

# The Digital SAT

## Updates in Standardized Testing

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- What has changed about the SAT and what has stayed the same
- New Digital SAT exam structure
- Examples of new question types
- Bluebook app
- Comparison of the SAT, Digital SAT, and ACT
- How preparation for the SAT is changing
- Available preparation resources

**CURVEBREAKERS**

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## What Has Not Changed?

- The SAT is still scored out of 1600
- Section scores are out of 800 each
- Types of math questions remain the same
- Math “grid-ins” still exist as fill-in-the-blank style questions
- Reading comprehension questions are still largely based on context clues and do not require students to memorize long vocab lists

### About Curvebreakers

As the founder of Curvebreakers Test Prep, I've dedicated my career to helping students navigate the ever-evolving landscape of standardized testing. After working for some of the largest tutoring companies and boutique firms in New York City, I founded Curvebreakers in 2014 with a vision to create a tutoring company that emphasizes data-driven results with a personalized approach.

At Curvebreakers, we're committed to empowering students to achieve their academic goals through personalized instruction, authentic assessment tools, and culturally responsive study materials that help them excel on college admissions exams. Our program is designed to prepare students to meet and exceed the SAT College Readiness Benchmarks and the ACT College and Career Readiness Standards.

We prioritize personalized attention to school administrative staff, students, and parents while maintaining a family atmosphere. We believe that every student deserves equal access to the tools they need to succeed, and we're passionate about helping students reach their full potential.

Today, we'll delve into the changes brought about by the digital SAT and explore strategies to ensure students are well-equipped to excel. So, let's dive in together and discover how we can empower our students to break through the curve and achieve their academic aspirations.

**Nicholas LaPoma, Founder & President**

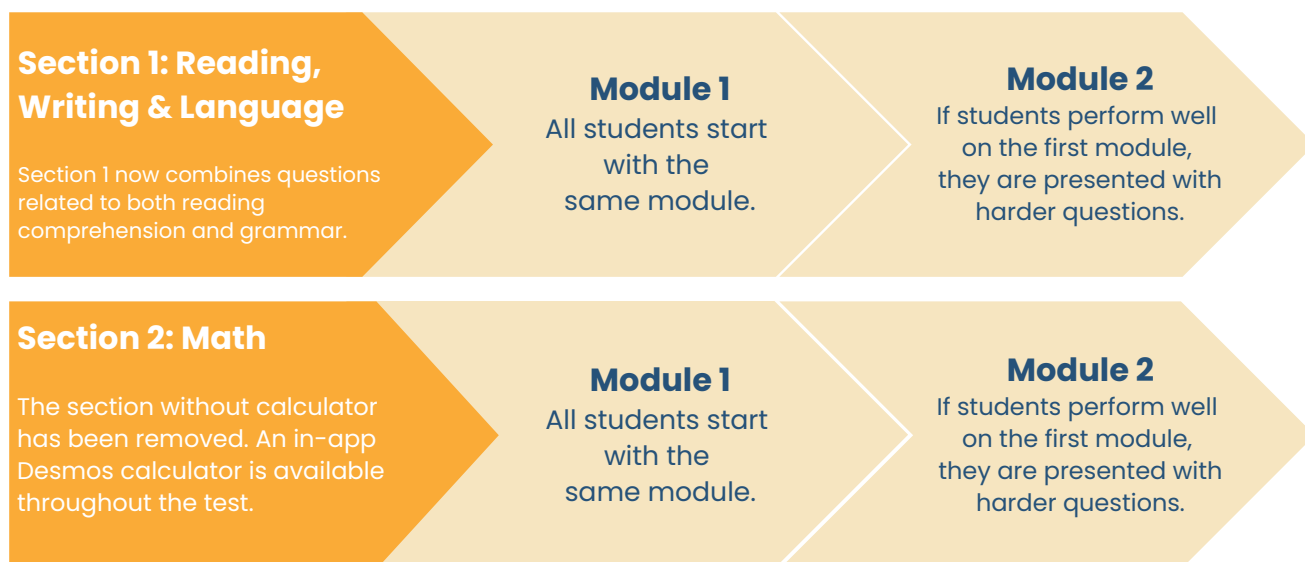
## What Has Changed?

