

ACT Testing Fact Sheet: Preparing for the English Test

- # of questions: 75
- Time: 45 minutes
- What does it test?
 - Conventions: punctuation, usage, sentence structure
 - Production of writing: topic development, organization, unity, cohesion
 - Knowledge of language: word choice, style, tone
- Format:
 - Consist of 5 essays/passages each accompanied by a sequence of test questions. These are the different kinds of questions:
 - Some questions refer to underlined portions of the passage and offer alternatives to the underlined portion. You choose which is the most appropriate choice.
 - Other questions ask about an underlined portion, a section of the passage or the whole passage. You choose the best answer to the question asked.
 - Many questions offer “No Change” as an option.
 - The passages are chosen to reflect students’ interests and experiences as well as to assess students’ writing skills.
- Scoring: 4 scores are reported:
 - Total score for English test (75 questions)
 - Production of Writing (29-32% of test devoted to this score)
 - Knowledge of Language (13-19% of test devoted to this score)
 - Conventions of Standard English (51-58% of test devoted to this score)
- Test-taking Tips for English Test:
 - KNOW DIRECTIONS
 - Pace Yourself
 - Be aware of the writing style used in each passage—when responding to a question, be sure you understand the context of the question
 - When answering questions with underlined portions in the passage, be sure you understand what you are being asked to do:
 - Some questions will ask you to consider an element of writing such as tone or emphasis the text should convey
 - Some questions will ask you to choose the alternative to the underlined portion that is NOT or LEAST acceptable. Read carefully!!
 - Some questions will refer to sections or the entire passage and there will be no underlined portions.
 - Know the differences in the answer choices—be careful not to select an answer that corrects one error but causes a different error.

ACT Testing Fact Sheet: Preparing for the Mathematics Test

- # of questions: 60
- Time: 60 minutes
- What does it test?
 - Covers math content that are pre-requisites to success in entry level college mathematics courses
 - Preparing for higher math: Number and quantity, Algebra, Functions, Geometry, Statistics and Probability
 - Integrating essential skills
 - Modeling
- Format:
 - All questions offer multiple choice answers that require reasoning skills to solve math problems.
 - Some questions may be part of sets such as several questions related to one graph or chart.
- Scoring: 9 scores are reported
 - Total score for Math test (60 questions)
 - Preparing for higher math (57-60% of questions)
 - Number and quantity (7-10%)
 - Algebra (12-15%)
 - Functions (12-15%)
 - Geometry (12-15%)
 - Statistics and Probability *8-12%)
 - Integrating essential skills (40-43%)
 - Modeling (less than 25%)
- Test-taking Tips:
 - KNOW DIRECTIONS
 - Pace yourself: you have an average of 1 minute/question—try to spend less time on each question and use the remaining time to review your work.
 - Use a calculator wisely, if you use one.
 - Solve the problem: use space provided in the test booklet.
 - After solving the problem, find your solution in the answer choices. If you don't find your answer in the choices, reread the question and be sure to pay special attention to the question being asked.
 - Make sure you answer the question being asked: many questions will involve several steps so make sure your answer addresses all the necessary steps
 - Make sure your answer is reasonable.
 - Check your work, if you have time.

ACT Testing Fact Sheet: Preparing for the Reading Test

- # of questions: 40
- Time: 35 minutes
- What does it test?
 - Measures reading comprehension: asks you to make meaning of a reading passage by referring to what is *explicitly* stated and reasoning to determining *implicit meaning*.
 - Determining main ideas
 - Locating and interpreting significant details
 - Sequencing of events
 - Comparing
 - Cause and Effect
 - Context dependent words and phrases
 - Making generalizations
 - Analyzing author's / narrator's voice and method
- Format: 4 sections
 - 3 long prose passages followed by a set of multiple-choice questions
 - 1 with 2 shorter prose passages followed by multiple-choice questions.
- Scoring: 4 scores reported
 - Total score for Reading test: 40 questions
 - Key Ideas and Details (55-60% of questions)
 - Craft and Structure (25-30% of questions)
 - Integration of Knowledge and Ideas (13-18% of questions)
- Test taking Tips
 - KNOW DIRECTIONS
 - Pace yourself: (spending 2-3 minutes to read the passage will give you 35 seconds to answer the questions so try to spend less time on the reading)
 - Read each passage carefully before answering the questions: look for relationships between and among ideas. Take notes in booklet.
 - Refer back to the passage when you are answering the questions.

