



# Ramp Up Your Test Scores

If you haven't been totally asleep through high school, you've heard about the SAT and ACT tests – a required rite of passage in terms of getting into college. But what's the difference between the two? Which one do you need to take – or do you need both?

Since most Kentucky schools will accept either the SAT or ACT exams, you might think about taking both. You may find that you score better on one over the other because there are some differences in the way the tests are set up. (See the chart below.)

For instance, on the SAT, you get a point for a correct answer and lose a fraction of a point for a wrong answer. There is no deduction for omitted answers or for math questions without answer choices. (In fact, you don't even have to answer every question correctly to get a good score. You can get an average score by answering about half of the questions correctly and omitting the remaining questions.) So, if you are completely clueless about a question on the SAT, it's really to your advantage to skip it altogether.

With the ACT, there is no penalty for wrong answers. So do your best and take a stab at it – you've got nothing to lose! It's also helpful to take the tests more than once. Scores generally go up the more you take the tests, so it's to your benefit to retake the test(s) if you want to improve your score. 📚

## Test Dates

### SAT

Fee: \$28.50

(For a listing of test centers, visit [apps.collegeboard.com](http://apps.collegeboard.com).)

Test Date	Regular Registration	Late Registration
January 24, 2004	Dec. 22, 2003	Dec 31, 2003
March 27, 2004	Feb. 20, 2004	Mar. 4, 2004
May 1, 2004	Mar. 25, 2004	Apr. 7, 2004
June 5, 2004	April 29, 2004	May 12, 2004

Source: The College Board

### ACT

Fee: \$26

(For a listing of test centers, visit [www.act.org](http://www.act.org).)

Test Date	Regular Registration	Late Registration
February 7, 2004	January 2, 2004	January 3–16, 2004
April 3, 2004	February 27, 2004	Feb. 28–Mar. 12, 2004
June 12, 2004	May 7, 2004	May 8–May 21, 2004

Source: ACT, Inc.

## What's the Difference?

### SAT

- Two sections: verbal and math
- Based primarily on aptitude and abstract reasoning
- Questions appear in order of difficulty
- There is a penalty for wrong answers
- Highest math level: algebra/basic geometry. Test booklet supplies all formulas.
- Multiple choice with some free-response questions

### ACT

- Four sections: English, math, reading and science reasoning
- Questions based on what you've covered in school
- Questions are not ordered according to difficulty
- No penalty for wrong answers
- Highest math level: trigonometry; few formulas provided in test booklet
- All multiple choice

