

# SAT

versus

# ACT

## Comparing Standardized Tests

Knowing whether to take one standardized test or the other, or both, can be stressful. To help you, here is a comparison of what we see as the crucial differences between the two.

### SAT

4 sections  
(+1 experimental section):  
Reading, Writing and  
Language, Math without  
Calculator, Math with  
Calculator

Scored out of 1600:  
200-800 each for Math and  
EBRW (Evidence-based  
Reading and Writing)

Calculator for only some  
of the math

Reading level of passages  
about 11th grade

More time per section, but  
presents material in ways  
students may not have seen

Essay no longer exists

Changing in Fall 2024

### ACT

4 sections  
(+ optional essay or  
experimental section if you  
don't opt for essay):  
English, Math, Reading,  
Science

Scored out of 36:  
Score is an average of the  
four sections

Calculator for whole  
math section

Reading level of material  
about 8th grade

Less time, but more  
straightforward

Essay exists, but no school  
requires it (and it's likely to  
disappear soon)

No large changes  
announced

**Things to remember:** colleges don't care which you take. National Merit will take either SAT or ACT scores to advance in the scholarship process after your PSAT. Almost all colleges superscore the SAT and many may also superscore the ACT.



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