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# SAT<sup>®</sup> Understanding Scores

2020



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# The SAT Suite of Assessments

The SAT® Suite of Assessments is an integrated system of tests that includes the SAT (for students in grades 11 and 12), the PSAT/NMSQT® and the PSAT™ 10 (for grades 10 and 11), and the PSAT™ 8/9 (for grades 8 and 9).

The tests measure the same skills and knowledge in grade-appropriate ways. They work together to show college readiness over time so educators, students, and parents can monitor student progress. Their content reflects the kinds of meaningful, engaging, and challenging work that students find in the best middle school and high school courses taught today.

The SAT, the last test in the suite, is a globally recognized college admission test that's accepted at all U.S. colleges.

## What the SAT Measures

The SAT measures the skills and knowledge that research shows are the most important for success in college and career. It includes the following sections.

### EVIDENCE-BASED READING AND WRITING

This section is made up of a Reading Test and a Writing and Language Test, each composed of multiparagraph passages and multiple-choice questions.

The Reading Test measures comprehension and reasoning skills and focuses on close reading of passages in a wide array of subject areas. The Writing and Language Test measures a range of skills, including command of evidence, expression of ideas, and the use of standard English conventions in grammar and punctuation.

### MATH

This section includes multiple-choice and student-produced response questions, and it is divided into two portions: one that allows calculator use and one that does not. It assesses skills in algebra, problem solving and data analysis, manipulation of complex equations, geometry, and trigonometry.

### ESSAY (OPTIONAL)

The SAT Essay asks students to read a high-quality source text and write an effective analysis of that text using evidence drawn from the source. It measures a range of skills in reading, analysis, and writing.

## How the SAT Is Scored

Students receive a total score that is the sum of their scores on the two sections (Evidence-Based Reading and Writing and Math). The optional SAT Essay is scored separately.

To calculate section scores, we first compute the student's raw score—the number of questions correctly answered—for each section. Nothing is deducted for incorrect answers or for unanswered questions.

Next, we convert each of the raw section scores to a scaled score of 200 to 800. This conversion process adjusts for slight differences in difficulty among versions of the test and provides a score that is consistent across different versions. The scaled scores are the scores provided on score reports.

## How Your School May Use Your Score Report

The student score report clearly summarizes a student's current achievement levels and encourages next steps to increase college and career readiness. Your teacher can go over your score report with you to help you understand what your score means.

For example, the score report includes an indicator showing if you meet the college readiness benchmark. If your score report shows you've met the benchmark, that means you're on track to be ready for college when you graduate high school. If you're not meeting the benchmark for a section of the test, your teacher may make a plan with you to strengthen your skills in that area.

# SAT Scores

## Total Scores

The total score is the sum of the two section scores; its range is 400–1600.

## Section Scores

Students receive scores in the range of 200–800 for each of two sections. The Evidence-Based Reading and Writing section score combines the scores for the Reading Test and the Writing and Language Test. The Math section score is derived from the Math Test score, including the calculator and no-calculator portions.

## Test Scores

The range for the following test scores is 10–40:

- Reading
- Writing and Language
- Math

## Cross-Test Scores

The range for cross-test scores is also 10–40. These scores represent performance on select questions across the three tests and show a student's strengths in the following domains:

- Analysis in History/Social Studies
- Analysis in Science

## Subscores

Subscores in the range of 1–15 offer feedback on student performance in the following skill areas:

- Command of Evidence
- Words in Context
- Expression of Ideas
- Standard English Conventions
- Heart of Algebra
- Problem Solving and Data Analysis
- Passport to Advanced Math

## SAT Essay Scores

The following three scores for the optional SAT Essay are on a 2–8 scale:

- Reading
- Analysis
- Writing

These scores aren't added together or combined with any other test scores. The online score report shows the prompt the student responded to and the student's essay.

## Score Ranges

A student's ability is better represented by score ranges than points. Score ranges are derived from the standard error of measurement and show how much your scores would likely vary if you took a different administration of the test under identical conditions.

Score ranges:

- Total:  $\pm 40$  points
- Section:  $\pm 30$  points
- Test scores, subscores, and cross-test scores:  $\pm 2$  points

## Percentiles

A student's percentile rank represents the percentage of students whose score is equal to or lower than their score. For example, if a student's score is in the 75th percentile, 75% of a comparison group achieved scores at or below that student's score. Two types of percentile ranks, comparing student scores to two different reference populations, are provided in this publication for both total and section scores.

**Nationally Representative Sample Percentiles** are derived from a research study of U.S. students in grades 11 and 12 and are weighted to represent all U.S. students in those grades, regardless of whether they typically take the SAT.

