

# SAT & ACT COLLEGE ADMISSIONS TESTING

presented by  open door  
education

The SAT and ACT are an important part of the college admission process for most students applying to colleges in the United States. Open Door helps families select the right test and guides students to success.

## CREATING AN INFORMED TEST PREP PLAN



### Try both tests in a simulated test environment.

Students begin by taking a full-length diagnostic SAT and/or ACT. Families should complete an intake form and specify that they are interested in diagnostic testing. We will follow up to provide options for testing as part of our intake process.



### Review the results during a consultation.

During the no-cost consultation, we will:

- **Review the results**, using Open Door's comprehensive diagnostic report.
- **Facilitate a conversation** among the family members regarding the student's test experience and answer questions about college admissions testing
- **Discuss the student's specific strengths**, interests, and challenges



### Establish an admissions testing plan.

Open Door works in partnership with the student and family to develop a testing plan that is unique to each student, taking into consideration the testing calendar, student experience, and availability, as well as indicators from the diagnostic tests. The plan will include:

- **Strategic testing timeline** that accommodates the student's schedule and goals
- **Tutor match based on the student's learning style** and personality, tutor expertise, and family schedule
- **A personalized tutoring plan** that identifies and targets a student's challenges while also amplifying their strengths to ensure the best possible outcome on test day

Test Preparation | Academic Tutoring | Writing Support  
492 Main Street, Acton, MA 01720 | 978-263-6387  
[www.opendoor.education](http://www.opendoor.education)

## FAQs

### What's the first step?

The first step in an informed college admissions testing plan is to experience both tests, the ACT and the SAT, to determine which is a better option.

### Is it essential to take the PSAT?

No, but we recommend it. If the date the PSAT is offered is inconvenient, you can take a diagnostic SAT with Open Door instead.

### Do I need to take both the ACT and SAT? Do colleges prefer one test over another?

No, you do not need to take both tests. Colleges that require test scores generally accept either test with no preference.

### When should official tests be taken?

Most students test in spring of junior year, summer prior to senior year, and fall of senior year. However, by planning ahead, a strategic testing timeline can be created that accommodates student and family commitments.

### Should my 9th or 10th grader be taking the SAT or ACT?

Most underclassmen have not yet been exposed to the material on the tests. The best preparation during freshman and sophomore years includes taking challenging courses and reading at increasingly higher levels.

## WHAT ARE SOME KEY DIFFERENCES BETWEEN THE SAT AND THE ACT?

	SAT	ACT
FORMAT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• 4 Sections (2 Math, Reading, and Writing/ Language)</li><li>• Reading passages from across the curriculum with at least one advanced passage from the 17th to early 20th Century</li><li>• Math sections focus primarily on Algebra, Geometry, Data Interpretation, and Basic Trigonometry; many problems are contextualized and multi-step, requiring conceptual thinking</li><li>• Data literacy woven into all sections of the test</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• 4 Sections (English, Math, Reading, and Science) plus an optional essay</li><li>• Fast-paced, content-based, simply-stated questions</li><li>• Reading section is characterized by longer, less complicated passages, focusing on speed and the ability to locate evidence</li><li>• Math covers Algebra I &amp; II, Geometry, Trigonometry, and Statistics, increasing in difficulty as the test progresses</li><li>• Science section requires very little outside knowledge, but instead rapid interpretation of graphs and figures</li></ul>
SCORES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Reading/writing sections and math sections are scored from 200–800; these 2 section scores are combined for a total score of 400–1600</li><li>• National average is 1080</li><li>• 1340 or above indicates top 10 percent</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Each multiple choice section receives a score of 1–36. Scores are averaged to determine a “composite” score from 1–36</li><li>• National average is 21</li><li>• 29 or above indicates top 10 percent</li></ul>