

CollegeBoard

SAT®

The Official

SAT

Study Guide™

Review every skill and question type needed for SAT® success.

2018 EDITION

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Includes:

8 Real SATs

and official answer explanations

ABOUT THE COLLEGE BOARD

The College Board is a mission-driven not-for-profit organization that connects students to college success and opportunity. Founded in 1900, the College Board was created to expand access to higher education. Today, the membership association is made up of over 6,000 of the world's leading educational institutions and is dedicated to promoting excellence and equity in education. Each year, the College Board helps more than seven million students prepare for a successful transition to college through programs and services in college readiness and college success — including the SAT® and the Advanced Placement Program®. The organization also serves the education community through research and advocacy on behalf of students, educators, and schools. For further information, visit collegeboard.org.

Copies of this book are available from your bookseller or may be ordered from College Board Publications at store.collegeboard.org or by calling 800-323-7155.

Editorial inquiries concerning this book should be submitted at sat.collegeboard.org/contact.

This publication was written and edited by the College Board, with primary authorship by Carolyn Lieberg, Jim Patterson, Andrew Schwartz, Jessica Marks, and Sergio Frisoli. Cover and layout design: Iris Jan. Project manager: Jim Gwyn. Product owner: Aaron Lemon-Strauss. Invaluable contributions and review from the College Board's Assessment Design & Development team led by Sherral Miller, Laurie Moore, and Nancy Burkholder.

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ISBN-13: 978-1-4573-0928-1

Printed in the United States of America

2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 23 22 21 20 19 18

Distributed by Macmillan

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Sample

CHAPTER 1

Introducing the SAT

Welcome to the *Official SAT Study Guide*! This guide is designed for you. Return to it again and again in the coming weeks and months. Reading it is an excellent way to become familiar with the SAT — its content, structure, timing, question types, and more. The information, advice, and sample questions will help you prepare to take the test with confidence.

Tackling new things makes most of us nervous, but when we can learn a great deal about a new situation in advance, we feel much more able to take a deep breath and meet the challenge. Learning about the SAT through this guide and taking practice tests will help you be well prepared when your test date arrives.

How Does the SAT® Measure Academic Achievement?

Questions on the SAT will not ask you to recall details of *Hamlet* or to name the capital of Nevada or the location of the Rappahannock River. If you recall those facts, good for you, but the SAT will ask for something different. Instead of asking you to show what you've memorized, the questions invite you to exercise your thinking skills.

All of the learning you've done — from childhood to now — contributes to how you think, how your mind manages information. Even if you don't recall the details of a history or science lesson, the process of learning information and blending it with previously learned information is key to becoming a skilled thinker.

The world needs more people who can use their thinking skills to solve problems, communicate clearly, and understand complex relationships. The best high school courses promote thinking skills, and colleges are looking for students who are skilled thinkers. The SAT is designed to measure the thinking skills you'll need to succeed in college and career.



REMEMBER

The SAT isn't designed to assess how well you've memorized a large set of facts; rather, the SAT assesses your ability to apply the knowledge and skills you'll need in college and career.

**REMEMBER**

The SAT has been carefully crafted by many people, experts in their fields, to ensure that it's a fair test that assesses the knowledge and skills you'll need to succeed in college and career.

**REMEMBER**

Colleges care about your SAT score because it's a strong predictor of how you'll perform in college. By doing well on the SAT, you can show colleges that you're ready to succeed.

How Is the SAT Developed?

The process of developing a test given to millions of students around the world is complex and involves many people. The SAT is developed by the College Board, a not-for-profit organization that was founded more than a century ago to expand access to higher education. The College Board is a large organization, with more than 6,000 schools, colleges, and universities as members.

College Board test developers are content experts in physics, biology, statistics, math, English, history, computer science, sociology, education, psychology, and other disciplines. They use their expertise to create questions for the SAT that will allow students to demonstrate their best thinking.

Committees of high school and college instructors review every potential SAT question to make sure that each one measures important knowledge and skills, that the questions are fair to all students, and that they're written in a way that models what students are learning in the best high school classrooms.

Colleges want to admit students who will have successful college experiences and go on to have successful careers. Colleges use the SAT in admissions because it's developed according to rigorous specifications, with input from numerous experts, to assess what matters most for college and career readiness and success. Independent research demonstrates that the single most important factor for demonstrating college readiness is high school GPA. Even more predictive than GPA, though, is GPA combined with an SAT score.

How Is the SAT Organized?

The SAT has four tests, with the Essay being optional. The three tests that everyone will take are (1) the Reading Test, (2) the Writing and Language Test, and (3) the Math Test. The timing and number of questions are as follows:

Component	Time Allotted (minutes)	Number of Questions/Tasks
Reading	65	52
Writing and Language	35	44
Math	80	58
Essay (optional)	50	1
Total	180 (230 with Essay)	154 (155 with Essay)

**REMEMBER**

More scores = more information. The scores reported on the SAT provide detailed information about your achievement and readiness for college and career.

