

# The Pathfinders Guide to Standardized Tests for College Admission 2025

## Test Scores Matter

- Many colleges still use ACT/SAT scores as a key factor that impacts college admissions.
- High scores can unlock merit-based scholarships.
- Students who prepare well, increase their scores by an average of 100+ points on the SAT and 4 points on the ACT.

## What's the Difference?

Table last updated: May 2025

ACT	SAT
Five sections: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• English</li><li>• Math</li><li>• Reading</li><li>• Science (optional, as of April 2025)</li><li>• Optional essay.</li></ul>	Two sections: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Math</li><li>• Evidence-Based Reading &amp; Writing.</li></ul>
Faster-pace (44 fewer questions, effective April 2025) The optional science section makes it unique.	Focuses more on logical reasoning and problem-solving.
Good for students strong in Math and Science.	Good for students strong in Reading and Social Sciences.
Revised version online effective April 2025. Paper version available in September 2025.	Now fully digital.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• English, Math, and Reading test (2 hours and 5 minutes)</li><li>• Optional Science section and essay (1 hour and 20 minutes)</li></ul> If paper, the results can take a bit longer to come out.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Shorter test (2 hours and 15 minutes)</li><li>• Faster results</li></ul>
Each question only has 4 possible answers and the time allotment for each question is longer.	Uses adaptive testing, where the difficulty of the second module in each section adjusts based on performance in the first module.
For preparation, visit the preparation page on ACT.org.	For preparation, practice with official digital tools and focus on time management.