

**WHAT STUDENTS NEED TO KNOW
ABOUT COLLEGE READINESS AND THE ACT[®]**

What Does College Readiness Mean?

Students who are college ready are academically prepared to enroll and succeed in college-level courses without needing to take developmental/remedial coursework during the freshman year in college.

The ACT College Readiness Benchmarks (English 18; Math 22; Reading 21; Science 24) represent the minimum scores needed for a 50% chance of making a "B" or better or a 75% chance of making a "C" or better in entry-level college courses. To find out how scores relate to academic skills, visit <http://www.act.org/standard/>. "Ideas for Progress" listed at the bottom of each standard identify areas to study in order to improve college readiness and ACT scores.

What is the ACT?

The ACT is a timed, curriculum-based, achievement test with four sections: English, math, reading, and science. The writing test is optional.

There are 215 questions on the ACT: English – 75 items (45 minutes); math – 60 items (60 minutes); reading – 40 items (35 minutes); and science – 40 items (35 minutes). The optional writing test adds 30 minutes. The general content strands measured are listed on the reverse page.

Preparation for the ACT includes becoming familiar with the types of questions asked, taking rigorous academic courses, building critical thinking skills, and practicing taking timed tests. Free test preparation materials are available from school counselors or from www.actstudent.org.

Why Should You Take the ACT?

ACT scores are accepted by all colleges/universities nationwide for college admission. Many universities use the results for course placement, course credit, and student advising. All highly-selective schools accept the ACT, and many will not require subject-related tests since the ACT is curriculum based.

The questions on the ACT are directly related to what has been learned in high school courses in English, mathematics, and science. Because the ACT tests are based on what is taught in the high school curriculum, many students are more comfortable with the ACT than they are with traditional aptitude tests or tests with narrower content.

Students may qualify for fee waivers. School counselors will have information on fee waivers.

Acceptable ACT scores vary. Postsecondary institutions typically post on their website the scores students need to earn, usually combined with class rank and/or GPA, to gain acceptance at that institution. The ACT score range is 1 – 36. A general guideline is:

<u>Admission Standard</u>	<u>Typical Scores</u>
Open	16 – 21
Traditional	18 – 24
Selective	21 – 26
Highly selective	25 – 36

The best time to take the ACT is in April or June of the junior year. Students can retake the ACT during the fall of the senior year if not happy with their scores. Following this strategy will allow students who want to raise their scores the opportunity to do so. Testing the first time during the senior year may be too late for some scholarship and university application deadlines. **You may register for the ACT at www.actstudent.org.**

ACT College Readiness Content Strands

English Academic Content Areas Tested

Topic Development in Terms of Purpose and Focus
Organization, Unity, and Coherence
Word Choice in Terms of Style, Tone, Clarity, and Economy
Sentence Structure and Formation
Conventions of Usage
Conventions of Punctuation

Optional Writing Test

Expressing Judgments
Focusing on the Topic
Developing a Position
Organizing Ideas
Using Language

Mathematics

Basic Operations and Applications
Probability, Statistics, and Data Analysis
Numbers: Concepts and Properties
Expressions, Equations, and Inequalities
Graphical Representations
Properties of Plane Figures
Measurement
Functions

Reading

Main Ideas and Author's Approach
Supporting Details
Sequential, Comparative, and Cause-Effect Relationships
Meanings of Words
Generalizations and Conclusions

Science

Interpretation of Data
Scientific Investigation
Evaluation of Models, Inferences, and Experimental Results