THE SAT VS THE ACT

KEY DIFFERENCES
• Fewer Geometry Questions
• More Time per Question
• No-calculator Math Section

• Lots of Geometry
• Faster Paced
• Tough Science Section

TIMING & SCORING

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subject</th>
<th>1-36</th>
<th>Overall Time</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reading</td>
<td>1-36</td>
<td>35m</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writing</td>
<td>1-36</td>
<td>45m</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Math (No Calculator)</td>
<td>1-36</td>
<td>60m</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Math (Calculator)</td>
<td>1-36</td>
<td>35m</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Points</td>
<td>1-36</td>
<td>3h</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>200-800 points</td>
<td></td>
<td>2h 55m</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Time per Question
- 75s Reading
- 48s Writing
- 83s Math

Time per Question
- 53s Reading
- 36s English
- 60s Math

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The ACT has a much greater emphasis on Geometry. In contrast, the SAT focuses more on Algebra, word problems, and “Data Analysis” questions that ask you to incorporate information from tables and charts into your calculations.

**Formulas**

The SAT provides a reference table of common formulas. The ACT does not provide formulas for reference.

The SAT Math section includes 45 multiple choice questions and 13 student-produced response questions (i.e., fill-in questions).

**Geometry Focus**

The ACT allows calculators for all Math sections. The SAT has one NO CALCULATOR section and one calculator section.

The SAT has 6% Geometry questions, while the ACT has 23% Geometry questions.
### Reading

**Time Per Question**
- **ACT**: 53s
- **SAT**: 75s

**Number of Questions**
- **SAT**: 52
- **ACT**: 40

**Vocabulary**
- **ACT**: 8%
- **SAT**: 17%

**Do the Reading sections have Graphs and Charts?**
- **SAT**: Yes, relating to two passages
- **ACT**: No, only on the Science section

**Passage Complexity**
- **SAT**:
  - Avg. words per sentence: 25
  - Peak words per sentence: 39
  - Avg. Grade Level*: 13.5
  - Grade Level Fluctuation: 11-16

- **ACT**:
  - Avg. words per sentence: 22
  - Peak words per sentence: 26
  - Avg. Grade Level*: 11.5
  - Grade Level Fluctuation: 9-14

*Flesch-Kincaid readability assessment

**Number of Passages**
- **SAT**: 5
- **ACT**: 4

**Topics Covered**
- **SAT**: Literature, History/Soc. Studies (2)
- **ACT**: Prose/Fiction, Social Science, Humanities, Natural Science

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WRITING/ENGLISH

Number of Questions
- SAT: 44
- ACT: 75

Time Per Question
- ACT: 36s
- SAT: 48s

Vocabulary
- What percent of questions test vocabulary?
  - ACT: 3%
  - SAT: 7%

Do the Reading sections have Graphs and Charts?
- SAT: Yes, relating to two passages
- ACT: No, only on the Science section

GRAMMAR VS. RHETORICAL SKILLS
- SAT: 45% 55%
- ACT: 51% 49%*

*The difference between the 49% Rhetorical Skills on the ACT and 55% on the SAT feels even greater in practice, as the questions on the SAT require a fuller understanding of the passage.

Passage Complexity
- SAT: 22
- ACT: 18

Average words per sentence
- SAT: 13
- ACT: 10

Average grade level*
*Flesch-Kincaid readability assessment