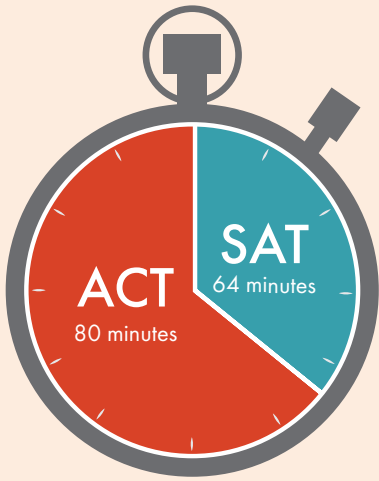
The digital SAT Math modules include 44 questions total. About 25% of these are student-produced response questions (i.e., grid-in), and the rest are multiple-choice.

Algebra Focus

The SAT has a much greater emphasis on Algebra, as well as Data Analysis questions that ask you to incorporate information from tables and charts into your calculations. In contrast, the ACT focuses more on Geometry and Pre-Algebra.



READING/WRITING/ENGLISH



Time Per Question

ACT

READING

53s

ENGLISH

36s

SAT

READING & WRITING

71s

Number of Questions

SAT
54
Reading & Writing

ACT
115
Reading & English

Vocabulary

What percentage of questions test vocabulary?

ACT

READING

8%

ENGLISH

3%

SAT

READING & WRITING

19%

Do the Reading/Writing/English sections have Graphs and Charts?



Yes, 3 to 5 Command of Evidence questions use graphs.



No, only on the Science section

Passage Complexity

Avg words per passage

SAT

50 - 150

30 - 100

Reading

Writing/English

ACT

600 - 800

300 - 500

Number of Reading Passages

SAT 25-29



1 question per passage

ACT

4



comparison

10 questions per passage

Topics Covered

- Literature
- Social Science
- Poetry
- Nat. Science
- History
- Humanities

Distribution of topics varies. Easier adaptive modules tend to focus on literature; harder adaptive modules tend to focus on humanities.

- Prose Fiction
- Humanities
- Social Science
- Natural Science

ACT Reading passage topics are consistent and appear in the same order on each test.