ACT Testing Fact Sheet: Preparing for the Science Test

Science Test

- # of questions: 40
- Time: 35 minutes
- What does it test?
 - Interpretation, analysis, evaluation, reasoning and problem-solving skills required in natural sciences
 - Science skills and practices
 - Background knowledge in biology, chemistry, Earth/space sciences (geology, astronomy, meteorology)
- Format:
 - Scientific information presented as *Data Representation* (graphs/tables etc.) followed by multiple-choice questions
 - Scientific information presented as *Research Summaries* (descriptions of related experiments) followed by multiple-choice questions
 - Scientific information presented as *Conflicting Viewpoints* (expressions of conflicting views and hypotheses) followed by multiple-choice questions
- Scoring: 4 scores reported
 - Total score for Science test (40 questions)
 - Interpretation of Data (45-55% of questions)
 - Scientific Investigation (20 – 30% of questions)
 - Evaluation of Models, Inferences, and Experimental Results (25-35% of questions)
 - Data represented in graphs and tables
 - Research summaries
 - Conflicting viewpoints
- Test taking Tips:
 - KNOW DIRECTIONS
 - Pace yourself (spending 2 minutes to read each passage gives you 30 seconds to answer the questions so try to work faster to give yourself time to review your work)
 - Read the passages carefully: Read the entire text, graphs, tables and figures carefully and take notes as needed.
 - Be aware of different viewpoints in the passages: take notes summarizing the different perspectives in the test booklet

ACT Testing Fact Sheet: Preparing for the Writing Test

- Time: 40 minutes to write one essay
- What does it test?
 - Writing skills taught in high school and entry level college composition courses.
- Format:
 - The test presents an issue and provides 3 different perspectives on the issue. You are asked to:
 - Analyze and evaluate the perspectives given
 - State and develop your own perspective
 - Explain the relationship between your perspective and those given
- Scoring: 5 scores reported
 - Total score for Writing Test (scale of 2 to 12)
 - Ideas and Analysis
 - Development and Support
 - Organization
 - Language Use and Conventions
- Test taking Tips:
 - KNOW DIRECTIONS
 - Pace yourself: know your own pace of writing an essay. (you probably won't have time to draft, revise and recopy your essay so make adjustments as necessary)
 - Plan:
 - Understand the issue, perspectives and task
 - Make use of pre-writing questions included with the prompt.
 - Make notes to organize and outline your essay
 - Write:
 - Establish the focus and main idea of your essay
 - Illustrate your ideas with meaningful and reasonable examples
 - Discuss why your ideas are important / significant to consider
 - Review your writing
 - Take a few minutes to review your essay—readable? Neat? Mistake-free?
 - Practice:
 - Read, read, read to keep up with issues
 - Practice writing for different purposes for different audiences
 - Practice writing within a time limit

ACT Testing Fact Sheet: Things to know before you take the test!

General Information about the ACT Test

What does the ACT test?

- Measures the **knowledge, understanding and skills** that you have acquired throughout your education
- It is an **achievement test that is used to determine college admission**

Structure: What content am I being tested on?

- English (multiple choice questions)
- Mathematics (multiple choice questions) **Calculators are permitted. Go to ACT.org to see a list of acceptable calculators. Phone calculators are NOT allowed.**
- Reading (multiple choice questions)
- Science (multiple choice questions)
- Writing (essay)

"Each (multiple choice) test offers 4 or 5 answer choices from which you are to choose the correct, or best answer."

Scoring:

- All 4 tests (excluding the Writing Test) are given scores from 1 to 36.
- The composite score is the average of the 4 tests.
- Composite scores accepted at different colleges:
 - University of Hawaii at Manoa: 22
 - Ivy League schools: 30 and above
 - Most other colleges: 20 and above

What should I do first?

- ❖ *Know the content of the ACT tests.*
- ❖ *Refresh your knowledge and skills in the content areas.*
- ❖ *Identify the content areas you have not studied and consider taking related courses.*

General Strategies for taking the ACT:

- Read directions carefully for each test!
 - English, reading and science test ask for the "best" answer.
 - Mathematics test ask for the "correct" answer.
- **Once you are familiar with the directions, don't spend time on them—START TEST AS SOON AS YOU CAN.**
- Read each question carefully.
- Answer easy questions first.
- When you return to the more difficult questions, think logically to eliminate the obviously incorrect choices and look for clues to help you make an educated guess. Use POE (process of elimination).
- Answer every question / don't leave blanks
 - If you are not sure about answer, skip it and go back later. (Tip: if you are guessing, choose the same letter for all of your guesses e.g.; mark C for all of your guesses.)
- Review your work.
- Fill in answers correctly and clearly: make sure answer ovals correspond to the right test question numbers. If you change answers, erase completely.