

Preparing America's Tomorrow Today
www.patt-nhf.org

[Preparing America's Tomorrow Today](#) endorses the preparation methods and techniques used to assist a student in preparing to take the SAT, ACT and PSAT exams. For further questions, contact PATT by email @ info@patt-nhf.org or telephone @ (919) 518-2903.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS FROM PARENTS

My student has a great grade point average, but does not do well on the SAT exam – why?

The SAT exam is a reasoning exam, and is not a highly correlated measure of a student's intelligence or academic knowledge. When students are trained properly to improve their reasoning skills for the SAT exam, they can do significantly better on the exam.

What SAT exam scores does my student need to gain admission to a specific college?

The best answer to this question is to contact the admissions office of the college where the student is applying.

Will colleges still consider old SAT exam scores in the admissions process?

The best answer to this question is to contact the admissions office of the college where the student is applying.

Is the new SAT exam more difficult than the old SAT exam?

Based on the March, May, and June 2005 exams, it seems that the Critical Reading Section is more difficult on the new SAT exam than the old SAT exam. The difficulty of the Math Sections of both exams seems to be about the same. The Writing Section of the new SAT exam seemed fairly easy for the March and May 2005 exams, but became more difficult for the June 2005 SAT exam. About 300,000 student took the March 2005 exam, and 127 scored a perfect score. The percentage of students who achieved a perfect score on the March 2005 SAT exam was half the percentage of students who normally scored a perfect score on the old SAT exam.

When should my student take/prepare for the SAT exam?

Students should start preparing for the SAT exam during their junior year in high school. In fact, if a student starts early enough, they could possibly achieve the SAT score they need to gain admission to the college they desire by the end of their junior year. This will make for a less stressful summer before their senior year. If students start early enough, they should plan on taking the three exams which offer the Question-and-Answer Service (usually October, January, and May) during their junior year. If a student is planning to apply to one of the military academies, they should start preparing for and taking the SAT exam during the spring of their sophomore year. The application process for the military academies is more involved and starts earlier than the process for other colleges.

What is the Question-and-Answer Service?

The Question-and-Answer Service is a report which provides a copy of the SAT exam the student took, along with a listing of the student's answers and the correct answers. The Question-and-Answer Service provides the best feedback for what a student actually did on the SAT exam. The Question-and-Answer Service is normally offered for the October, January, and May SAT exams. It normally takes 6 – 8 weeks after the exam (or after you order the report) to receive the report. The College Board offers the Student Answer Service for the dates when it does not offer the Question-and-Answer Service. The Student Answer Service only provides a listing of the questions which the student got correct, got wrong, or omitted.

Do you need to complete Algebra II before you take the SAT exam?

The completion of Algebra II is not necessary in order to start preparation for the SAT. The reality of the exam is there are typically only 4 – 5 problems which can remotely be considered Algebra II problems, and most of these problems can be evaluated successfully with some simple logic. Even if a student does not complete these problems, they will achieve a very good Math Section score. If a student determines the correct answers to all of the other problems, their score for the Math section will be about 700. In fact, students only need to answer 70% of the questions correctly in order to receive a score of 600 for the Math section of the SAT exam.

How important is the essay on the SAT exam?

The essay contributes about 13% of the Writing Section Score and 4% of the overall score. The remaining part of the score comes from the Multiple Choice Grammar portions of the exam. An increase of two points (0 – 12 point scale) on the essay will result in only about a 30 point increase in the Writing Section Score. Most colleges are still evaluating how they will use the scores from the Writing Section.

How important is the PSAT exam?

The PSAT exam is normally thought of as preparation for taking the SAT exam. Most schools give the PSAT exam to all of their juniors since the junior year PSAT score is used for the National Merit Scholarship Program. Some schools also use the PSAT exam scores for course placement. However, if a student prepares properly for the SAT exam, there is no reason for the student to wait to take the PSAT exam before taking the SAT exam.

Should students take the October SAT exam so near to the PSAT exam?

As of the March 2005 SAT exam, the PSAT and SAT exams are very similar. The main differences are that the SAT exam has an essay section and has more sections than the PSAT. Since the content of each test is the same, students can prepare for both exams at the same time. If students prepare for the October exams, taking both exams within a few days of each other will not have a detrimental effect on their scores. In fact, if they prepare properly, they should do well on both exams.

What score can I expect my student to achieve on the SAT exam based solely on their PSAT scores?

Most students who took the old SAT exam and old PSAT exam in the month of October (an apples-to-apples comparison), scored about 50 points lower on each section (Verbal/Math) of the SAT exam than they did on the sections of the PSAT exam. October 2005 will be the first time that students can take both the new SAT exam and the new PSAT exam in the same month.

Should students take the ACT exam instead of the SAT exam?

Part of the answer to this question depends on the requirements of the college where the student is applying. However, many colleges will accept either exam. With this in mind, there are advantages and disadvantages to both exams. Because each exam has advantages and disadvantages, many students end up achieving the same percentile score on each exam.

If you have additional questions, or need help preparing for the SAT exam or ACT exam, please contact Lyle Burnham, NC Director of Studyworks, at 919-624-4484 or 800-705-6577. His e-mail address is lylej@studyworks.com. The Studyworks' web site is www.studyworks.com.

[Preparing America's Tomorrow Today](#) endorses the preparation methods and techniques used to assist a student in preparing to take the SAT, ACT and PSAT exams. For further questions, contact PATT by email @ info@patt-nhf.org or telephone @ (919) 518-2903.