- App-based, adaptive testing
- One-hour shorter test time
- Two main sections instead of four
- Each section consists of two modules
- A calculator is now permitted on all math questions
- Shorter reading passages and new question types
- Results are available within days vs. weeks
- Discontinued QAS reports

## Timing and format

| Component         | Time Allotted (minutes)    | Number of Questions / Tasks |
|-------------------|----------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Reading & Writing | 64 (two 32-minute modules) | 54                          |
| Math              | 70 (two 35-minute modules) | 44                          |
| Total             | 134                        | 98                          |

## New Exam Structure



# SAT, Digital SAT, and ACT Comparison

|                             | Paper-and-Pencil SAT  | Digital SAT  | ACT  |
|-----------------------------|---|--|--|
| Timing and Questions        | Test Time: 3 hours<br>Break time: 15 min<br>154 questions   | Test Time: 2 hours<br>Break Time: 10 min<br>98 Questions   | Test Time: 2h 55m<br>Break Time: 10 min<br>215 Questions                           |
| Format                      | 4 Sections:<br>1) Reading<br>2) Writing<br>3) Math (no calculator)<br>4) Math with calculator                                       | 2 Sections:<br>Reading & Writing is Section 1 and Math is Section 2. Each section is made up of two modules.   | 4 Sections:<br>1) English<br>2) Math<br>3) Reading<br>4) Science<br>Optional Essay |
| Math                        | Math is split into two sections; one with calculator followed by one without.   | Math is one section. Students may use the in-app graphing Desmos calculator during both math modules.  | Math is one section and calculator is allowed for the full section.                |
| Reading & Writing (English) | Reading and Writing/Language are their own separate sections.   | Reading, Writing & Language are now combined into the same section. Questions are mixed together randomly.   | Reading and English are separate sections.   |
| Preparation Resources       | Full-length practice exams are widely available; many are free and directly available from The College Board's website to download. | 4 digital practice tests are available on the Bluebook app. Test preparation companies are developing their own tests to supplement the lack of available materials. | The ACT is a long-established exam and with many resources for preparation.        |

# Old vs. New Question Types

## Example: Old Reading Comprehension Question Being Replaced

### Paper Version

The Reading section in the paper SAT provides students with several long reading passages and a series of 10 questions based on each passage.

The challenge: If students don't have a good understanding of a passage, then it will affect their ability to correctly answer the series of questions related to the one passage.

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| <p>"I have two boys," she said. "Both of them were<br/>60 born there. Enrique, my oldest, is away at college on<br/>a soccer scholarship. And there's Mayor, who you<br/>met. He's nothing at all like his brother. Rafa thinks<br/>we might have taken the wrong baby home from the<br/>hospital." She forced a smile. "Just a joke, of course."<br/>65 She stood and lifted a framed picture from the<br/>end table. "This is from last summer before Enrique<br/>went back to school," she said, handing it to me.<br/>"Micho took it for us."<br/>In the photo were two boys: Mayor, whom I<br/>70 recognized from the store, small for his age with<br/>dark, buzzed hair and sparkling eyes, and Enrique,<br/>who stood next to his brother with his arms crossed,<br/>the faint shadow of a mustache above his lip.<br/>"What about you?" Celia asked. "Do you have<br/>75 other children besides your daughter?"<br/>"Only her," I said, glancing at my hands around<br/>the glass. The perspiration from the ice had left a ring<br/>of water on the thigh of my pants.<br/>"And she's going . . ." Celia trailed off, as though<br/>80 she didn't want to say it out loud.<br/>"To Evers."<br/>Celia nodded. She looked like she didn't know<br/>what to say next, and I felt a mixture of<br/>embarrassment and indignation.<br/>85 "It's temporary," I said. "She only has to go there<br/>for a year or two."<br/>"You don't have to explain it to me."<br/>"She's going to get better."<br/>"I've heard it's a good school."<br/>90 "I hope so. It's why we came."<br/>Celia gazed at me for a long time before she said,<br/>"When we left Panamá, it was falling apart. Rafa and<br/>I thought it would be better for the boys to grow up<br/>here. Even though Panamá was where we had spent<br/>95 our whole lives. It's amazing, isn't it, what parents<br/>will do for their children?"<br/>She put her hand on mine. A benediction. From<br/>then, we were friends.</p> | <p><b>1</b></p> <p>The description of Celia's apartment in lines 9-20 is primarily intended to</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>A) evoke a sense of coziness and comfort.</li><li>B) reflect the hectic and unpredictable nature of life in Celia's building.</li><li>C) extol the ready availability of goods in the United States.</li><li>D) establish that Celia is an avid collector.</li></ul> <p><b>2</b></p> <p>According to the passage, which fact about Celia's neighbors does the narrator know before she visits Celia's apartment?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>A) Micho Alvarez and Benny Quinto are close friends.</li><li>B) Benny Quinto once studied to be a priest.</li><li>C) Micho Alvarez has a sensitive side.</li><li>D) Quisqueya dyes her hair.</li></ul> <p><b>3</b></p> <p>When Celia tells the narrator not to let Quisqueya "put you off" (line 54), she most nearly means that the narrator should not</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>A) be offended by Quisqueya.</li><li>B) be deceived by Quisqueya.</li><li>C) let Quisqueya avoid her.</li><li>D) let Quisqueya impose on her.</li></ul> |
|--|--|

## Example: New Writing and Language Questions

Writing and language questions are interspersed among reading comprehension questions.

