

SAT Testing Timeline

The SAT is offered nationally seven times each year, in March, May, June, August, October, November, and December, usually on the first or second Saturday of the month. See the current [SAT test date schedule](#) for the exact dates.

When do most students take the SAT for the first time?

Here are the PSAT/SAT sequences that the majority of high school students elect to pursue:

Option A: The fall of 11th grade testing path

PSAT: Fall of 10th grade and/or fall of 11th grade

SAT #1: December 3 SAT exam of 11th grade

SAT #2: March 1 SAT exam of 11th grade. This is the free CFISD School Day SAT for all juniors.

SAT #3 (if necessary): June or August SAT exam

Option B: The spring of 11th-grade testing path

PSAT: Fall of 10th grade and/or fall of 11th grade

SAT #1: **March 1 SAT exam of 11th grade.** This is the free CFISD School Day SAT for all juniors.

SAT #2: June or August SAT exam

SAT #3 (if necessary): October SAT exam

Understand that if you take the SAT during senior year you will be completing college applications and preparing for the SAT exam at the same time. This may create a stressful situation.

Even if you apply early decision or early action, you could still take another SAT in December of your senior year as the results are generally made available prior to the date on which many schools make their ED/EA decision.

Aligning the SAT with your high school coursework

This is one of the most important considerations for 11th graders in determining when to first sit for the SAT. Consider that the SAT measures your aptitude in three major areas of math as well as an “Additional Topics” category. They are:

- **Heart of Algebra** (19 questions): Linear equations, systems of equations, and linear relationships.
- **Problem Solving and Data Analysis** (17 questions): Ratios, proportions, percentages, analysis of graphs, understanding quantitative data.
- **Passport to Advanced Math** (16 questions): Quadratic and higher-order equations, manipulating polynomials, more complex equations or functions.
- **Additional Topics in Math** (6 questions): Geometric concepts, fundamentals of trigonometry, arithmetic of complex numbers.

So, what’s the takeaway from all of this? In essence, students need to at least get close to completing Geometry and Algebra II in order to be fully prepared for both the SAT and ACT. If you are taking Algebra II during junior year, you may want to wait until the spring to begin your standardized testing journey.

How much time do I need to study?

Among seniors retaking the SAT, 55% see their scores increase; the average improvement is by 40 points. A mere 4% of re-testers see their reading or math score jump by 100+ points. However, the numbers are far more encouraging for those who study than those who do not, and this does not necessarily mean paying hundreds or thousands of dollars for one-on-one tutoring or fancy SAT classes. In fact, a study released this year by the College Board found that just 20 hours of targeted practice through Khan Academy (which is completely free) resulted in an average score gain of 115 points. If you need more time (Christmas break, spring break, etc.), then waiting until the spring may be more advantageous.

Here are a few quick links to get you started with your SAT prep:

[Official SAT Practice on Khan Academy®](#): Free and personalized study for everyone. Take official full-length practice tests, use interactive practice, and get a tailored practice plan based on your PSAT/NMSQT results.

[Daily Practice App](#): SAT prep you can use anytime, anywhere.

[SAT Practice Tests](#): Simulate test day with official full-length SAT practice tests.

[Sample Questions](#): Check out these questions so you'll know what to expect on test day

Am I taking multiple AP/DC courses junior year?

If you are enrolled in multiple AP/DC courses/tests junior year, then early to mid-May is going to be a rough time already full of intense prep-work and exam-taking.

Registering for the exam

Register for the exam early. Do not wait until the deadline to register. Test centers have limited number of seats and the longer you wait to register for the exam, the more likely the test center may be full. Sometime the nearest testing center that has seats left may be a significant drive. The May, June, and August dates are highly sought after testing dates by students. Test Center will reach capacity for those dates.