SAT Reasoning Test

"SAT" means:

Originally, SAT was an abbreviation for the Scholastic Aptitude Test. In 1993, the test was renamed the SAT I: Reasoning Test. At the same time, the former Achievement Tests were renamed the SAT II: Subject Tests. In 2004, the numerals "I" and "II" were dropped and the tests are now named the SAT Reasoning Test (or just SAT) and SAT Subject Tests. SAT is a simple and recognizable way of referring to the SAT Reasoning Test.

The SAT Reasoning Test is a measure of the critical thinking skills you'll need for academic success in college. The SAT assesses how well you analyze and solve problems—skills you learned in school that you'll need in college. The SAT is typically taken by high school juniors and seniors.

Each section of the SAT is scored on a scale of 200—800, with two writing subscores for multiple-choice and the essay. It is administered seven times a year in the U.S., Puerto Rico, and U.S. Territories, and six times a year overseas.

SAT Question Types

The SAT includes several different question types, including: a student-produced essay, multiple-choice questions, and student-produced responses (grid-ins). Select any section below to learn more about specific question types.

The Critical Reading Section

Overview

Time	Content	Item Types	Score
70 min. (two 25-min. sections and one 20-min. section)	Critical reading and sentence-level reading	Reading comprehension, sentence completions, and paragraph-length critical reading	200-800

The critical reading section, formerly known as the verbal section, includes short as well as long reading passages. Questions can be based on one, or sometimes two, reading passages. Some questions are not based on reading passages, but ask to complete sentences.

The critical reading section measures:

(1) Sentence Completion questions measure your:

- knowledge of the meanings of words
- ability to understand how the different parts of a sentence fit logically together

(2) Passage-based Reading

The reading questions on the SAT measure a student's ability to read and think carefully about several different passages ranging in length from about 100 to about 850 words. Passages are taken from a variety of fields, including the humanities, social studies, natural sciences, and literary fiction. They vary in style and can include narrative, argumentative, and expository elements. Some selections consist of a pair of related passages on a shared issue or theme that ask the students to compare and contrast.

The following kinds of questions may be asked about a passage:

- **Vocabulary in Context**: These questions ask the students to determine the meanings of words from their context in the reading passage.
- **Literal Comprehension**: These questions assess the students understanding of significant information directly stated in the passage.
- **Extended Reasoning**: These questions measure the students' ability to synthesize and analyze information as well as to evaluate the assumptions made and the techniques used by the author. Most of the reading questions fall into this category. The students may be asked to identify cause and effect, make inferences, recognize a main idea or an author's tone, and follow the logic of an analogy or an argument.

Approaching Passage-based Reading

Below are samples of the kind of reading passages and questions that may appear on the test. For each set of sample materials, students should:

- read the passage carefully,
- decide on the best answer to each question, and then
- read the explanation for the correct answer.

The Mathematics Section

Overview

Time	Content	Item Types	Score
70 min. (two 25-min. sections and one 20-min. section)	Number and operations; algebra and functions; geometry; statistics, probability, and data analysis	Five-choice multiple-choice questions and student-produced responses	200-800

The SAT includes mathematics topics from up through a third-year college preparatory course, such as exponential growth, absolute value, and functional notation. It also places emphasis on such topics as linear functions, manipulations with exponents, and properties of tangent lines. Important skills such as estimation and number sense are measured through the multiple-choice and student response (grid-in) questions (formerly measured in the quantitative comparison format).

Can I use a calculator?

Yes. Students can use a four-function, scientific, or graphing calculator. The College Board recommends that students use at least a scientific calculator for the SAT, although it's still possible to solve every question without a calculator.

The mathematics section has two types of questions:

(1) Multiple Choice

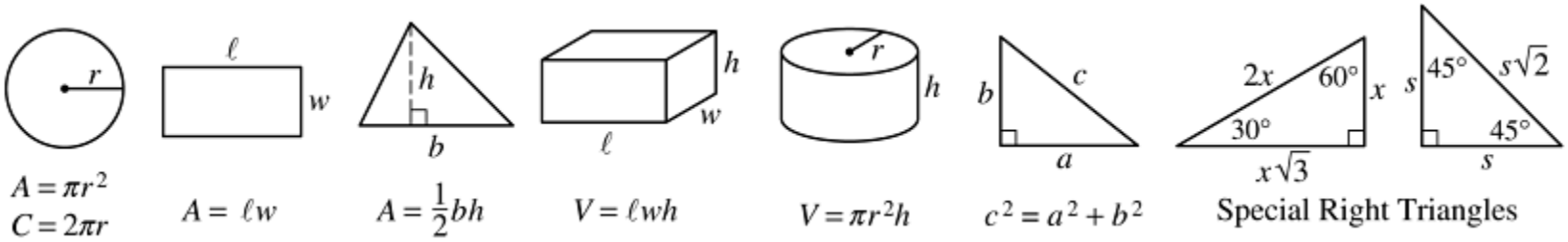
The questions that follow will give students an idea of the type of mathematical thinking required to solve problems on the SAT. First, try to answer each question, and then read the solutions that follow. These solutions may give students new insights into solving the problems or point out techniques to be used again. Most problems can be solved in a variety of ways, so don't be concerned if one method is different from another. Note that the directions indicate that students are to select the best of the choices given.

