



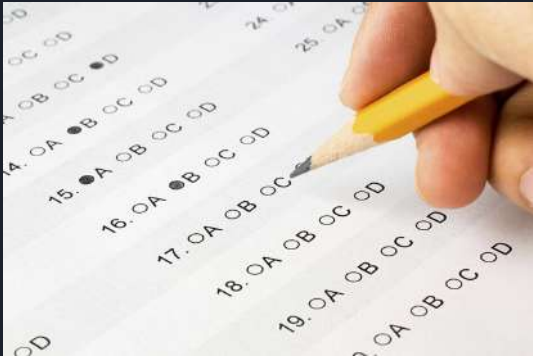
ACT Basics and Strategy

The Beginning

What is it and why?

- A means of measuring college preparedness in core school subjects
- Helps measure YOU against vast number of students in the US and the world
 - ACT can be between **20-50%** of college admissions decision

(This isn't to make you feel afraid-but it is important to take the test seriously and feel prepared)





A Fact

- **An hour of ACT studying will do more to get you into college than an hour of anything else you're doing right now.**
- This sounds frightening. This is not to encourage you to devote your life to ACT studying. But, mindlessly looking at colleges online or worrying about your GPA a lot is not as helpful as working hard to prepare for this test.



The Basics

- Section 1: English (45 minutes, 75 questions)
- Section 2: Math (60 minutes, 60 questions)
- Break (5 minutes)
- Section 3: Reading (35 minutes, 40 questions)
- Section 4: Science (35 minutes, 40 questions)
- Section 5: Writing (40 minutes)



What to Bring

1. ACT Ticket
2. Government Issued Photo ID
3. Approved Calculator
4. Sharpened Number 2 Pencils
 - a. I recommend 5 (one per test)
5. Erasers
6. Snack
7. Layered Clothing
8. A watch (this is very important)
9. It's about being comfortable and prepared



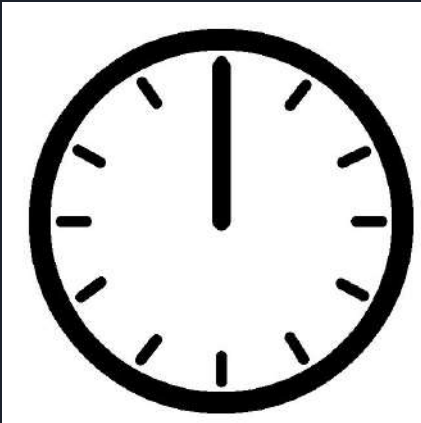
Setting a Goal Score

- Take a moment to explore the average 25, 50, and 75% ACT for top schools
- Google search can help you figure this out
- I recommend aiming for the top 75%
- Scored on a scale: 1-36
 - Average of English, Math, Reading, and Science scores (1-36) each
 - Graded on a curve
- Create goals for each section and a composite score



Reach Your Goal

- The ACT is repetitive. It requires strategy and practice NOT genius.
- Research recommends 40 hours of study



Study Strategy

- Set a schedule
 - Tuesday from __ to __.
- Tape formulas and goal score to your wall
- Study with real amounts of time
 - This is important. Really make it happen
- Plan to take it 2-4 times





Universal Things to Know

- Math gets progressively harder
- Science gets progressively harder with each section
- Reading and English are random (generally)



For Scoring up to a 24

- You only need to answer 60-70% of questions correctly!
 - English: 56/75 questions correct
 - Math: 40/60 questions correct
 - Reading: 29/40 questions correct
 - Science: 27/40 questions correct
- *To get a 20, you only to get 50% of all questions correct*
- National average is a 20-21



Strategy

- SKIPPING!
- Skip hardest questions and MOVE ON!
 - Don't even spend time on these questions
 - Still fill in every bubble (designated guessing column)
- **30 second rule: if you are spending more than 30 sec. On one questions and are not close, skip it and try to come back.**
- You are not penalized for guessing, but you are penalized for for leaving questions blank



Important Fact to Remember

**Every question is worth the same
number of points!**



For Scoring Over a 24

- Aim to get 65-75% of all questions correct
- To get a 30, aim for 85-90%
- To get a 36, aim for 100%

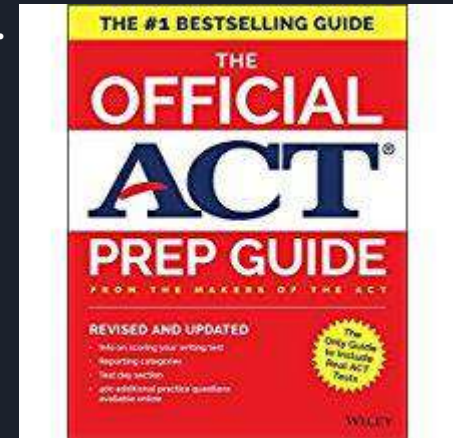


Strategy

- Track your errors!
 - Note why you got it wrong
 - Content gap, careless error, or wrong guess?
- Time management strategies
 - Complete all questions THEN fill in answers or do it page by page
 - Try to finish with 5 minutes to spare to double check answers

For Everyone

- The key to the ACT is practice!
 - This is the only way to learn how repetitive it is and to figure out which strategies work best for you
- Use real tests, real time, and real conditions.
 - Practice as much as you can.
 - Try to do at least one full practice test.
- ACT study book recommendation:





Other Things

-If you take the test outside of school, you cannot count on the testing site to have a calculator for you.

-There's a lot of different scores that are "good", so don't beat yourself up because your friend got a slightly different score. (also, don't be a jerk if you get a higher score)

-**Retaking the test is worth it.** There are avenues to get fees waived or reduced, even when you're taking it outside of school.

-For some of the subjects, it's less about what you know in terms of subject and more about how prepared you are and the test taking strategies that you have.



Our General College Wisdom <3

- It's okay to not have a list of colleges right now, but it's a good idea to start thinking generally about what you want to study and what kinds of schools you want to apply for (BFA? No BFA? In-State? Out of state?)
- Think critically about your class load senior year in relation to the intensity of your college application process.
- The University of Minnesota is not a safety school.
- Stay organized by using a spreadsheet to track your progression for each school