

## ACT vs SAT vs TSI: Key Differences Between the ACT, SAT, and TSI

	<u>SAT</u>	<u>ACT</u>	<u>TSI</u>
<b>Why Take It</b>	Colleges and universities use SAT scores for admissions and merit-based scholarships	Colleges and universities use SAT scores for admissions and merit-based scholarships	Colleges and universities in Texas use TSI scores to determine if students must take developmental Math or English courses
<b>Type of Test</b>	Content-based test	Content-based test	Content-based test that is administered online
<b>Test Format</b>	<p>Reading: 1, 65-min section (5 Passages)</p> <p>Math: 1, 25-min section (no calculator) &amp; 1, 55-min section (w/ calculator)</p> <p>Writing &amp; Language: 1, 35-min section</p> <p>Essay: 1, 50-min section (optional)</p> <p>Total Testing Time- 3 hours (no essay) and 3 hours, 50 minutes (plus essay)</p>	<p>English: 1, 45-min section</p> <p>Math: 1, 60-min section</p> <p>Reading: 1, 35-min section (4 Passages)</p> <p>Science: 1, 35-min section</p> <p>Writing: 1, 40-min essay (optional)</p> <p>Total Testing Time- 2 hours, 55 minutes (no essay) and 3 hours, 40 minutes (plus essay)</p>	<p>Math: 20 multiple choice questions and 10 questions in each section of the diagnostic test (if required)</p> <p>Reading: 24 multiple choice questions and 10-12 questions in each section of the diagnostic test (if required)</p> <p>Writing: Includes a 20 question multiple choice questions and 10-12 questions in each section of the diagnostic test (if required) with a required 250 word essay</p> <p>Total Testing Time- The TSI is an untimed assessment</p>
<b>Content Covered</b>	Reading, relevant words in context, math, grammar & usage, analytical writing (optional)	Grammar & usage, math, reading, science reasoning, and writing (optional)	Reading, grammar & usage, math and writing
<b>Test Style</b>	Questions are evidence and context-based in an effort to focus on real-world situations and multi-step problem-solving	Straightforward, questions may be long but are usually less difficult to decipher	Computer adaptive test- designed to adjust their level of difficulty to match the knowledge and ability of the test taker
<b>Scoring</b>	<p>Math and Evidence-Based Reading &amp; Writing are each scored on a scale of 200-800.</p> <p>Composite SAT score is the sum of the two section scores and ranged from 400-1600.</p>	<p>English, Math, Reading, and Science scores will each range between 1-36.</p> <p>Composite ACT score is the average of your scores on the four sections; ranges between 1-36</p>	<p>To achieve college ready standards students must score: 351 on Reading, 350 on Math, and 340 on writing with an essay score of 4</p>

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<b>Penalty for Wrong Answers?</b>	No – you do not lose points for incorrect answers	No – you do not lose points for incorrect answers	No – you do not lose points for incorrect answers
<b>Score Choice?</b>	Yes – you can choose which set(s) of SAT scores to submit to colleges	Yes – you can choose which set(s) of ACT scores to submit to colleges	Yes – you can choose which TSI scores to submit to colleges
<b>Difficulty Levels</b>	Questions increase in difficulty level as you move through that question type in a section (except reading passage questions, which progress chronologically through the passage)	Difficulty level of the questions is random	Computer-adaptive testing: if a student gives a wrong answer, the computer follows up with an easier question; if the student answers correctly, the next question will be more difficult.
<b>Math Levels</b>	Arithmetic, problem-solving & data analysis, heart of algebra, geometry, and trigonometry; formulas provided.  Some math questions do not allow you to use a calculator.	Arithmetic, algebra I and II, functions, geometry, trigonometry; no formulas are provided  Test takers may use a calculator on all math questions.	Elementary algebra and functions Intermediate algebra and functions Geometry and measurement Data analysis, statistics and probability  The test has a built in calculator function in the online interface. No other calculator may be used.
<b>Tends to be more popular?</b>	With private schools and schools on the east and west coasts; however, every four-year college in the US accepts SAT scores	With public schools and schools in the Midwest and south; however, every four-year college in the US accepts ACT scores	All Texas public colleges and universities require students to meet the TSI thresholds before placement into Math/English courses. There are a number of ways in which a student can be TSI exempt.
<b>Offered when?</b>	Seven times per year: January, March, May, June, October, November, December	Seven times per year: February, April, June, July, September, October, December	Varies by institution- many colleges and universities offer it daily and high schools at selected times
<b>Registration deadline?</b>	Typically about four weeks before the test date	Typically about five to six weeks before the test date	Varies by institution