In the early 1800s, the Cherokee scholar Sequoyah created the first script, or writing system, for an Indigenous language in the United States. Because it represented the sounds of spoken Cherokee so accurately, his script was easy to learn and thus quickly achieved \_\_\_\_\_ use: by 1830, over 90 percent of the Cherokee people could read and write it.

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Which choice completes the text with the most logical and precise word or phrase?

- A. widespread
- B. careful
- C. unintended
- D. infrequent

## Example: New Reading Comprehension Question Type

### What's Changing

No more long passages with multiple questions. Changed to shorter passages paired with a single question.

Now, if students struggle with the passage, it only affects their ability to answer one question.

While researching a topic, a student has taken the following notes:

- The *Atlantic Monthly* magazine was first published in 1857.
- The magazine focused on politics, art, and literature.
- In 2019, historian Cathryn Halverson published the book *Faraway Women and the "Atlantic Monthly."*
- Its subject is female authors whose autobiographies appeared in the magazine in the early 1900s.
- One of the authors discussed is Juanita Harrison.

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The student wants to introduce Cathryn Halverson's book to an audience already familiar with the *Atlantic Monthly*. Which choice most effectively uses relevant information from the notes to accomplish this goal?

- A. Cathryn Halverson's *Faraway Women and the "Atlantic Monthly"* discusses female authors whose autobiographies appeared in the magazine in the early 1900s.
- B. A magazine called the *Atlantic Monthly*, referred to in Cathryn Halverson's book title, was first published in 1857.
- C. *Faraway Women and the "Atlantic Monthly"* features contributors to the *Atlantic Monthly*, first published in 1857 as a magazine focusing on politics, art, and literature.
- D. An author discussed by Cathryn Halverson is Juanita Harrison, whose autobiography appeared in the *Atlantic Monthly* in the early 1900s.

# Preparing for the New SAT

## How Preparing for the SAT is Changing

Feedback from Asia, where the digital SAT has already been administered, show that students who used digital resources were better prepared than students who relied on old SAT paper exams. "Linear" paper exams for the new digital SAT do exist, but we advise against using them solely to prepare without a digital assessment.

The key to preparing for standardized tests is all about practicing with the time restrictions. Using previous College Board exams *was* the best way to do that. Because the test is brand new, there are very few official digital SAT tests to practice on. We only have the four practice tests available on Bluebook, and the score reports do not offer any insight into a student's practice test performance.

This has caused the entire industry to prepare its own adaptive, digital practice tests, new testing platforms that mimic the Bluebook, new strategies, new books, etc. We already have eight digital SAT practice tests with adaptive capabilities at our disposal.

## How to Prepare for the SAT

### **Baseline practice test and SAT and ACT score comparison**

Try both an SAT and an ACT to see which test better suits your child's strengths. Many students in our area do not consider the ACT and should, especially while the SAT is transitioning. Curvebreakers provides free SAT and ACT diagnostic testing for families.

### **Utilize Khan Academy (free)**

Khan Academy, which is partnered with College Board has instructional videos and a large question bank. Khan provides students with lots of opportunity for practice but lacks instruction on test strategies necessary for this kind of difficult, timed test.

### **Seek additional support from SAT experts**

Register for a class or private tutoring. Just be wary of companies that offer "guarantees."

### **Practice makes perfect**

Practice questions in a timed setting and utilize online testing tools that provide diagnostics.

## 3 Core Factors to Improve Your Score

1. The proper **diagnosis**
2. The proper **study schedule and time**
3. The ideal **strategy**



## Test Preparation Options

### Self-Study

- Option for self-motivated students who are comfortable studying independently and seeking out help
- Check out the many free resources offered through College Board and ACT websites
- Purchase study guides online
- Khan Academy covers all of your self-prep needs for the SAT
- There is also a similar ACT academy

### Take into consideration:

- Learning style
- Time to prepare
- Test prep budget
- Scores required by target schools

### Classes

- Cost a bit more than a self-study approach
- Good supplement to a self-study program
- Provide general layout, language, testing strategy, and material on the exam
- Content will vary, designed to target as many students as possible
- School-offered classes provide students with discounted registration and convenience

