When you are planning for college, look into the college entrance test requirements for each school. CFNC provides average test scores of incoming freshmen for each North Carolina college. Look in the admissions section of each school's profile at CFNC.org. Contacting the college or university can be the first step in finding out which test(s) you will need to take. A good rule of thumb in college planning is to start early, so begin thinking about college entrance tests in your sophomore year. Your high school counselor can be an invaluable resource.

If you have questions about any of these tests or need further information, call 866-866-CFNC or visit CFNC.org.
SAT

The SAT measures critical thinking skills that are considered to be vital to academic success in college and beyond. The test is offered seven times a year in October, November, December, January, March/April, May, and June.

College Board, which administers the SAT, is launching a redesigned version of the test in March 2016. If you take the SAT prior to March 2016, the test will be divided into four sections as shown in the table below. If you take the SAT in March 2016 or after, the redesigned test will have three sections.

Notice that the total possible score range is changing from 600-2400 to 400-1600. Another important change for test-taking strategy is that the redesigned SAT will be based on rights-only scoring (a point for a correct answer but no deduction for an incorrect answer). Full details are at collegeboard.org.

Three main sections of the current SAT (prior to March 2016)

1. Critical Reading: consists of three sections of short and long reading passages as well as sentence-completion questions. Some questions test your ability to think carefully about the passage while others ask about a word’s definition based on its context. There are questions related to information stated in passages and questions that require you to identify writing techniques. Sentence completion questions will assess your logical ability to connect different parts of a sentence and the meaning of words.

2. Mathematics: consists of three segments of multiple choice and student-produced response questions. Math questions fall into four categories: numbers and operations, algebra and functions, geometry and measurement, and data analysis, statistics, and probability. Approximately 10 student-produced response questions require that you solve a problem and fill in the answer on a special grid.

3. Writing: consists of a short essay and multiple-choice questions. The essay assesses your writing competence based on your ability to express yourself while appropriately organizing and developing ideas and choosing words. The essay is scored by trained high school and college instructors who give each essay a score from one to six, six being the highest. The multiple-choice questions in this section evaluate your ability to identify errors and improve sentences and paragraphs.

Preparation

The heart of the SAT is analytical reasoning; therefore, cramming information won’t be of much assistance. In general, it is best to use study guides or sample tests to familiarize yourself with the types of questions and reasoning skills used in the exam. An excellent source of information about the SAT is collegeboard.org, which offers a test preparation center with test-taking tips, sample tests, and questions of the day. College Board has a new partnership with Khan Academy (khanacademy.org) to offer a more personalized online option for SAT practice.
Registration
You may register for the SAT at sat.collegeboard.org. You may also be able to obtain a Registration Bulletin from your school counselor and mail in your registration.

Cost and Test Dates
- $52.50 (Your school counselor can help you determine if you are eligible for a fee waiver.)
- The SAT is given each year in October, November, December, January, March/April, May, and June. Contact your high school counselor or the College Board SAT Program for specific dates.

Average Test Scores (SAT)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2014 National</th>
<th>2014 NC</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Critical Reading</td>
<td>497</td>
<td>499</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mathematics</td>
<td>513</td>
<td>507</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writing</td>
<td>487</td>
<td>477</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total SAT</td>
<td>1497</td>
<td>1483</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

SAT Subject Tests
The SAT Subject Tests measure knowledge in the following subject areas (including some subsections).
- English (Literature)
- History (U.S. History and World History)
- Math (Math Level 1 and Math Level 2)
- Science (Biology with either an ecological or molecular focus, Chemistry, and Physics)
- Languages, some with a listening section (Chinese, French, German, Spanish, Modern Hebrew, Italian, Latin, Japanese, and Korean).

All SAT Subject Tests are one-hour, multiple-choice tests. Some colleges may use the tests for admission decisions; other colleges use the SAT Subject Tests for college placement or advising. Some colleges do not accept SAT Subject Test scores at all.

How to Know if You Have to Take SAT Subject Tests
Check the admissions requirements for the colleges you have selected. If you are still unsure, talk with your school counselor or contact admissions counselors at the colleges of your choice.

Preparation
Taking SAT Subject Tests as soon as possible after completing course work in the subjects being tested will help, because the information will be fresh in your memory. For language tests, however, it is recommended that students wait until after they have completed at least two years of study. Because SAT Subject Tests determine knowledge of a specific subject, if you continue to study the subject and then retake the test, your score should reflect your increased knowledge.

There are numerous study guides available. Students may also consider visiting the Subject Tests Learning Center at collegeboard.org for test-taking tips and practice questions.

