

## Basic Standardized Testing Advice

Which test should I take, the ACT or the SAT?

A fourth of students do better on the SAT, a fourth on the ACT and half do equally well. I suggest preparing for the test that seems most comfortable for you and will be less stressful in preparing. If unsure, you can take a practice test of each and see how it goes. To really do a practice test, its best to do the whole 4-hour test, as fatigue and the order of the materials on the test are factors. Or just keep it simple and choose one. For most students, the difference is not a significant factor.

How much time should I spend preparing and practicing?

Taking the test a second time without any studying improves SAT scores about 30 points. Spending 5 hours of prep, mainly in math review, produces around a 60-point increase. Spending around 20 hours produces around 90-point increases. The *ideal* is to spend 50-70 hours total including full 4-hour practice tests over 8-10 weeks, which is 5-10 hours a week. Ideally its best to take it three times. Again that is the *ideal*. You need to balance test prep with the rest of your life and the importance of possibly opening a few more doors to more colleges and scholarships.

What is the best way to prepare and study?

I think the best answer, like any test, is to study well. Some students do better in study groups, while some prefer online, and other, a guidebook. Some are very motivated and can do it well on their own. Some need an in-person class and others want one-on-one. It's really a family and student decision to determine the time and method of study. I haven't found the *best* way. I wouldn't worry about the *best* way. Just spending quality time and effort is the most important thing. You can schedule a session with me to discuss your thoughts and I'd be glad to give you more detailed advice

### Standardized Test Dates 2020

#### SAT

Date	Registration Deadlines	Score Release Date/Essay
March 14	February 14	March 27/30
May 2	April 3	May 15/20
June 6	May 8	July 15/17
Oct 3 (last test before EA/ED deadline)	Sept 4	
Nov 7	Oct 2	
Dec 5	Nov 6	

#### ACT

February 8	January 10	February 18/Mar 3
April 4	February 25	April 4/28
June 13	May 8	June 23/July 7
July 18	June 19	July 28/ Aug 11
Sept 5 (last test before EA/ED deadline)	July 31	
Oct 24	Sept 18	
Dec 2	Oct 30	

**It's better to register as early as possible to get a seat and cancel if necessary than to scramble close to the registration deadline.** Registering is done through the SAT and ACT websites.