

2025 SAT vs. ACT: What Parents Need to Know

Both tests are accepted by every college — the key is finding the best fit for your child. Here's a quick side-by-side guide now that the SAT is fully digital and the ACT is moving digital too:

SAT

- 100% online
- Shorter reading passages
- Fully multiple choice
- Calculator allowed for all of math

- ~2 hours and 14 minutes
- More time per question

- Reading and Writing (writing section is multiple choice; not writing an essay)
- Math

- 400-1600 scale
- No essay

- \$68 (additional fees may apply)
- Fee waiver available
- 4 score sends included with purchase of the test

Format

Timing

Sections

Scoring

Cost

ACT

- Paper and online
- Longer reading passages
- Multiple choice, except an optional written essay
- Calculator allowed for all of math

- ~2 hours and 55 minutes (without essay but with science)
- Faster pace per question

- English, Math, Reading
- *Optional* Science* and Writing sections
- Optional Science section tests data analysis

- 1-36 scale
- Optional essay scored separately

- \$65 base fee + Writing (\$25) and Science (\$4)
- 4 free score sends



Thrive
Tutoring

Beginning April 2025, students can choose to take the ACT with or without the Science section **when testing online. Starting September 2025, the Science section becomes optional for paper-based tests also.*