Cost and Test Dates
- $26 Registration Fee
- Plus $26 Language Test with Listening
- Plus $16 Each Additional Subject Test
- The SAT Subject Tests are given each year in October, November, December, January, May, and June, but not all tests are offered each month. Contact your high school counselor or the College Board SAT Program for specific dates.

Average Test Scores
Average test scores vary depending on the subject. Below are average scores for 2014 college-bound seniors from selected subject tests.

Average SAT Subject Test Scores

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subject</th>
<th>Score</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>English (Literature)</td>
<td>619</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>U.S. History</td>
<td>643</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>World History</td>
<td>626</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Math Level 1</td>
<td>621</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Math Level 2</td>
<td>691</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chemistry</td>
<td>668</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spanish</td>
<td>651</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

For More Information
College Board SAT Program
P.O. Box 025505
Miami, FL 33102
866-756-7346
212-713-8333 (Services for Students with Disabilities)
888-857-2477 (TTY)
212-713-7789 - International
609-882-4118 (TTY) - International
collegeboard.org
The PSAT: Preliminary SAT/NMSQT

The Preliminary SAT/National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test measures verbal reasoning as well as critical reading, writing, and mathematical skills. The test is divided into five sections and takes two hours and ten minutes to complete. The PSAT allows you to familiarize yourself with the types of questions found on the SAT and provides valuable feedback on areas where you might benefit from additional study or practice. Because the PSAT has the same kinds of questions as the SAT, it is the best way to practice taking the SAT. When taken in the junior year, it also allows you to qualify for the National Merit Scholarship Corporation’s programs, which provide financial assistance for recipients. You will receive scores on each individual section of the PSAT. The scale for scores is 20-80.

When to Take the PSAT

Students may take the PSAT in the sophomore or junior year. To compete for National Merit Scholarships, you must take the PSAT in your junior year, unless you plan to graduate early. Information about the National Merit Scholarship Corporation is available at nationalmerit.org.

Preparation

Challenging courses, problem-solving activities, and a well-established reading practice are the best preparation for the PSAT. You can find practice questions and answers and test-taking tips at collegeboard.org.

Registration

You may register for the PSAT through your high school. Contact your school counselor for more information. Online registration for the PSAT/NMSQT is not available.

Cost and Test Dates

- $14 (Schools may charge an additional fee for administrative costs.)
- The high school determines the date that you will take the test and should provide you with registration materials. It is usually given in October.

Scores

Your scores are reported directly to your school. You may not access them online or by phone. Your school is responsible for distributing them and providing extra copies to you. If your scores qualify you to be a Commended Student or Semifinalist in the National Merit Scholarship Program, your school will notify you in September of your senior year.

Average Test Scores (PSAT)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>National</th>
<th>NC</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Juniors 2014</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Critical Reading</td>
<td>46.9</td>
<td>46.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mathematics</td>
<td>48.6</td>
<td>48.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writing</td>
<td>45.3</td>
<td>44.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sophomores 2014</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Critical Reading</td>
<td>42.1</td>
<td>43.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mathematics</td>
<td>43.4</td>
<td>45.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writing</td>
<td>40.1</td>
<td>41.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

For More Information

PSAT/NMSQT Office
P.O. Box 6720
Princeton, NJ 08541-6720
866-433-7728
609-882-4118 (TTY)
212-713-8105 - International
collegeboard.org

ACT Assessment

The North Carolina Department of Public Instruction has partnered with ACT to assess college and career readiness skills. North Carolina 11th graders take the ACT test and 10th graders take the PLAN test (a pre-ACT assessment). These assessments measure what students have learned in their courses and help educators identify the information that students still need to learn to succeed in college or a career.

The ACT Assessment measures skills in English, math, reading, and science reasoning. You will receive scores on each individual section as well as a composite score. The composite score is the average of these sections. The scale for scores is 1–36. There is also an optional Writing Test. The ACT is curriculum-based, meaning questions directly correspond to high school courses and assess a student’s ability to handle college courses. In North Carolina, the ACT test may be offered during a regular school day at your public high school as part of the DPI/ACT partnership. Additionally, the ACT is offered six times a year in September, October, December, February, April, and June. Questions are multiple-choice, and the entire exam takes just over four hours to complete.

Students with Special Needs

Special arrangements are available for students with disabilities as well as those who cannot test on Saturday for religious reasons. Fee waivers may be available for students who demonstrate financial need.
Preparation

ACT recommends long-term preparation using your high school curriculum to provide the instruction you will need. Research has shown that students who choose to take four or more years of English and three or more years of course work in math, science, and social studies score better on the ACT regardless of factors such as grade point average, gender, ethnicity, or family income.

Test preparation activities to improve test-taking skills and review of content may also help. Also, check out College Test Prep at CFNC.org. Test-taking tips and sample questions are also available at actstudent.org.

