



The PSAT 8/9, PSAT, SAT, and ACT

(edited and compiled from many sources)

SAT vs. ACT

Our recommendation is that juniors take the SAT and ACT in late winter/spring, and then repeat at least one test in the fall of senior year. Colleges accept both tests equally, so the choice is up to you! Here's what you need to know to compare the exams.

	SAT	ACT
Why Take It	Colleges use SAT scores for admissions and merit-based scholarships.	Colleges use ACT scores for admissions and merit-based scholarships.
Test Structure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Math • Reading • Writing and Language Essay (Optional)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Math • Reading • English • Science Essay (Optional)
Length	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 3 hours (without essay) • 3 hours, 50 minutes (with essay) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2 hours, 55 minutes (without essay) • 3 hours, 40 minutes (with essay)
Reading	5 reading passages	4 reading passages

Science	None	1 science section testing your critical thinking skills (not your specific science knowledge)
Math	Covers: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Arithmetic • Algebra I & II • Geometry, Trigonometry and Data Analysis 	Covers: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Arithmetic • Algebra I & II • Geometry and Trigonometry
Tools	Some math questions don't allow you to use a calculator. All of the math can be done without the use of a calculator.	You can use a calculator on all math questions.
Essays	Optional. The essay will test your comprehension of a source text.	Optional. The essay will test how well you evaluate and analyze complex issues.
How It's Scored	Scored on a scale of 400–1600	Scored on a scale of 1–36

The SAT Suite of Assessments

For the first time, all scores from the SAT, PSAT/NMSQT, PSAT 10, and PSAT 8/9 will be on a common score scale, so that students and educators can track growth across assessments and target areas of knowledge and skills that need to be strengthened.

The PSAT

The Preliminary SAT test will be administered each October, to all students in grades 9, 10, and 11. This is a great opportunity for students to get some understanding of what it is like to take this sort of reasoning test. The score reports that students receive contain valuable information and tips for how to improve their scores. The PSAT is often used to predict success in AP courses and is also used as the National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test. Juniors who score exceptionally high on the PSAT may qualify for various awards and scholarships. For more information, please visit the [PSAT/NMSQT](#) website at the College Board. There is not a make up date for the PSAT. The PSAT test date for the 2016-2017 school year is October 19, 2016. Cost is \$15.00 and office will bill the accounts.

Understanding PSAT Scores

The SAT

New SAT: Substantial changes were made to the SAT in March of 2016. For [more information](#) visit the College Board website.

This is the standard SAT test that is required by most colleges for admission. The test is administered several times each year. Students are tested on critical reading, mathematical, and writing abilities. Anyone who is planning to go to college should plan to take the SAT and since BA is a college preparatory school we tend to insist everyone take the test. Typically, students will take the SAT in spring of their junior year. We recommend that students take the test again at the beginning of their senior year. The score scale is from 200-800 on each of the two sections. There is not penalty for guessing which is different from the 'old' SAT. The Critical Reading/Writing and Math questions are divided into four 50 minute sections. Testing without an essay takes three hours.

SAT Subject Tests

These tests (formerly known as Achievement Tests or SAT II Tests) are offered in several different subject areas. Students may take up to three tests on any testing date. About thirty percent of colleges require that applicants take SAT Subject Tests. These schools are usually the most competitive and selective schools. Another group of schools (about 1/3) recommend, but do not require, that students take SAT Subject Tests. Finally, a large group of schools neither require nor recommend that applicants take SAT Subject Tests. Typically, a school that requires SAT Subject Tests will require three. Please note that even though the Writing test is no longer offered, many schools are still expected to require three tests. Most specify which tests to take (a Math test is often required), but some let students choose. All scores become part of the student's College Board record and will be sent along to colleges with all other SAT and SAT Subject Test scores.

Students who decide to take SAT Subject Tests may want to obtain a copy of one of the test prep books. There are a few reasons for this. First of all, the SAT Subject Tests may test some material that is not a part of the curriculum. The prep book will expose students to some of the material that will be on the test that they may not have covered in class. Secondly, the prep book will offer a chance to take at least one full-length practice test, which is a very valuable experience.

These are one hour tests offered in several subject areas. You may take up to three on one test date. Each test is scored on a scale of 200-800. Several competitive schools require or recommend that

applicants take these tests. They may or may not specify which tests must be taken. Most schools in Georgia do not require these tests. Be sure to check the requirements for any college that interests you. There is a penalty for incorrect answers, so only take a guess if you can narrow the choices to two. here is no penalty for leaving something blank.

