

## **SAT or ACT: Which Is Best For Me?**

Most colleges today accept both the SAT and ACT and state that they don't have a preference. It's not unusual for a student to score significantly higher on one test vs. the other. Many students are asking: "Which test should I take?"

First, check to see if the schools you are considering have a test preference or requirement. If not, consider your options.

Keep in mind the differences in structure and content of the two exams. The tests have distinct qualities — the ACT is curriculum-based (English, math, reading, science and an optional writing section), while the SAT is more of an aptitude test focused on vocabulary, reading comprehension, general reasoning and problem-solving skills.

If you have a hard time staying focused for long periods, the ACT may be the test for you. It's shorter, generally more straightforward and there are more knowledge-based questions. English and math are a part of both tests, but the content and orientation is different.

The SAT focuses more on vocabulary and the ACT concentrates on grammar, punctuation and syntax. The ACT includes science and trigonometry, neither of which is found on the SAT.

Some counselors will tell you that intelligent underachievers will do better on the SAT and diligent overachievers will score better on the ACT.

Many experts recommend that you take both tests, as well as both pre-tests (the PSAT and the PLAN) if they are offered in your area.

If you wish to make an educated choice, check out some of the free full-length practice tests for the ACT and SAT online (at The College Board, ACT, Princetonreview.com, Petersons.com and Ivybound.net), familiarize yourself with the format, content and structure and decide what's best for you.

If you don't have a clear preference, many students looking for any edge to improve their chances of admission, are taking both tests and submitting the higher score or both scores.

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