**SAT User Percentiles** are based on the actual scores of students in the past three graduating classes who took the current SAT during high school. These user percentiles are reported on tests completed in August 2019 through June 2020.



# Sample Score Report (Front)



SAT®

## SAT Score Report

Imagood Student  
100 Main Street  
Apt 2  
Anytown, MI 00000-0000

Test Date: **December 07, 2019**  
Registration Number: **0123456789**  
Sex: **Female**  
Date of Birth: **Feb. 12, 2003**  
Test Center Number: **12345**  
CB Student ID: **12345678**  
High School Code: **123456**  
High School Name: **John F. Kennedy High School**

### Your Total Score

**1010** | 400–1600

**50th**

Nationally Representative  
Sample Percentile

**41st**

SAT User Percentile

### Essay Scores

**4** | 2–8  
Reading

**4** | 2–8  
Analysis

**4** | 2–8  
Writing

### Am I on Track for College?

Look for the green, yellow, or red symbols next to your section scores. They let you know if your scores are at or above the benchmark scores. Benchmarks show college readiness. If you see green, you're on track to be ready for college when you graduate.

If your score below the benchmark, you can use the feedback and tips in your online report to get back on track.

### Benchmark scores:

Evidence-Based Reading and Writing: 480

Math: 530

### How Do My Scores Compare?

A percentile shows how you scored, compared to other students. It's a number between 1 and 99 and represents the percentage of students whose scores are equal to or below yours.

For example, if your Math percentile is 57, that means 57% of test takers have Math scores equal to or below yours.

**The Nationally Representative Sample Percentile** compares your score to the scores of typical U.S. students.

**SAT® User Percentile** compares your score to the scores of students who typically take the test.

### How Can I Improve?

To see which skills are your strongest and what you can do to boost your college readiness, go to your full report online and look for Skills Insight™.

### What Are Score Ranges?

Test scores are single snapshots in time—if you took the SAT once a week for a month, your scores would vary.

That's why score ranges are better representations of your true ability. They show how much your score can change with repeated testing, even if your skill level remains the same.

Colleges know this, and they get score ranges along with scores so they can consider scores in context.

Your online score report shows your score ranges.

### Section Scores

**490** | 200–800

Your Evidence-Based  
Reading and Writing  
Score

**44th** Nationally Representative  
Sample Percentile

**35th** SAT User Percentile



You've met  
the benchmark!

**520** | 200–800

Your Math Score

**57th** Nationally Representative  
Sample Percentile

**49th** SAT User Percentile



You've scored below  
the benchmark.

### Test Scores

**22** | 10–40

Reading

**27** | 10–40

Writing and Language

**26.0** | 10–40

Math

### Cross-Test Scores | 10–40

**24**

Analysis in History/Social Studies

**23**

Analysis in Science

### Subscores | 1–15

**6**

Command of  
Evidence

**9**

Words in Context

**8**

Expression of Ideas

**9**

Standard English  
Conventions

**8**

Heart of Algebra

**9**

Problem Solving  
and Data Analysis

**7**

Passport to  
Advanced Math

Get your full report online at [sat.org/scorereport](https://sat.org/scorereport)

## Sample Score Report (Back)

### SAT Summary of Scores

Date	Dec. 07, 2019					
Grade	11					
<b>SAT</b>						
Total	1010					
Evidence-Based Reading and Writing	490					
Math	520					
Essay	Reading	4				
	Analysis	4				
	Writing	4				
<b>Old SAT</b>						
Critical Reading						
Mathematics						
Writing						

### SAT Subject Test Scores

Date	Nov. 02, 2019					
Grade	11					
<b>Subject Test</b>						
	Japanese w/ Listening					
Test Score	620					
Language Subscores	Reading	58				
	Listening	63				
	Usage	66				
<b>Subject Test</b>						
	Chemistry					
Test Score	590					
<b>Subject Test</b>						
	Literature					
Test Score	690					

\*Scores from the SAT Subject Test in Mathematics aren't comparable to Math section, test, and related subscores on the SAT.  
\*Not all SAT Subject Tests™ have subscores.

#### How Do I Send My Scores to Colleges?

This student score report is for your use only.

Most colleges require you to have the College Board send them official score reports. They don't accept copies of student score reports, online score reports, or score report labels on transcripts.

#### Can I Choose Which Scores to Send?

With Score Choice™, you decide which scores you send to colleges. Choose by test date for the SAT and individual test for SAT Subject Tests™. Just make sure you follow each college's stated score-use policy.

#### What's Next?

Go to [sat.org/scorereport](https://sat.org/scorereport) and choose your next steps:

- Send your scores to colleges.
- Find out which AP® courses you might do well in.
- Get tips on boosting your skills.
- Use your scores to personalize your SAT practice.
- Make a college plan.
- Follow your interests, and a career road map.
- Register for SAT Subject Tests, or take the SAT again.

## Percentiles for Total Scores

Total Score	Nationally Representative Sample	SAT User
1600	99+	99+
1590	99+	99+
1580	99+	99+
1570	99+	99+
1560	99+	99+
1550	99+	99
1540	99+	99
1530	99+	99
1520	99+	99
1510	99	98
1500	99	98
1490	99	98
1480	99	97
1470	99	97
1460	99	97
1450	99	96
1440	98	96
1430	98	95
1420	98	95
1410	97	94
1400	97	94
1390	97	93
1380	96	92
1370	96	92
1360	95	91
1350	94	90
1340	94	89
1330	93	89
1320	93	88
1310	92	87
1300	91	86
1290	90	85
1280	89	84
1270	88	83
1260	87	82
1250	86	81
1240	85	80
1230	84	78
1220	83	77
1210	82	76
1200	81	74
1190	80	73

Total Score	Nationally Representative Sample	SAT User
1180	78	72
1170	77	70
1160	76	69
1150	74	67
1140	73	66
1130	71	64
1120	70	62
1110	69	61
1100	67	59
1090	65	57
1080	63	55
1070	61	54
1060	60	52
1050	58	50
1040	56	48
1030	54	46
1020	52	45
1010	50	43
1000	48	41
990	46	39
980	44	38
970	42	36
960	40	34
950	38	33
940	36	31
930	35	29
920	33	28
910	31	26
900	29	25
890	27	23
880	26	22
870	24	20
860	23	19
850	21	18
840	20	16
830	18	15
820	17	14
810	16	12
800	14	11
790	13	10
780	11	9
770	10	8

Total Score	Nationally Representative Sample	SAT User
760	9	7
750	8	6
740	7	5
730	6	5
720	5	4
710	4	3
700	4	3
690	3	2
680	2	2
670	2	1
660	1	1
650	1	1
640	1	1
630	1	1
620	1-	1-
610	1-	1-
600	1-	1-
590	1-	1-
580	1-	1-
570	1-	1-
560	1-	1-
550	1-	1-
540	1-	1-
530	1-	1-
520	1-	1-
510	1-	1-
500	1-	1-
490	1-	1-
480	1-	1-
470	1-	1-
460	1-	1-
450	1-	1-
440	1-	1-
430	1-	1-
420	1-	1-
410	1-	1-
400	1-	1-

## Percentiles for Section Scores

Total Score	Evidence-Based Reading and Writing		Math	
	Nationally Representative Sample	SAT User	Nationally Representative Sample	SAT User
800	99+	99+	99+	99
790	99+	99+	99+	99
780	99+	99+	99	98
770	99+	99	99	97
760	99+	99	99	96
750	99	98	98	96
740	99	98	98	95
730	99	97	97	94
720	98	96	97	93
710	97	95	96	92
700	97	94	95	91
690	96	93	94	90
680	95	91	93	89
670	93	90	92	87
660	92	88	91	86
650	90	86	90	84
640	88	83	89	82
630	86	81	87	81
620	84	78	85	79
610	81	76	83	77
600	79	73	81	75
590	76	70	79	72
580	74	67	76	69
570	71	64	73	66
560	68	60	71	64
550	65	57	68	61
540	62	54	65	58
530	58	50	61	54
520	55	47	57	50
510	51	44	52	46
500	48	40	47	42
490	44	37	44	39
480	41	34	40	36
470	38	30	36	33
460	34	27	32	30
450	31	24	29	27
440	28	21	25	24
430	24	18	23	22
420	22	15	20	19
410	19	13	17	17

Total Score	Evidence-Based Reading and Writing		Math	
	Nationally Representative Sample	SAT User	Nationally Representative Sample	SAT User
400	16	11	15	15
390	13	9	13	12
380	11	7	10	10
370	9	5	9	8
360	7	4	7	7
350	5	3	5	5
340	3	2	4	4
330	2	1	3	3
320	2	1	2	2
310	1	1	1	1
300	1	1-	1	1
290	1-	1-	1-	1
280	1-	1-	1-	1-
270	1-	1-	1-	1-
260	1-	1-	1-	1-
250	1-	1-	1-	1-
240	1-	1-	1-	1-
230	1-	1-	1-	1-
220	1-	1-	1-	1-
210	1-	1-	1-	1-
200	1-	1-	1-	1-