
SAT[®] Understanding Scores


2021



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FOR STUDENTS AND PARENTS

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The SAT Suite of Assessments

The SAT® Suite of Assessments is an integrated system of tests that includes the SAT (for students in grades 11 and 12), the PSAT/NMSQT® and the PSAT™ 10 (for grades 10 and 11), and the PSAT™ 8/9 (for grades 8 and 9).

The tests measure the same skills and knowledge in grade-appropriate ways. They work together to show college readiness over time so educators, students, and parents can monitor student progress. Their content reflects the kinds of meaningful, engaging, and challenging work that students find in the best middle school and high school courses taught today.

The SAT, the last test in the suite, is a globally recognized college admission test that's widely accepted at U.S. colleges.

The SAT is one of the most accessible, affordable, and fair ways for students from all backgrounds to show what they know and stand out to colleges.

SAT Subject Tests

College Board has discontinued offering SAT Subject Tests™. However, students who have taken one or more of these hour-long content-based tests will continue to see their Subject Test scores on their score reports.

What the SAT Measures

The SAT reinforces what students are learning in their classrooms while measuring the skills and knowledge that research shows are the most important for success in college and career. It includes the following sections.

EVIDENCE-BASED READING AND WRITING

This section is made up of a Reading Test and a Writing and Language Test, each composed of multiparagraph passages and multiple-choice questions.

The Reading Test measures comprehension and reasoning skills and focuses on close reading of passages in a wide array of subject areas. The Writing and Language Test measures a range of skills, including command of evidence, expression of ideas, and the use of standard English conventions in grammar and punctuation.

MATH

This section includes multiple-choice and student-produced response questions, and it is divided into two portions: one that allows calculator use and one that does not. It assesses skills in algebra, problem solving and data analysis, manipulation of complex equations, geometry, and trigonometry.

ESSAY (DISCONTINUED FOR MOST ADMINISTRATIONS)

Some state-provided testing still includes the SAT Essay, which has been discontinued for most administrations starting in August 2021. The Essay asks students to read a high-quality source text and write an effective analysis of that text using evidence drawn from the source. It measures a range of skills in reading, analysis, and writing.

How the SAT Is Scored

Students receive a total score that is the sum of their scores on the two sections (Evidence-Based Reading and Writing and Math). The SAT Essay, when applicable, is scored separately.

To calculate section scores, we first compute the student's raw score—the number of questions correctly answered—for each section. Nothing is deducted for incorrect answers or for unanswered questions.

Next, we convert each of the raw section scores to a scaled score of 200–800. This conversion process adjusts for slight differences in difficulty among versions of the test and provides a score that is consistent across different versions. The scaled scores are the scores provided on score reports.

How Schools May Use Score Reports

The student score report clearly summarizes a student's current achievement levels and encourages next steps to increase college and career readiness. Teachers can go over score reports with students to help them understand what their scores mean.

For example, the score report includes an indicator showing if a student meets the college readiness benchmark. If the score report shows a student has met the benchmark, that means the student is on track to be ready for college when they graduate high school. If a student isn't meeting the benchmark for a section of the test, their teacher may make a plan with the student to work on their skills in that area.

The score report can also help students see their strengths, which can increase their confidence and show them subjects in which they can handle more advanced coursework.

The Sample Score Report on page 3 shows how the PDF version that students and their school counselors can download and print will look. Remember that results will be summarized in the downloadable version. More detailed information and guidance is accessible in the online score report.

SAT Scores

Total Scores

The total score is the sum of the two section scores; its range is 400–1600.

Section Scores

Students receive scores in the range of 200–800 for each of two sections. The Evidence-Based Reading and Writing section score combines the scores for the Reading Test and the Writing and Language Test. The Math section score is derived from the Math Test score, including the calculator and no-calculator portions.

Test Scores

The range for the following test scores is 10–40:

- Reading
- Writing and Language
- Math

Cross-Test Scores

The range for cross-test scores is also 10–40. These scores represent performance on select questions across the three tests and show a student's strengths in the following domains:

- Analysis in History/Social Studies
- Analysis in Science

Subscores

Subscores in the range of 1–15 offer feedback on student performance in the following skill areas:

- Command of Evidence
- Words in Context
- Expression of Ideas
- Standard English Conventions
- Heart of Algebra
- Problem Solving and Data Analysis
- Passport to Advanced Math

SAT Essay Scores

The following three scores for the SAT Essay, if applicable, are on a 2–8 scale:

- Reading
- Analysis
- Writing

These scores aren't added together or combined with any other test scores. The online score report shows the prompt the student responded to and the student's essay.

Score Ranges

A student's ability is better represented by score ranges than points. Score ranges are derived from the standard error of measurement and show how much your scores would likely vary if you took a different administration of the test under identical conditions.