Notes

1. The use of a calculator is permitted.
2. All numbers used are real numbers.
3. Figures that accompany problems in this test are intended to provide information useful in solving problems.
    - They are drawn as accurately as possible EXCEPT when it is stated in a specific problem that the figure is not drawn to scale. All figures lie in a plane unless otherwise indicated.

4. Unless otherwise specified, the domain of any function f is assumed to be the set of all real numbers x for which $f(x)$ is a real number.

Reference Information



The number of degrees of arc in a circle is 360.
The sum of the measures in degrees of the angles of a triangle is 18

(2) Student-Produced Responses

Questions of this type have no answer choices provided. Instead, students must solve the problem and fill the answer on a special grid. Ten questions on the test will be of this type.

Approaches to Student-Produced Responses

Decide in which column to begin gridding the answers before the test starts. This strategy saves time. We recommend that students grid the first (left-hand) column of the grid or that the answers are right-justified.

If the answer is zero, grid it in column 2, 3, or 4. Zero has been omitted from column 1 to encourage students to grid the most accurate values for rounded answers. For example, an answer of 1/8 could also be gridded as .125 but not as 0.12, which is less accurate.

A fraction does not have to be reduced unless it will not fit the grid. For example, 15/25 will not fit. Students can grid 3/5, 6/10, or 9/15. The decimal form, .6, can also be gridded.

The Writing Section

Overview

Time	Content	Item Types	Score
60 min.	Grammar, usage, and word choice	Multiple choice questions (35 min.) and student-written essay (25 min.)	200-800

The writing section includes both multiple-choice questions and a direct writing measure in the form of an essay.

Short Essay

- The short essay measures students' ability to:
  - Organize and express ideas clearly
  - Develop and support the main idea
  - Use appropriate word choice and sentence structure
- Students will be asked to develop a point of a view on an issue, using reasoning and evidence — based on own experiences, readings, or observations — to support the ideas.

The essay will be scored by trained high school and college teachers. Each reader will give the essay a score from 1 to 6 (6 is the highest score) based on the overall quality of the essay and demonstration of students' writing competence.

Scoring Guide

SCORE OF 6

An essay in this category demonstrates *clear and consistent mastery*, although it may have a few minor errors. A typical essay

- effectively and insightfully develops a point of view on the issue and demonstrates outstanding critical thinking, using clearly appropriate examples, reasons, and other evidence to support its position
- is well organized and clearly focused, demonstrating clear coherence and smooth progression of ideas
- exhibits skillful use of language, using a varied, accurate, and apt vocabulary

- demonstrates meaningful variety in sentence structure
- is free of most errors in grammar, usage, and mechanics

SCORE OF 5

An essay in this category demonstrates *reasonably consistent mastery*, although it will have occasional errors or lapses in quality. A typical essay

- effectively develops a point of view on the issue and demonstrates strong critical thinking, generally using appropriate examples, reasons, and other evidence to support its position
- is well organized and focused, demonstrating coherence and progression of ideas
- exhibits facility in the use of language, using appropriate vocabulary
- demonstrates variety in sentence structure

SCORE OF 4

An essay in this category demonstrates *adequate mastery*, although it will have lapses in quality. A typical essay

- develops a point of view on the issue and demonstrates competent critical thinking, using adequate examples, reasons, and other evidence to support its position
- is generally organized and focused, demonstrating some coherence and progression of ideas
- exhibits adequate but inconsistent facility in the use of language, using generally appropriate vocabulary
- demonstrates some variety in sentence structure
- has some errors in grammar, usage, and mechanics

SCORE OF 3

An essay in this category demonstrates *developing mastery*, and is marked by ONE OR MORE of the following weaknesses:

- develops a point of view on the issue, demonstrating some critical thinking, but may do so inconsistently or use inadequate examples, reasons, or other evidence to support its position
- is limited in its organization or focus, or may demonstrate some lapses in coherence or progression of ideas
- displays developing facility in the use of language, but sometimes uses weak vocabulary or inappropriate word choice
- lacks variety or demonstrates problems in sentence structure
- contains an accumulation of errors in grammar, usage, and mechanics

Multiple-Choice Writing Questions

- The multiple-choice writing questions measure students' ability to:
    - Improve sentences and paragraphs
    - Identify errors (such as diction, grammar, sentence construction, subject-verb agreement, proper word usage, and wordiness)

Identifying Sentence Errors

This question type measures students' ability to:

- recognize faults in usage

- recognize effective sentences that follow the conventions of standard written English

Improving Sentences

This question type measures students' ability to:

- recognize and correct faults in usage and sentence structure
- recognize effective sentences that follow the conventions of standard written English

Improving Paragraphs

This type of question measures students' ability to:

- edit and revise sentences in the context of a paragraph or the entire essay
- organize and develop paragraphs in a coherent and logical manner
- apply the conventions of standard written English