

How to Prepare for the College Entrance SAT

Many people are afraid of the dreaded SAT, the longest, most comprehensive test most high school students will ever take. If they do poorly, they fear they will never be able to go to college.

Although the test scores are a very bad judge of your actual intelligence or ability to succeed in life, your SAT scores unfortunately have a disproportionate impact on your college options. The good news is that it is easy for which to prepare.

Most colleges take your SAT scores into consideration. Many indicate that they will not accept students who score below a certain level on the test. Colleges know that it is not a measure of your I.Q. or a real measure of how likely you are to succeed; however it is a measure of the level of one's discipline to study and, frankly, an easy screening method for applicants.

It takes a lot of preparation time to review all the material that will be on the SAT and, most importantly, to familiarize yourself with the way the test is given. If you don't understand the format, the test can be very confusing and intimidating. Below is a list of steps you can take to prepare for the SAT.

1. Take practice SAT's

There is no better preparation than taking practice SAT's and carefully reviewing your mistakes. You can find practice tests at book stores and online. For every time you take a practice test, your goal should be for your test score to improve by several points.

2. Brush up on Old Math

Much of the math on the SAT is from earlier level high school material, so even if you're good at math, you might not remember it. You need to re-read your old geometry and algebra books to do well in this section of the test.

3. Practice Your Vocabulary

Most of the verbal section of the SAT is based on vocabulary. The SAT frequently presents unusual words that sound like simpler words but have different meanings. If you have a limited vocabulary, it is very hard to expand it in a matter of weeks, but it can be helpful to try.

4. Become a Writer

Writing is a skill that only gets better with practice. Try writing a few SAT-style essays every day and you will soon be able to do them quickly and without being nervous.

5. Be Well Rested and Fed

Make sure you get a lot of sleep the night before the test. In the morning, eat a huge breakfast of something that won't bother your stomach. Definitely get to the test location with plenty of time to spare.

6. Don't Guess

If you read a multiple choice question on the SAT and have no idea of the answer and are unable to eliminate any of the choices as incorrect answers, your odds of guessing and getting it right are low. You are better off skipping the question altogether. Skipping a question will negatively impact your score less than getting the answer wrong.

Having said that, if you have a multiple choice question and are able to narrow down the correct answer between one choice or another, that would be worth making an educated guess since then your odds are much better at getting it correct.

The SAT is a long, dull test, so don't be nervous. Also, try to take the SAT early so you have time to take it again if you are not happy with your score. Regardless how many times you take the SAT, colleges accept your highest score for their consideration of admittance to their school.

About the Author

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