Score ranges:

- Total: ± 40 points
- Section: ± 30 points
- Test scores, subscores, and cross-test scores: ± 2 points

Percentiles

A student's percentile rank represents the percentage of students whose score is equal to or lower than their score. For example, if a student's score is in the 75th percentile, 75% of a comparison group achieved scores at or below that student's score. Two types of percentile ranks, comparing student scores to two different reference populations, are provided in this publication for both total and section scores.

Nationally Representative Sample Percentiles are derived from a research study of U.S. students in grades 11 and 12 and are weighted to represent all U.S. students in those grades, regardless of whether they typically take the SAT.

SAT User Percentiles are based on the actual scores of students in the past three graduating classes who took the current SAT during high school. These user percentiles are reported on tests completed in August 2020 through June 2021.

Sample Score Report (Front)



SAT Score Report

Imagood Student
100 Main Street
Apt 2
Anytown, ST 00000-0000

Test Date: **April 13, 2021**
Registration Number: **0123456789**
Sex: **Female**
Date of Birth: **Feb. 12, 2004**
Test Center Number: **12345**
CB Student ID: **12345678**
High School Code: **123456**
High School Name: **John F. Kennedy
High School**

Your Total Score

1010 | 400–1600

50th

Nationally Representative
Sample Percentile

41st

SAT User Percentile

Essay Scores

4 | 2–8

Reading

4 | 2–8

Analysis

4 | 2–8

Writing

Am I on Track for College?

Look for the green, yellow, or red symbols next to your section scores. They let you know if your scores are at or above the benchmark scores. Benchmarks show college readiness. If you see green, you're on track to be ready for college when you graduate.

If you score below the benchmark, you can use the feedback and tips in your online report to get back on track.

Benchmark scores:

Evidence-Based Reading and Writing: 480

Math: 530

How Do My Scores Compare?

A percentile shows how you scored, compared to other students. It's a number between 1 and 99 and represents the percentage of students whose scores are equal to or below yours.

For example, if your Math percentile is 57, that means 57% of test takers have Math scores equal to or below yours.

The **Nationally Representative Sample Percentile** compares your score to the scores of typical U.S. students.

SAT® User Percentile compares your score to the scores of students who typically take the test.

How Can I Improve?

To see which skills are your strongest and what you can do to boost your college readiness, go to your full report online and look for Skills Insight™.

What Are Score Ranges?

Test scores are single snapshots in time—if you took the SAT once a week for a month, your scores would vary. That's why score ranges are better representations of your true ability. They show how much your score can change with repeated testing, even if your skill level remains the same.

Colleges know this, and they get score ranges along with scores so they can consider scores in context.

Your online score report shows your score ranges.

Section Scores

490 | 200–800

Your Evidence-Based
Reading and Writing
Score

44th Nationally Representative
Sample Percentile

35th SAT User Percentile



You've met
the benchmark!

520 | 200–800

Your Math Score

57th Nationally Representative
Sample Percentile

49th SAT User Percentile



You've scored below
the benchmark.

Test Scores

22 | 10–40

Reading

27 | 10–40

Writing and Language

26.0 | 10–40

Math

Cross-Test Scores | 10–40

24

Analysis in History/Social Studies

23

Analysis in Science

Subscores | 1–15

6

Command of
Evidence

9

Words in Context

8

Expression of Ideas

9

Standard English
Conventions

8

Heart of Algebra

9

Problem Solving
and Data Analysis

7

Passport to
Advanced Math

Get your full report online at sat.org/scorereport

Sample Score Report (Back)

SAT Summary of Scores

Date	Mar. 13, 2021					
Grade	11					
SAT						
Total	1010					
Evidence-Based Reading and Writing	490					
Math	520					
Essay	Reading					
	Analysis					
	Writing					
Old SAT						
Critical Reading						
Mathematics						
Writing						

SAT Subject Test Scores

Date	Nov. 07, 2020					
Grade	11					
Subject Test						
	Japanese w/ Listening					
Test Score	620	0				
Language Subscores	Reading	58				
	Listening	63				
	Usage	66				
Subject Test						
	Chemistry					
Test Score	590					
Subject Test						
	Literature					
Test Score	690					

* Scores from the SAT Subject Test in Mathematics aren't comparable to Math section, test, and related subscores on the SAT. Not all SAT Subject Tests™ have subscores.

How Do I Send My Scores to Colleges?

This student score report is for your use only.

Most colleges require you to have College Board send them official score reports. They don't accept copies of student score reports, online score reports, or score report labels on transcripts.

Can I Choose Which Scores to Send?