### Private Tutor

- More expensive than other options
- (Should be) Personalized test prep strategy
- Schedule to keep student on track to achieve goals - helpful for today's busy student
- Focus on areas most in need of improvement
- Find a good "fit" - tutor match is important
- Fees & methods vary

## Does The SAT (or ACT) Still Matter?

The answer to this question is evolving every prep cycle. The SAT/ACT can give you an edge when applying to colleges, but the process has become increasingly nuanced. **Curvebreakers fully supports test optional policies at colleges.**

### Those that do NOT need the SAT:

- You simply do not want to take it.
- If you are applying to exclusively non-competitive schools (75% acceptance rates or higher) you may not need the SAT or ACT.
- You are applying to only test-blind schools.
- If you struggle to perform up to standard on the SAT or ACT.

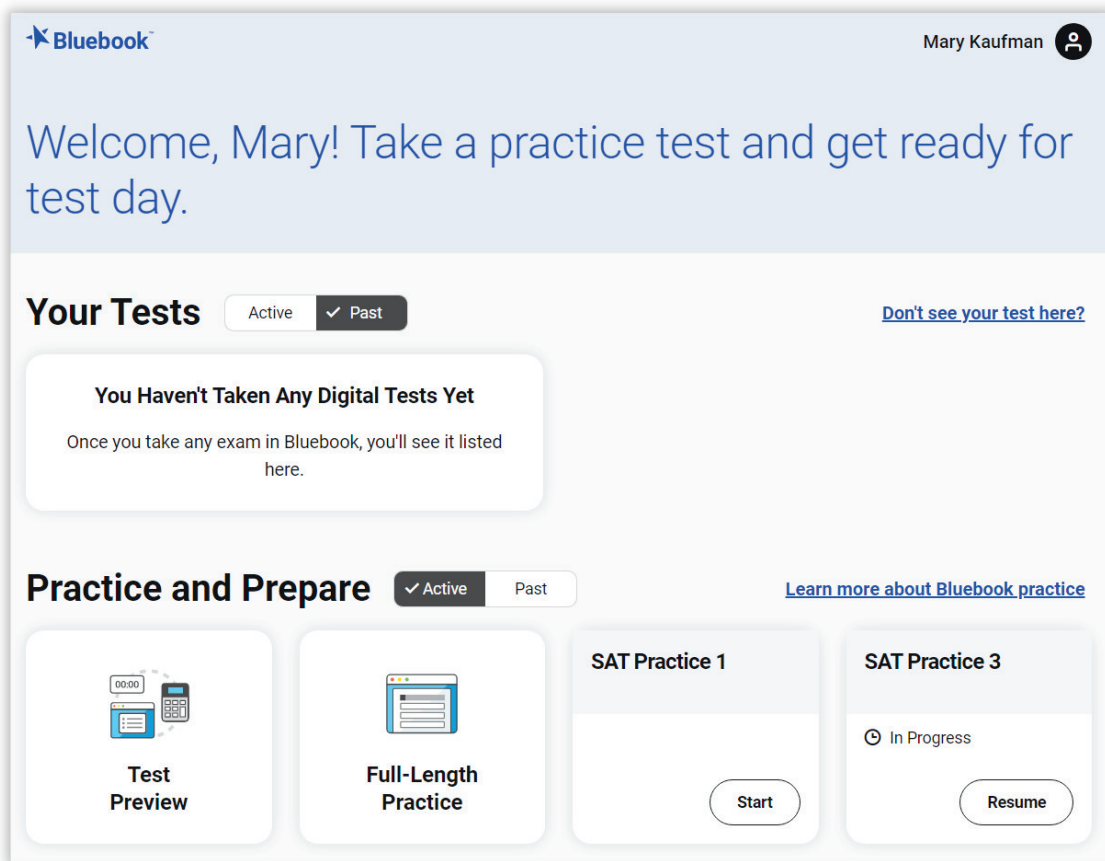
### Those who may need the SAT:

- Those looking for merit based aid
- Applying to competitive schools
- Applying to competitive programs in any school

# Students Need Bluebook to Take College Board Exams

Students need to download Bluebook, College Board’s online testing application, on their devices to take the PSAT, official SATs, and select AP exams.

Students also need to create an online College Board account if they have not done so already. Currently, Bluebook contains four SAT practice tests. After taking a practice exam, students may review their answers and view answer explanations.



