

THREE MONTH SAT STUDY GUIDE



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My name is Gaeun, and I'm from Seoul, South Korea. I love to study math, and debating, coding, and doing lab research are some of my favorite things about life. Although I'm not quite sure what my future would look like, I want to pursue a career in bioengineering or computer programming. Best of luck on the SAT!

3 months until the test

- Take a full diagnostic test. In fact, take two if you can spare enough time! This will help you gain a clear sense of your weaknesses and strengths.
 - As you score your diagnostic test, identify the questions you got wrong because of simple mistakes, and those you missed because you were confused or unfamiliar with the material. It's best to prioritize studying for the latter, and waiting to practice reducing mistakes until closer to the actual test.
 - Take notes on the basic concepts you would have to know to tackle problems. These include common grammar rules and math problem types (listed on Khan Academy!). Review these concepts until you master them and feel confident about applying them to questions.
- Keep your workload a bit light for the first month, because you don't want to get too worn out. Work on 1 reading section, 1 math section, and 1 writing section every two or three days. If you think you have more time, do 2 sections for the areas you needed improvement on according to the diagnostic.
- Read ahead! On the new SAT's reading section, there will be more historically relevant documents and speeches, such as the Bill of Rights or the Gettysburg Address. Reading and analyzing these texts during your practice could help you on the real test.

2 months until the test

First half

- Increase the number of practice areas you work on each day. Focus on 1-3 skills (depending on the areas you need improvement on) each for reading, writing, and math, for about 1-2 hours every other day.
- Keep a review notebook for the mistakes you make. Here are some tips:
 - Cut out or write down the questions you missed and the passages you found confusing.
 - For each question, don't just write the correct answer. Write your original answer, and add an explanation of why your answer turned out to be wrong. This will help you understand your way of reasoning, and reduce the number of mistakes you make in the future.

- Update these notes about twice a week, and invest at least an hour every time you make changes.
- Don't forget to read over the notes you took during the first month of practice! Add more concepts if necessary.
- Overall, you should spend about 1-2 hours every two days solving sections, and about 3 hours each week writing review notes.

Second half

- Keep the number of sections you work on the same as the previous two weeks, but work on 1-3 skills *every day* instead of every other day. While the SAT is a test of your knowledge and thinking skills, it's also a test of endurance, so the more you practice, the better!
- Consistently update your review notes. There's also one more thing you might want to do at this point. Print copies of the passages/questions that you cut out or wrote down. Compile a few passages or individual questions to create your own sections, and solve them. Experience tells me that you probably won't be able to remember all the answers, but even if you do, it's still worthwhile.
- You might want to start practicing for the essay (if you choose to write it), including reviewing sample prompts and outlining potential essay responses.
- You should spend about 2 hours each day working on sections and reviewing. Creating your own sections may seem like a tedious job, but it's very rewarding and sometimes even enjoyable.

1 month until the test

First half

- Don't forget to review your mistakes and update your review notes.
- Keep practicing for the essays, using different examples for every essay that you write.
- Work on 2 or 3 skills each for reading, writing, and math every day. This time, take more care to simulate the actual testing environment by strictly timing yourself, placing minimal distractions around you.
- Although you're studying a wide range of skills and you've been at it for a couple of months, you should still limit your study time to under 3 hours a day. More than 3 hours will not allow you to function as a socially active human being, and you will end up extremely tired by the time you take the test.

Second half

- Now is the time to start taking full practice tests. Take at least two practice tests each week, making sure to time yourself. I suggest taking these tests on the weekend, or any time you're not busy. The point here isn't to finish early; even if you finish a section in, say, 15 minutes, you should check your work until the time is up, just like you would for the real test. Resist the urge to grade your answers immediately after you finish a few sections, and sit through the entire test. I find it best to take 5 full tests total before the test day.
- At this point, try to spend less time creating notes, and spend more time reading over them and reinforcing important formulas or grammar rules in your brain.