The Essay is optional, but some high schools and colleges require it. Depending on your high school and your college choices, you may already know whether or not you'll take the Essay. If you have any uncertainty — for instance, if you can imagine that you might transfer from a school that doesn't require it to one that does — consider taking the SAT with Essay.

How Is the SAT Scored?

When you take the SAT, you don't get just one score. The SAT reports a total score, but there are also section scores, test scores, cross-test scores, and subscores. This wide array of scores provides insight into your achievement and your readiness for college and career.

You earn points on the SAT by answering questions correctly. No points are deducted for wrong answers, so go ahead and give your best answer to every question — there's no advantage to leaving any blank.

Total Score and Section Scores

The total score is the number most commonly associated with the SAT. The total score ranges from 400 to 1600. This score is the sum of the scores on the Evidence-Based Reading and Writing section (which includes the Reading and Writing and Language Tests) and the Math section. Of the 154 questions in the entire SAT (not counting the Essay), 96 questions are on the Reading and the Writing and Language Tests and 58 questions are on the Math Test.

Section scores for Evidence-Based Reading and Writing and for Math are reported on a scale from 200 to 800. The Evidence-Based Reading and Writing section score is derived in equal measure from the scores on the Reading and the Writing and Language Tests. The Math section score is derived from the score on the Math Test.

Test Scores

Test scores are reported on a scale of 10 to 40 for each of the three required tests: Reading, Writing and Language, and Math.

Cross-Test Scores

Cross-test scores — one for **Analysis in History/Social Studies** and one for **Analysis in Science** — are reported on a scale of 10 to 40 and are based on selected questions in the Reading, Writing and Language, and Math Tests that reflect the application of reading, writing, language, and math skills in history/social studies and science contexts.

Subscores

Subscores are reported on a scale of 1 to 15. They provide more detailed information about how you're doing in specific areas of literacy and math.

Two subscores are reported for Writing and Language: Expression of Ideas and Standard English Conventions.

The **Expression of Ideas** subscore is based on questions focusing on topic development, organization, and rhetorically effective use of language.

The **Standard English Conventions** subscore is based on questions focusing on sentence structure, usage, and punctuation.



REMEMBER

Subscores provide additional insight into your performance on specific topics and skills.

The Math Test reports three subscores: Heart of Algebra, Problem Solving and Data Analysis, and Passport to Advanced Math.

Heart of Algebra focuses on linear equations, systems of linear equations, and functions.

Problem Solving and Data Analysis focuses on quantitative reasoning, the interpretation and synthesis of data, and problem solving in rich and varied contexts.

Passport to Advanced Math focuses on topics important for progressing to more advanced mathematics, such as understanding the structure of expressions, reasoning with more complex equations, and interpreting and building functions.

The final two subscores — Words in Context and Command of Evidence — are based on questions in both the Reading and the Writing and Language Tests.

Words in Context questions address word and phrase meanings in context as well as rhetorical word choice.

Command of Evidence questions ask you to interpret and use evidence found in a wide range of passages and informational graphics, such as graphs, tables, and charts.



REMEMBER

Test scores will reflect your performance on each of the three required tests on the SAT. The three different Essay scores serve a similar role.

Essay Scores

The scores for the optional SAT Essay are reported separately and aren't factored into any other scores. The Essay yields three scores, one each on three dimensions:

Reading: How well you demonstrate your understanding of the included passage

Analysis: How well you analyze the passage and carry out the task of explaining how the author of the passage builds an argument to persuade an audience

Writing: How skillfully you craft your response

Two raters read each response and assign a score of 1 to 4 to each of the three dimensions. The two raters' scores are combined to yield Reading, Analysis, and Writing scores, each on a scale of 2 to 8.

The SAT Score Report

You'll be able to access all of your scores online through your free College Board account. This account will be the same one you use to register for the SAT. Learn more at sat.org.

Score Range

The SAT Score Report includes a score range for each of the scores described above. This range indicates where your scores would likely fall if you took the test several times within a short period of time (for instance, on three consecutive days). If you were to do that, you would see how much your scores vary by much.

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Take the SAT[®] with confidence.

The Official SAT Study Guide[™] is written by the test designers to help you succeed on the SAT.

Use this book to:



Understand how success on the SAT relates to the work you're doing in the classroom



Become familiar with the test format by viewing **sample questions**



Learn how to pace yourself on test day with **eight real SAT practice tests**



Review **detailed explanations** of right and wrong answers



Identify areas for improvement and get **free, personalized practice from Khan Academy**[®]



Find out how the College Board can help you understand your scores and get you to college