

Unlocking Potential: Understanding The Enhanced ACT

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Key Updates to the ACT – for Arizona



Shorter Test, More Time Per Item

- 44 items shorter across sections.
- ~10 seconds + per item.



More Flexibility

- Composite Score based on English, Math & Reading only.



Expand Online Testing

- Online test is linear, not adaptive.
- Committed to paper testing.



Content Update

- Rebalance reporting categories.
- Math – 4 answer choices.
- Science – engineering & design.

The Enhanced ACT: What Students Are Saying

- 👤 16,000 students took enhanced test in April 2025.
- 👤 50 Students took the enhanced ACT online through special testing with accommodations.
- 👤 Students felt they had enough time to complete the English, reading, and science sections.
- 👤 95% of students expressed some level of satisfaction with their overall test-taking experience.

ACT "Legacy"

English	75 items	45 min
Math	60 items	60 min
Reading	40 items	35 min
Science	40 items	35 min
Writing	1 item	40 min
	National -with Writing State & District -with Writing	195 min 235 min 175 min 215 min

ACT Enhanced

English	50 items	35 min
Math	45 items	50 min
Reading	36 items	40 min
Science	40 items	40 min
Writing	1 item	40 min
Scores Received	Composite -with Science <u>and</u> Writing	125 min 205 min

Enhanced ACT: Additional Time

Additional Time Per Item

Subject	Legacy (seconds/item)	Enhanced (seconds/item)	Est. increase in seconds/item
English	36	42	6 (17%)
Math	60	67	7 (11%)
Reading	53	67	14 (27%)
Science	53	60	7 (13%)

Important Note: The enhanced ACT blueprint remains a linear assessment and is not a computer adaptive test. A student's max score potential is not routed into "tracks" based on their performance on initial section questions.

Enhanced ACT: Test Blueprint

	ACT - Legacy		ACT - Enhanced	
	Items	Total Time (Min)	Items	Total Time (Min)
English	75	45	50*	35
Math	60	60	45*	50
Reading	40	35	36*	40
Science	40	35	40*	40
Writing	1	40	1	40
Core ACT Administration**	215	175	131*	125

*Number includes embedded field-test items that do not contribute to score points.

**The core administration is the shortest administration of the test and results in a college-reportable Composite Score. The core administration for the legacy ACT is English, Math, Reading, and Science. The core administration for the enhanced ACT is English, Math, and Reading.

See comparison of the legacy and enhanced ACT reporting categories.



Enhanced ACT Blueprint: English

Reporting Category	English			
	ACT - Legacy		ACT - Enhanced	
	Number of Items	Percentage of Section	Number of Items	Percentage of Section
Production of Writing	22-24	29-32	15-17	38-43
Knowledge of Language	11-13	15-17	7-9	18-23
Conventions of Standard English	39-41	52-55	15-17	38-43
Total	75		50*	

*Total number includes 10 embedded field-test items that do not contribute to score points.

Enhanced ACT Blueprint: Math

Reporting Category	Math			
	ACT - Legacy		ACT - Enhanced	
	Number of Items	Percentage of Section	Number of Items	Percentage of Section
Preparing for Higher Math	34-36	57-60	33	80
Number & Quantity	5-7	8-12	4-5	10-12
Algebra	7-9	12-15	7-8	17-20
Functions	7-9	12-15	7-8	17-20
Geometry	7-9	12-15	7-8	17-20
Statistics & Probability	5-7	8-12	5-6	12-15
Integrating Essential Skills	24-26	40-43	8	20
Modeling	≥ 12	≥ 20	≥ 8	≥ 20
Total	60		45*	

*Total number includes four embedded field-test items that do not contribute to score points.

Enhanced ACT Blueprint: Reading

Reporting Category	Reading			
	ACT - Legacy		ACT - