

# PSAT Scores... Now What?



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## Welcome

### Our Contact Information:

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### Some other things to note:

[www.PrincetonReview.com](http://www.PrincetonReview.com)  
[www.Collegeboard.com](http://www.Collegeboard.com)  
[www.NationalMerit.org](http://www.NationalMerit.org)  
[www.ACT.org](http://www.ACT.org)

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## Topics for **Today**

- Why we take the PSAT
- The PSAT Score Report
- The National Merit Scholarship Program
- Tricks of the Trade
- Admissions Timeline
- Overview of Admissions Tests
- Test Prep Options

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## Why Do We Take the **PSAT?**

**Why do we take the PSAT?**

**What does PSAT stand for?**

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## Preliminary SAT

### What does this mean?

- A practice test before the SAT
- Qualifying exam for National Merit Scholarships

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## Making a Plan

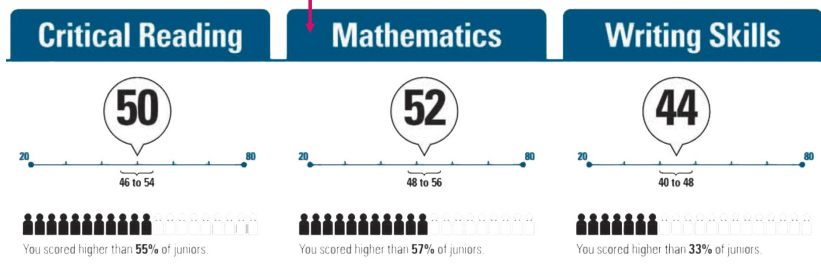
**Taking the PSAT is a great way to jumpstart your college admissions planning.**

- You'll get an idea of how standardized tests work
- See how you perform in a high-pressure testing situation
- Most importantly, you'll get SCORES to give you a starting point

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## The PSAT Score Report

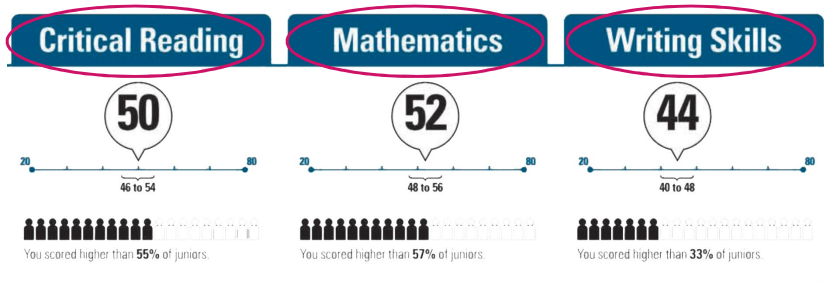
The PSAT is based on a scale of 20-80  
You will have 3 scores, one for  
Critical Reading, one for Mathematics,  
and one for Writing Skills



Your overall scores are found at the top of the Score Report. You should see three numbers, all between 20 and 80.

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## Your Overall Score




Add each score above to get your overall PSAT score:

$$50 + 52 + 44 = 146$$

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## Selection Index

 <b>National Merit Scholarship Corporation</b>		<b>Entry Requirements</b> <small>(Information you provided on your answer sheet.)</small>	<b>Eligibility Information</b> <small>If your Selection Index places you among the 55,000 high scorers who qualify for program recognition, you will be notified next September.</small>
<small>National Merit Scholarship Corporation (NMSC) uses a Selection Index based on PSAT/NMSQT scores as an initial screen of over 1.5 million students who enter its scholarship programs. (See reverse for more information.)</small>	<b>Your Selection Index</b> <small>Sum of scores in critical reading, mathematics and writing skills.</small> <b>146</b>	<small>High school student:</small> <b>Yes</b> <small>U.S. citizenship:</small> <b>Yes</b> <small>Year to complete high school and enroll full-time in college:</small> <b>2011</b> <small>Years to be spent in grades 9-12:</small> <b>4</b>	
	<b>Percentile</b> <small>Compares your performance with college-bound juniors.</small> <b>47</b>		

**Your total score = Selection Index.**

**You can find your Selection Index on your College Board Score Report**

**Highest = 240**

**Lowest = 60**

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## Raw Scores

**Raw Score = How Many Questions  
You Got Right**

- » **Reading: 48 questions**
- » **Math: 38 Questions**
- » **Writing: 29 questions**
- » **TOTAL: 125 questions**

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## Guessing Penalty

### Guessing Penalty

Get It Right:	+1 Raw Point
Leave It Blank:	+0 Raw Points
Get It Wrong:	- 1/4 Raw Point

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## Your Final Score

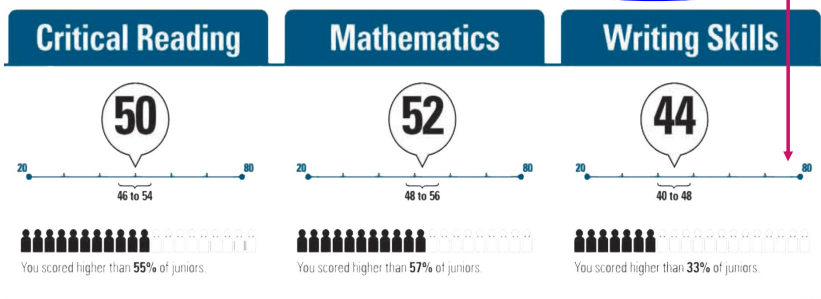
1. College Board takes your Raw Score from each section.
2. They plug it into a crazy algorithm (which is different for each test date).
3. You get a “Scaled” Score from 20-80 for each section, and 60-240 Overall.

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## Ranges

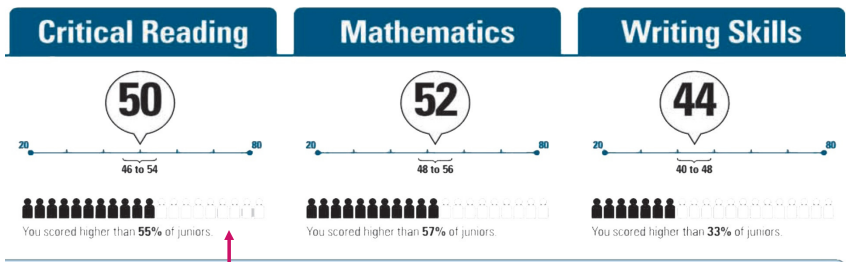
These are the ranges in which you scored. Scores within your range are considered “equal” statistically.

Score range is what CB predicts you would score if you took the PSAT over again but didn't really learn any additional skill



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## Percentiles



These are your percentiles – where your scores stand against other students in your class year

The Percentiles allow you to compare your score with all the other students that took the PSAT.

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## Reviewing Your Answers

**Your Answers**

See test questions and review explanations of the answers at [www.collegeboard.com/quickstart](http://www.collegeboard.com/quickstart).

You can also ask your counselor for a copy of your test book back so you can review the questions.

**Key**

✓ Correct	e Easy
o Omitted	m Medium
u Unscorable	h Hard

**Scoring**

- Correct answer – PLUS 1 POINT.
- Omitted answers – 0 POINTS.
- Wrong answers to multiple-choice questions – MINUS 1/4 POINT.
- Wrong answers to math questions 29–38 = NO LOST POINTS.
- Points are totaled, then converted to scores on the 20–80 scale.

Question	Correct Answer	Your Answer	Difficulty
1	A	✓ e	
2	B	✓ o	
3	A	C m	
4	C	A h	
5	B	E h	
6	D	✓ o	
7	B	✓ m	
8	D	o e	
9	B	✓ m	
10	E	B h	
11	D	✓ h	
12	C	✓ m	
13	A	✓ m	
14	B	A m	
15	A	✓ e	
16	C	✓ m	
17	A	✓ o	
18	E	✓ m	
19	B	✓ m	
20	B	E m	
21	E	✓ m	
22	D	B h	
23	E	✓ m	
24	A	✓ m	

"Your Answer" section gives you a lot of information about what you answered on every question in every section. Take time to look back over how you answered each question. Did you do better at certain types of problems than others? Did you leave questions blank or did you guess?

**Question** – The question number in the exam/section.

**Correct Answer** – The correct answer for this question.

**Your Answer** – The answer choice you filled in on the test.

**Difficulty** – rated Easy, Medium or Hard and pertains to the level of difficulty of each question.

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## Math Pacing

- Even though the questions have different levels of difficulty, they are all worth the same amount of points.
- So, if easy questions have the same point value as hard ones – which type of question would you want to spend the most time on?

# THE EASY ONES!

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## Math Pacing

Question #1

Question #20



Easy

Hard

### Math Tips:

- It's all about the pacing. Getting the easy ones = more raw points = high overall Math Score.
- **SLOW DOWN and SCORE MORE!**

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## Writing Pacing

### Writing Section Order of Difficulty Structure

- 1. Improving Sentences (20 questions) - from Easy to Hard
- 2. Error IDs (14 questions) – from Easy to Hard
- 3. Improving Paragraphs (5 questions) – all Easy or Medium

### Writing Tips:

- Know when the Order of Difficulty “re-sets.”
- Consider doing the Improving Paragraphs ?s first.

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## Reading Pacing

**For Critical Reading, you have to rely on your own Personal Order of Difficulty.**

- **Reading Tips:**
- **Spend your time on the answers that you CAN answer.**
- **Consider omitting questions to save time.**
- **Improve your vocabulary!**

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## Improve Your Skills

**Your Skills**

These skill categories can help you understand your score and focus your study efforts before you take the SAT.

To learn more about your skills and review suggestions for improvement based on your test performance, visit [www.collegeboard.com/quickstart](http://www.collegeboard.com/quickstart) and sign in using your code below.

**Online Access Code**  
**A02670146P**

<p><b>Number &amp; Operations</b></p> <p>12 of 15 questions correct (1 omitted)</p> <p><b>Algebra &amp; Functions</b></p> <p>5 of 5 questions correct (0 omitted)</p> <p><b>Geometry &amp; Measurement</b></p> <p>8 of 10 questions correct (2 omitted)</p> <p><b>Data, Statistics &amp; Probability</b></p> <p>6 of 8 questions correct (1 omitted)</p>	<p><b>Grammatical Relationships Between Words</b></p> <p>3 of 12 questions correct (1 omitted)</p> <p><b>Words &amp; Phrases Used to Modify or Compare</b></p> <p>1 of 5 questions correct (2 omitted)</p> <p><b>Phrases &amp; Clauses</b></p> <p>6 of 10 questions correct (2 omitted)</p> <p><b>Correctly Formed Sentences</b></p> <p>1 of 6 questions correct (4 omitted)</p> <p><b>Relationships of Sentences &amp; Paragraphs</b></p> <p>2 of 6 questions correct (3 omitted)</p>	<p>9 of 15 questions correct (0 omitted)</p> <p>3 of 5 questions correct (0 omitted)</p> <p>8 of 10 questions correct (2 omitted)</p> <p>2 of 8 questions correct (2 omitted)</p> <p>4 of 10 questions correct (0 omitted)</p>
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Get suggestions for improving your skills before you take the SAT.

[www.collegeboard.com/quickstart](http://www.collegeboard.com/quickstart)

The "Your Skills" section gives you pointers on areas where you can improve your scores. If you don't learn additional skills, you may never break out of your scoring range. The skills tested on the PSAT will also be tested on the SAT.

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## National Merit Scholarships

 <p><b>National Merit Scholarship Corporation</b></p> <p>National Merit Scholarship Corporation (NMSC) uses a Selection Index based on PSAT/NMSQT scores as an initial screen of over 1.5 million students who enter its scholarship programs. (See reverse for more information.)</p>	<p><b>Your Selection Index</b> Sum of scores in critical reading, mathematics and writing skills. <b>146</b></p> <p><b>Percentile</b> Compares your performance with college-bound juniors. <b>47</b></p>	<p><b>Entry Requirements</b> (Information you provided on your answer sheet.)</p> <p>High school student: <b>Yes</b></p> <p>U.S. citizenship: <b>Yes</b></p> <p>Year to complete high school and enroll full-time in college: <b>2011</b></p> <p>Years to be spent in grades 9–12: <b>4</b></p>	<p><b>Eligibility Information</b></p> <p>If your Selection Index places you among the 55,000 high scorers who qualify for program recognition, you will be notified next September.</p>
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**True or False:**


**Only juniors are eligible for recognition by NMSC.**

**TRUE!**

**Sophomores are not considered for national merit recognition until their junior year.**

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**True or False:**


**All National Merit Semi-Finalists and Finalists get college scholarships.**

**FALSE!**

**Fewer than 1% of students who take the test will receive any money from NMSC.**

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High school student:	U.S. citizenship:					
<b>Yes</b>	<b>Yes</b>					
<p><b>Your Selection Index</b> Sum of scores in critical reading, mathematics and writing skills. <b>146</b></p> <p><b>Percentile</b> Compares your performance with college-bound juniors. <b>47</b></p>						

**True or False:**

**If you get recognized by NMSC, you won't have to worry about paying for college.**

**FALSE!**

**Of those scholarships handed out to fewer than 1% of students who took the test, none are worth more than \$2500.**

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## National Merit Scholarships

**NMSC will contact your school if you've been chosen for recognition.**

**For more information, check out [www.nationalmerit.org](http://www.nationalmerit.org).**

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## Admissions Timeline

### FRESHMAN YEAR:

STUDY: Pick graduation plan  
TEST: Practice PSAT

- Choose your courses wisely!
- Prep for first PSAT in freshman or sophomore year

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## Admissions Timeline

### SOPHOMORE YEAR:

STUDY: Focus on grades & taking difficult classes  
TEST: Take your first PSAT

- Your HS Transcript is your #1 priority!
- Extracurricular Activities: quality over quantity
- Prep for and take your first PSAT
- Consider SAT Subject Tests

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# Admissions Timeline

JUNIOR YEAR		
<b>OCTOBER</b> TEST: Take the PSAT	<b>NOVEMBER</b> RESEARCH: Start researching colleges	<b>DECEMBER</b> PREP: Start thinking about the SAT vs ACT and how to prep
<b>JANUARY</b> TEST: SAT on January 28	<b>FEBRUARY</b> TEST: ACT on February 11 ACTION: Consider going to visit colleges	<b>MARCH</b> TEST: SAT on March 10
<b>APRIL</b> TEST: ACT on April 14	<b>MAY</b> TEST: SAT on May 5 Consider taking subject tests!	<b>JUNE</b> TEST: SAT on June 2 ACT on June 9

## College Research

- 1-2 “Safety” Schools
- A Handful of “Target” Schools
- 1-2 “Reach” Schools

Use **FREE** online tools at [princetonreview.com](http://princetonreview.com) to get started!

