



Understanding the A C T



WHAT IS THE ACT?

This assessment was created by ACT Inc., the ACT is an entrance exam used by most colleges and universities to make admissions, scholarship and course placement decisions. The idea was to provide colleges with one common criterion that can be used to compare all applicants. The weight placed on ACT scores varies from school to school. Many schools are now “test optional”.

Changes

- Total testing time reduced by 75 minutes
- 44 fewer questions
- More time per question to answer
- Science section is now optional
- Math section now has 4 answer choices instead of 5
- Reading section now has shorter passages
- Break after the math section is now 15 minutes

ACT

English - 35 minutes

50 Questions



Math - 50 minutes

45 Questions

Writing (optional) - 40 minutes

Reading - 40 minutes

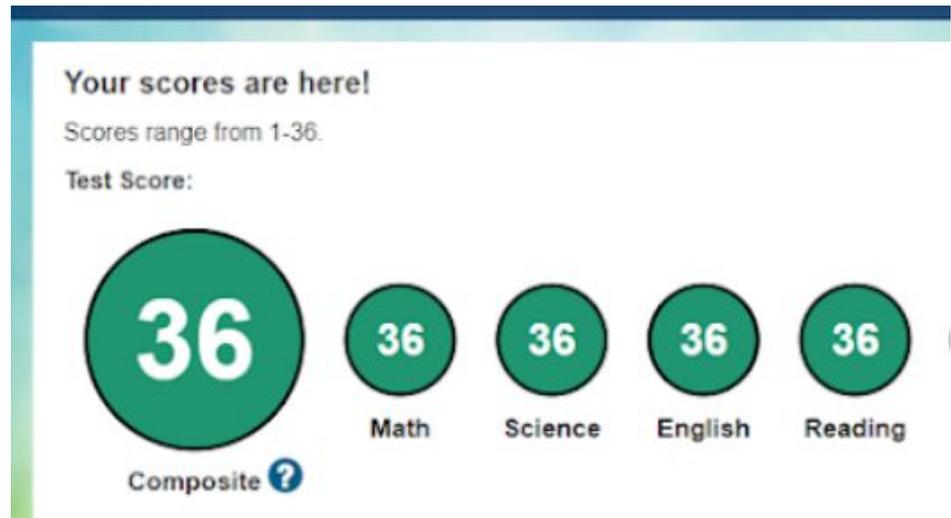
36 Questions



Science (optional) - 40
minutes

40 questions

ACT SCORING



- *Scores range between 1 and 36 for each section and for the composite score.*
- *High/perfect score - 36*
- *National average score - 19*

English

Test Tips

- Be aware of the writing style used in each passage.
- Consider the elements of writing that are included in each underlined portion of the passage. Some questions will ask you to base your decision on some specific element of writing, such as the tone or emphasis the text should convey.
- Be aware of questions with no underlined portions—that means you will be asked about a section of the passage or about the passage as a whole.
- Examine each answer choice and determine how it differs from the others. Many of the questions in the test will involve more than one aspect of writing.
- Determine the best answer. Read and consider all of the answer choices before you choose the one that best responds to the question.
- Reread the sentence, using your selected answer.

Reading

Test Tips

- Read the passage(s) carefully.
- Read and consider all of the answer choices before you choose the one that best responds to the question.
- Refer to the passage(s) when answering the questions.

Science

Test Tips

- Read the passage carefully.
- Refer to the scientific information in the passage when answering the question.
- Read and consider all of the answer choices before you choose the one that best responds to the question.
- Note conflicting viewpoints in some passages.

Math

Test Tips

- Read each question carefully to make sure you understand the type of answer required.
- If you choose to use a calculator, be sure it is permitted, is working on test day, and has reliable batteries.
- Use your calculator wisely.
- Solve the problem.
- Locate your solution among the answer choices.
- Make sure you answer the question asked.
- Make sure your answer is reasonable.
- Check your work.

Calculator Tips

- Review the latest information on permitted and prohibited calculators.
- You are not required to use a calculator. All the problems can be solved without a calculator.
- If you regularly use a calculator in your mathematics work, use one you're familiar with when you take the mathematics test. Using a more powerful, but unfamiliar, calculator is not likely to give you an advantage over using the kind you normally use.

General

Test Tips

- There is no penalty for guessing
- Make sure you answer ALL the questions. When you get the 5 minute warning, make sure you guess on remaining questions.
- Dress comfortably in layers
- Get a good night sleep and eat a good breakfast
- Bring an approved calculator that you are familiar with, old school #2 pencils and erasers
- Know where you are testing and get there plenty early
-

ACT TEST DATES

December 13, 2025

February 14, 2026

March 10, 2026 Juniors at LSN

April 11, 2026

June 13, 2026

July 11, 2026

TEST INFORMATION RELEASE

Registration deadlines are approximately 3 weeks before the exam. Register early to ensure testing location choice.

