

# SAT OR ACT?

## Top 10 Things to Consider

1

Some students struggle to remember details, even if their **Reading** skills are strong. The shorter passages on the ACT are preferable for those with weaker working or verbal memory.



2

The **Reading** passages in the SAT are longer and more complex. The SAT **Essay** requires reading another passage. Unless your verbal reasoning skills are strong, you are likely to do better on the ACT.



3

The SAT starts with **Reading**, what many find hardest to finish, while the ACT starts with English, the section many find easiest. Some prefer to get the Reading over, while others like to build up to it.



4

If **Math** makes you anxious the ACT may be better--all questions are multiple choice and allow a calculator. Anxiety can impede working memory, which is key for mental math and multi-step problems.



5

The ACT **Math** has more geometry and trigonometry plus the extra graphs to interpret on the **Science**. You might prefer the SAT if you have weaker spatial perception or visual memory.



6

If you don't enjoy **Science**, the SAT might be better. ACT Science is last when students are already tired. This can be particularly challenging if you have weaker abstract reasoning or spatial skills.



7

If you have trouble choosing the "**best answer**" you might prefer the more straight-forward questions on the ACT. This is key for students aiming for a near perfect score but have weaker flexible thinking.



8

The overall length of both tests is about the same, but the shorter ACT sections can be better if you have trouble with **focus** or **time management**, often from weaker attention or working memory.



9

Some students just work at a slower pace. The average SAT time per question is 70 seconds versus 50 seconds on the ACT. The **pacing** of the SAT is often better for students with slower processing speed.



10

If the **bubble sheet** causes problems, consider the ACT. It alternates answers between ABCD and EFGH, so you're less likely to make a mistake or catch it quicker if you do. This might matter most if you have weaker visual motor speed.



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