Register online at www.collegeboard.com. BA's school code is 112988.

SAT 2016-2017 Test Dates
(Subject To Change and Error- Verify Online)

Test Dates	Tests Offered	Registration Deadlines	
		Regular	Late (fee applies)
October 1, 2016	SAT & Subject Tests	Sep. 1, 2016	Sep. 20, 2016
November 5, 2016	SAT & Subject Tests	Oct. 7, 2016	Oct. 25, 2016
December 3, 2016	SAT & Subject Tests	Nov. 3, 2016	Nov. 22, 2016
January 21, 2017	SAT & Subject Tests	Dec. 21, 2016	Jan. 10, 2017
March 11, 2017	SAT only	Feb. 10, 2017	Feb. 28, 2017
May 6, 2017	SAT & Subject Tests	Apr. 7, 2017	Apr. 25, 2017
June 3, 2017	SAT & Subject Tests	May 9, 2017	May 24, 2017

October and March test dates are offered at BA. In 2017-2018 the College Board will no longer offer the January test date but will add and August test date.



- All freshmen, sophomores, and juniors take the PSAT offered in October. This test is given on a Wednesday. The cost is \$15.00. You will be billed by the office.
- Test date this year is Oct. 19, 2016. There is no makeup for the test if a student is absent. Tests have been ordered for every student in grades 9, 10, and 11.
- The PSAT 8/9 is the first test in the SAT Suite of Assessments. Using the same specifications as the SAT, the PSAT/NMSQT, and the PSAT 10, it establishes a baseline for college and career readiness as students enter high school. The PSAT 8/9 is geared for 8th and 9th grade students.

PSAT/NMSQT and PSAT 10: Check-in and Focus

What are they? These assessments are the same test and only differ in the time at which they are administered; the redesigned PSAT/NMSQT is offered to 10th and 11th graders in the fall, while the PSAT 10 is offered to 10th graders in the spring. These assessments serve as “check-ins” on student progress and pinpoint areas for development.

Who should take them? Tenth-graders (high school graduating class of 2018) and 11th-graders (class of 2017). Taking the PSAT/NMSQT and/or PSAT 10 provides students with a midpoint check-in on their progress toward college and career readiness as well as detailed feedback that evaluates the knowledge and skills in need of strengthening. The first administration of the redesigned PSAT/NMSQT will be in October 2015; the PSAT 10 will first be offered in spring 2016.

Reflects what is taught in the classroom: The focus is on the knowledge and skills that evidence shows matter most for college and career readiness. The PSAT/NMSQT and PSAT 10 have questions and tasks that more closely resemble what is happening in today’s classrooms. The text will be more complex than the PSAT 8/9 and the tasks more challenging.



CollegeBoard

- All eighth and ninth grade students will take the PSAT 8/9. The cost is \$10.00 and the office will bill you.
 - This is great practice for the suite of assessments the students will take. We choose a day and the date for our students is Jan. 18, 2017. Like the PSAT there is no makeup date.
 - What is it? Replacing ReadStep™, the PSAT 8/9 serves as the foundation for understanding students’ progress as they enter high school. An early indicator of college readiness that is aligned with the SAT, PSAT/NMSQT, and PSAT 10, the PSAT 8/9 will provide detailed performance feedback.
 - Who should take it? All eighth- and ninth-graders (beginning with the high school graduating classes of 2021 and 2020). The PSAT 8/9 will first be offered in October 2015.
 - Reflects what is taught in the classroom: The focus is on the knowledge and skills that evidence shows matter most for college and career readiness. The PSAT 8/9 will include grade-level appropriate content for eighth- and ninth-graders that will match the scope and difficulty of work found in the classroom.
- Opportunities: The PSAT 8/9 serves as a foundation for understanding student readiness as students enter high school in addition to providing hands-on opportunities to practice the knowledge and skills that evidence shows matter most for success in college and care.



ACT Test

- This test has several sections: English, Reading, Science, and Math plus the optional essay.
- Scoring is 1-36 on each section and overall.
- There is no penalty for guessing
- Test takes about 3 ½ hours.
- Register at www.actstudent.org. Same school code as SAT. We do have a testing center number as the ACT is not given at BA but it is at many local schools.