|  | **SAT vs** | **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** | * Math
* Reading
* Writing and Language
*

Essay (Optional) | * Math
* Reading
* English
* Science

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 and Trigonometry
 |
| **Tools** | 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 |