Is the ACT Required?

NO!

The ACT is NOT mandated by the state of Missouri.

You can pay to take the ACT multiple times if needed.

Many colleges are now “test optional” but may request ACT scores for scholarships and/or course placement

With “test optional” choices the high school cumulative GPA becomes even MORE important

How can I perform my best on the ACT

- Take rigorous courses, do homework, pay attention in class, ask questions and apply yourself.
- Practice taking the ACT BEFORE taking the official ACT.
- Take an ACT prep course and/or participate in other ACT prep activities.

LSN TEST PREP

[LSN ACT Prep](#)

Link 

ACT PREP RESOURCE

[ACT PREP](#)

Link 

STA ACT Prep Class

STA at The Missouri Innovation Campus will be hosting an ACT Test Prep Course taught by Power Prep, a Midwest-based company that has specialized in ACT preparation for 15+ years.

This class is designed for any student who wants practical and relevant information on how to increase their ACT score. Although targeted towards Juniors, all grades are welcome to participate. Juniors and Seniors who take the ACT test can greatly benefit from the strategic problem-solving techniques taught in this course.

The class will be held on:

Monday, January 5, 2026

8:30am to 2:15pm

Cost: \$90 (\$75 with early-bird discount by 12/15)

Spaces are limited and classes usually fill up, so please register your student today at:

ACTPREP.INFO/SUMMITTECH

ACT REQUIREMENT EXAMPLES

University of Missouri

University of Central Missouri

University of Arkansas

All Currently have Test Optional options

University of Missouri

Test Optional Admission

Freshman applicants for the Fall 2026 semester have the option of being reviewed with or without test scores. Choosing a test optional review will mean your admissibility will be determined holistically by a committee.

How to Apply Online as Test Optional Using the Mizzou Application

1. In the Status and Interests section of the application, select “I want my application reviewed without test scores” and complete the acknowledgement that you are applying with a test optional admission review.
2. Upload a resume or type out your activities.
3. Complete the required short essay question in your application for admission. Make sure to include which essay prompt you are using at the top of the page.
4. Submit the application and pay the \$55 application fee.
5. Send your official high school transcript to Mizzou.

University of Central Missouri

Test Optional Admission

Students applying to UCM with a 2.75 GPA or higher will be admitted without submitting an ACT or SAT test score. Students admitted as test optional will also receive up to \$3,000 in Red & Black Scholarship. While you are fully admitted to UCM under the test optional admission policy, you will need to submit a qualifying test score to be eligible for the following:

- Direct Entry Nursing Program (requires an ACT composite of 25 or higher)
- Education majors - possible exemption from the MOGEA exam
- [Honors College](#) (requires an ACT composite of 25 or higher)
- [Automatic merit scholarships](#)**

Test scores are still required for both certain UCM academic direct program admissions as well as certain scholarships mentioned above.

**Students admitted under test-optional admissions are still eligible to earn a higher Red and Black Scholarship with submission of a qualifying ACT score and GPA. See the GPA & ACT requirements [here](#).

University of Arkansas

Test Optional: 3.20 high school GPA or higher

Applicants with a 3.20 high school GPA or higher (on a standard 4.00 scale) will be reviewed for admission to the university without a qualifying test score but must submit ACT, SAT, Next Generation Accuplacer, or Classic Learning Test scores by May 1, 2025, for placement and enrollment purposes and to meet state reporting requirements.

Test Required: less than a 3.20 high school GPA

Applicants with less than a 3.20 high school GPA should submit ACT, SAT, or Next Generation Accuplacer scores at the time of application.

Applicants must submit ACT or SAT test scores by February 1, 2026, to be considered for most merit-based scholarships and fellowships.

ACT Registration

- All LSN juniors will take a national ACT exam in the Spring, paid by the district
- Students/Parents register online at: [ACT.org](https://act.org)
- Practice tests given at LSN sophomore year.
- First try spring or summer of junior year.
- Retakes fall of senior year.

Just retaking the exam does not necessarily improve scores. Taking a rigorous curriculum, evaluating previous tests, improving and practicing time management and test taking skills along with participating in test prep options has the most impact.

A Comparison - ACT vs SAT

	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	Reading Writing & Language Math Essay (Optional)	English Math Reading Science Reasoning Essay (Optional)
Length	3 hours (without essay) 3 hours, 50 minutes (with essay)	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: Arithmetic Algebra I & II Geometry, Trigonometry and Data Analysis	Covers: Arithmetic Algebra I & II Geometry, Trigonometry, and Probability & Statistics
Calculator Policy	Some math questions don't allow you to use 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

QUESTIONS?

Thanks for coming

justene.smith@lsr7.net