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# Admissions Timeline

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## Make a Testing Plan

- SAT or ACT?
- When will you take your first test?
- How long will you need to prep?
- When during the year are you going to have time to prep?

Make sure to leave enough time to re-take the test at least once!

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## Admissions Timeline

### JUNIOR YEAR

#### OCTOBER

TEST: Take the PSAT

#### NOVEMBER

RESEARCH:  
Start researching colleges

#### DECEMBER

PREP:  
Start thinking about the SAT  
vs ACT and how to prep

#### JANUARY

TEST:  
SAT on January 28

#### FEBRUARY

TEST:  
ACT on February 11  
ACTION:  
Consider going to visit  
colleges

#### MARCH

TEST:  
SAT on March 10

#### APRIL

TEST:  
ACT on April 14

#### MAY

TEST:  
SAT on May 5  
Consider taking subject  
tests!

#### JUNE

TEST:  
SAT on June 2  
ACT on June 9

### College Visits

- Take a tour
- Talk with actual students
- Try it out: eat in the school cafeteria!

**Be a savvy college shopper – this campus may be where you spend the next four years of your life!**

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## Admissions Timeline

### SUMMER BREAK:

APPLY: Consider Early Decision or Early Action

- Start looking at applications
- Think about recommendations, essays, and resumes
- Start hunting for scholarships
- If You're Sure: Early Decision and/or Early Action

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## Admissions Timeline

### SENIOR YEAR:

TEST: Take the SAT/ACT or Subject Tests again if needed

PLAN: Get teacher recommendations

APPLY: Get applications and FASFA in early!

- Retake the SAT or ACT if necessary
- Fill out those applications early!
- Apply for Financial Aid as early as January 1<sup>st</sup>!

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## Admissions Tests

	PSAT	SAT	ACT	SAT Subject Tests
<b>Is it Required?</b>	No	Yes	Yes	Sometimes
<b>Length</b>	2.5 hours	3 hours, 45 minutes without breaks	3 hours, 25 minutes for Essay	1 hour
<b>Subjects and Sections</b>	Math (2), Reading (2), Writing (1)	Math (3), Reading (3), Writing (3), Experimental (1)	English (1), Math (1), Reading (1), Science (1), Optional Essay (1)	By subject
<b>Scoring and Penalties</b>	20-80 each section, 60-240 overall, +1 right, +0 blank, -1/4 wrong	200-800 each section, 600-2400 overall, +1 right, +0 blank, -1/4 wrong	1-36 is average of scores from all parts of test, no guessing penalty	200-800, +1 right, +0 blank, -1/4 wrong
<b>Score Choice</b>	No	Yes	Yes	Yes

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## Score Comparison

**Score Comparison Chart**

PSAT	SAT	ACT
240	2400	36
234	2340	35
226	2260	34
219	2190	33
213	2130	32
204	2040	31
192	1920	30
186	1860	29
182	1820	28
176	1760	27
170	1700	26
165	1650	25
158	1580	24
153	1530	23
150	1500	22
141	1410	21
135	1350	20
129	1290	19
121	1210	18
114	1140	17
106	1060	16
100	1000	15
90	900	14
78	780	13
75	750	12
		11

Use the comparison chart to guesstimate what you would get on the SAT and ACT without any further prep.

Predicted SAT Score	Your Goal SAT Scores
_____ Critical Reading	_____ Critical Reading
_____ Mathematics	_____ Mathematics
_____ Writing	_____ Writing
_____ Total SAT Score	_____ Total SAT Score
_____ Equivalent ACT Score	_____ Equivalent ACT Score

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## SAT vs. ACT – which one is for you ?

### SAT vs. ACT

Pick the one that is best for YOU!

### How We Can Help

Take our FREE Princeton Review Assessment (PRA)

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## Test Prep Options

**The Bottom Line: You Gotta Prep!**

- **Classroom Courses**
- **Small Group Instruction**
- **Private Tutoring**
- **Online Courses**

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## Conclusion

**THANK YOU FOR ATTENDING!**

**GOOD LUCK WITH YOUR  
ADMISSIONS PROCESS!**

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