When to Take the ACT

Please note, if you attend a public high school in North Carolina, during the spring of your junior year, you may be required to take the ACT at a special test date offered during a regular school day at your high school. Your school counselor will advise you of specifics about ACT testing at your school.

There is no limit to the number of times you may take the ACT. There are, however, restrictions on the time frame between test administrations. You should consider taking the test during your junior year. There are advantages to testing as a junior, such as gaining necessary feedback in time to influence course work taken in your senior year. Taking the ACT during your junior year also provides the opportunity to take the test again if you feel your scores don’t accurately portray your ability. Importantly, students who take the ACT more than once have the option of choosing the date of the scores they wish to submit to colleges during the admissions process.

Registration

Students wishing to take the ACT may register at actstudent.org. You may also contact ACT in writing at the contact information below under For More Information and have registration materials mailed to you.

Cost and Test Dates

- $38 or $54.50 with the Writing Test
- The ACT is given each year in September, October, December, February, April, and June.
  Contact your high school counselor or ACT for specific dates.

Average Test Scores (ACT)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2014 National</th>
<th>2014 NC</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>English</td>
<td>20.3</td>
<td>17.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mathematics</td>
<td>20.9</td>
<td>19.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reading</td>
<td>21.3</td>
<td>19.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scientific Reasoning</td>
<td>20.8</td>
<td>18.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Composite Scores</td>
<td>21.0</td>
<td>18.9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

For More Information

ACT
301 ACT Drive
P.O. Box 414
Iowa City, IA 52243-0414
actstudent.org

319-337-1270
319-337-1701 (TDD)
Community College Placement Tests

Between 2013 and 2016, North Carolina community colleges are implementing a new policy to determine placement in courses. You should check with your local campus for their current requirements. Under the new policy, if you graduated from high school within the last five years, you may not have to take placement tests if you have an unweighted GPA of at least 2.6 along with appropriate Future-Ready Core courses in English and math. If your GPA is below 2.6 or you have not taken appropriate courses, the college will consider your ACT or SAT scores:

**English**
- ACT Reading 22 or English 18
- SAT Writing 500 or Critical Reading 500

**Math**
- ACT Math 22 or SAT Math 500

If neither your recent GPA nor your ACT or SAT scores meet benchmarks, then you’ll need to take a diagnostic placement test. If you need to take a placement test, you may take one of the following: COMPASS, ASSET, ACCUPLACER/CPT, NC Diagnostic Assessment and Placement (NCDAP). COMPASS and ACCUPLACER/CPT are electronic tests. The computer gives you questions based on your responses. For example, you will receive a more challenging question if you answer an item correctly. Likewise, you will receive a less challenging question if you answer incorrectly. The COMPASS and ACCUPLACER/CPT are not timed, although it takes most students two to three hours to complete. The ASSET is a timed test. You may not use notes or books during your test. Some colleges will not allow a calculator. Typically, you can receive your scores immediately after finishing the test.

Preparation
For ASSET and COMPASS, visit act.org/asset or act.org/compass/sample for test-taking tips and sample questions. For the ACCUPLACER, go to the website listed at the end of this section.

If you would like to brush up on a particular area, focus your skills in English and math. For English, you may find it helpful to spend some time reading and looking up words you do not understand. You might practice writing an essay or review basic grammar. Math topics may include pre-algebra, elementary and intermediate algebra, geometry, and trigonometry. It might be helpful to work out some math problems beforehand. For additional suggestions, you may talk to the admissions office before taking the placement test.

When to Take Community College Placement Tests
Placement tests are typically taken in the spring, prior to graduating from high school. North Carolina community colleges administer the tests to students prior to their enrolling in community college courses. Contact your community college to arrange a time to take a test. Some community colleges will allow you to retake a placement test to improve your score.

Registration
Each community college may differ in the way it structures placement test registration. When you visit the community college you wish to attend, be sure to ask about placement testing.

Cost and Test Dates
- Some community colleges charge fees to take or retake placement tests.
- Contact your community college admissions office for test dates, times, and fee information.

Average Test Scores
Community colleges have “cut-off” scores to help determine the courses in which students will be most successful. You will talk with someone after testing who will interpret your scores for you.

For More Information
Contact your community college admissions office for more information, or contact the testing centers listed below:

**COMPASS and ASSET**
ACT
500 ACT Drive
P.O. Box 168
Iowa City, IA 52243-0168
319-337-1054
act.org/compass
act.org/asset

**ACCUPLACER/CPT**
The College Board
45 Columbus Avenue
New York, NY 10023
866-607-5223
collegeboard.org/student/testing/accuplacer