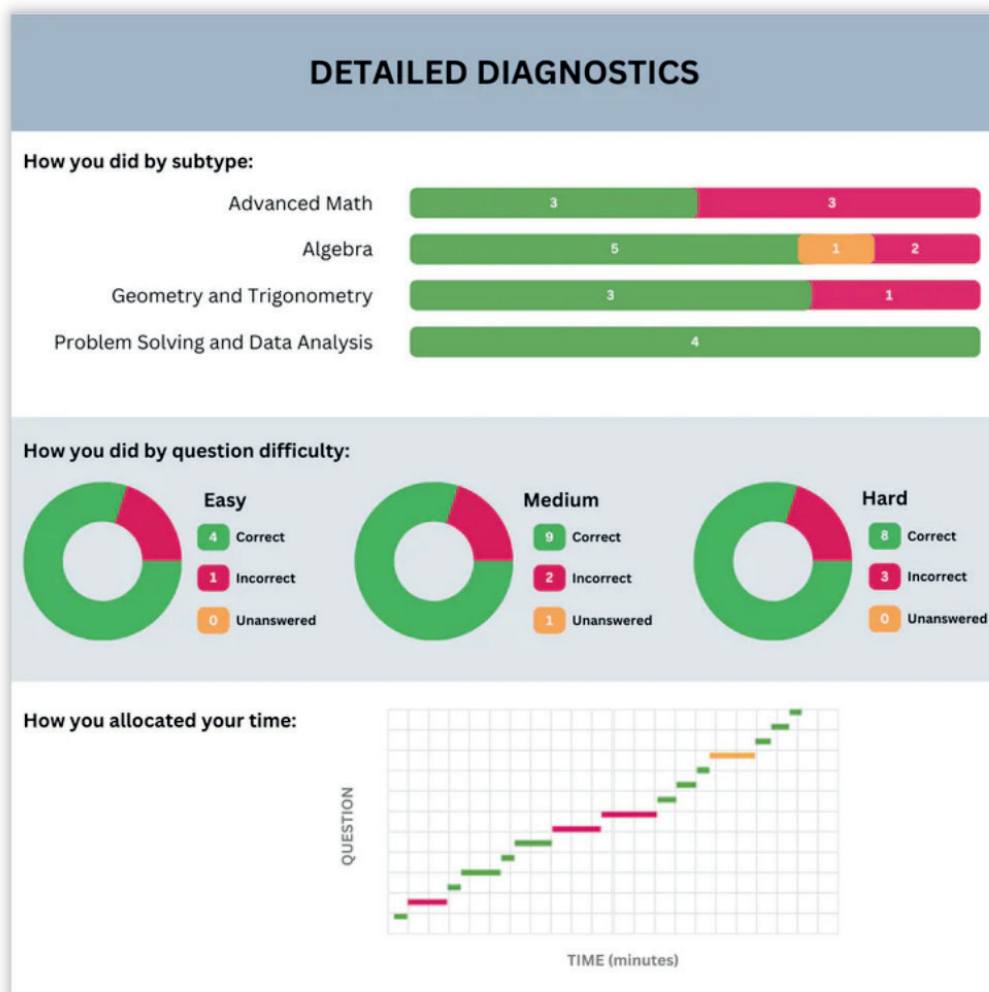
# What is diagnostic score data and how to use it to improve scores

Diagnostic analytics go beyond offering cumulative and section scores to pinpoint specific areas where the student performance can be improved. These insights show how the student did on various question types, what content knowledge is lacking, and reveal any issues with timing.

**Curvebreakers' online diagnostic testing platform mimics the real, adaptive testing environment while providing a detailed breakdown.**

Features:

- Realistic test environment that simulates digital testing conditions
- Instant scoring and immediate performance assessment
- Accessible anywhere
- Detailed diagnostics include question and module difficulty and accuracy by question type.



**Full Comparison of Bluebook and Curvebreakers**  
[curvebreakerstestprep.com/vs-bluebook](https://curvebreakerstestprep.com/vs-bluebook)

## What do we do for schools?

- In-school SAT/ACT prep classes
- Online SAT/ACT prep classes
- Self-Paced SAT/ACT video courses
- Online, diagnostic digital SAT testing application
- Speaking engagements - college prep night, etc.
- Professional development for teachers
- Schools that have in-house SAT/ACT prep classes can utilize our books and platform combined with training to execute their own long-term SAT/ACT prep.

***We work with all budgets as well as student pay models.***

**For more information, visit the School Partnership page on Curvebreakers' website:**

<https://curvebreakerstestprep.com/schools/>

## Book a Meeting to View Pricing and Discuss Your School's Needs

We will create a proposal for your team to review that includes an outline of a customized program and sample class schedules.

Click on the link below or copy and paste it into your browser to book a meeting.

<https://meetings.hubspot.com/nickthetutor/collegeprep>



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