



ACT and SAT by the numbers

Attack plan: Know your test

ACT: 2 hours 55 minutes (plus 10 minutes for the break). 4 Tests [English, 45 minutes, 75 questions; Math, 60 minutes, 60 questions; Reading, 35 minutes, 40 questions, Science, 35 minutes, 40 questions; optional essay, 40 minutes]

SAT: 3 hours (plus 15 minutes for the breaks). 4 Tests [Reading, 65 minutes, 52 questions; Writing and Language, 35 minutes, 42 questions; Math no calculator, 25 minutes, 20 questions; Math with calculator, 55 minutes, 38 questions; optional essay, 50 minutes.

Be prepared: Breaks

Take some water and a snack (fresh fruit, peppermint hard candy) for the break (s). There is a 10 minute break between Math and Reading on the ACT, and there are two breaks, 10 minutes between Reading and Writing and Language and 5 minutes between Math no calculator and Math with calculator, on the SAT.

Concentrate: Time management

52.5 seconds per Science question on the ACT; 85 seconds for non-calculator and 105 seconds with calculator per Math question on the SAT. 8 1/2 minutes for ACT 10-question Reading passage, but 13 minutes for 10-11 questions on the SAT Reading.

Be sure to time yourself when taking practice tests.