With Score Choice™, you decide which scores you send to colleges. Choose by test date for the SAT and individual test for past SAT Subject Tests you took (these tests are no longer offered). Just make sure you follow each college's stated score-use policy.

What's Next?

Go to sat.org/scorereport and choose your next steps:

- Send your scores to colleges.
- Find out which AP® courses you might do well in.
- Get tips on boosting your skills.
- Use your scores to personalize your SAT practice.
- Make a college plan.
- Follow your interests, and build a career road map.
- Register to take the SAT again.

Percentiles for Total Scores

Total Score	Nationally Representative Sample	SAT User
1600	99+	99+
1590	99+	99+
1580	99+	99+
1570	99+	99+
1560	99+	99+
1550	99+	99
1540	99+	99
1530	99+	99
1520	99+	99
1510	99	98
1500	99	98
1490	99	98
1480	99	97
1470	99	97
1460	99	96
1450	99	96
1440	98	95
1430	98	95
1420	98	94
1410	97	94
1400	97	93
1390	97	93
1380	96	92
1370	96	91
1360	95	91
1350	94	90
1340	94	89
1330	93	88
1320	93	87
1310	92	87
1300	91	86
1290	90	85
1280	89	84
1270	88	83
1260	87	82
1250	86	81
1240	85	79
1230	84	78
1220	83	77
1210	82	76
1200	81	74
1190	80	73

Total Score	Nationally Representative Sample	SAT User
1180	78	72
1170	77	70
1160	76	69
1150	74	67
1140	73	66
1130	71	64
1120	70	63
1110	69	61
1100	67	59
1090	65	58
1080	63	56
1070	61	54
1060	60	52
1050	58	51
1040	56	49
1030	54	47
1020	52	45
1010	50	44
1000	48	42
990	46	40
980	44	39
970	42	37
960	40	35
950	38	34
940	36	32
930	35	30
920	33	29
910	31	27
900	29	26
890	27	24
880	26	23
870	24	21
860	23	20
850	21	19
840	20	17
830	18	16
820	17	15
810	16	13
800	14	12
790	13	11
780	11	10
770	10	9

Total Score	Nationally Representative Sample	SAT User
760	9	8
750	8	7
740	7	6
730	6	5
720	5	4
710	4	3
700	4	3
690	3	2
680	2	2
670	2	1
660	1	1
650	1	1
640	1	1
630	1	1
620	1-	1-
610	1-	1-
600	1-	1-
590	1-	1-
580	1-	1-
570	1-	1-
560	1-	1-
550	1-	1-
540	1-	1-
530	1-	1-
520	1-	1-
510	1-	1-
500	1-	1-
490	1-	1-
480	1-	1-
470	1-	1-
460	1-	1-
450	1-	1-
440	1-	1-
430	1-	1-
420	1-	1-
410	1-	1-
400	1-	1-

Percentiles for Section Scores

Total Score	Evidence-Based Reading and Writing		Math	
	Nationally Representative Sample	SAT User	Nationally Representative Sample	SAT User
800	99+	99+	99+	99
790	99+	99+	99+	98
780	99+	99+	99	98
770	99+	99	99	97
760	99+	99	99	96
750	99	98	98	95
740	99	98	98	95
730	99	97	97	94
720	98	96	97	93
710	97	95	96	92
700	97	94	95	91
690	96	92	94	90
680	95	91	93	88
670	93	89	92	87
660	92	87	91	85
650	90	85	90	84
640	88	83	89	82
630	86	81	87	81
620	84	78	85	79
610	81	76	83	77
600	79	73	81	75
590	76	70	79	72
580	74	67	76	69
570	71	64	73	66
560	68	61	71	64
550	65	58	68	61
540	62	54	65	58
530	58	51	61	54
520	55	48	57	50
510	51	45	52	46
500	48	41	47	43
490	44	38	44	40
480	41	35	40	37
470	38	31	36	34
460	34	28	32	31
450	31	25	29	28
440	28	22	25	25
430	24	19	23	23
420	22	16	20	20
410	19	14	17	18

Total Score	Evidence-Based Reading and Writing		Math	
	Nationally Representative Sample	SAT User	Nationally Representative Sample	SAT User
400	16	11	15	16
390	13	9	13	13
380	11	7	10	11
370	9	5	9	9
360	7	4	7	7
350	5	3	5	5
340	3	2	4	4
330	2	1	3	3
320	2	1	2	2
310	1	1	1	1
300	1	1-	1	1
290	1-	1-	1-	1
280	1-	1-	1-	1-
270	1-	1-	1-	1-
260	1-	1-	1-	1-
250	1-	1-	1-	1-
240	1-	1-	1-	1-
230	1-	1-	1-	1-
220	1-	1-	1-	1-
210	1-	1-	1-	1-
200	1-	1-	1-	1-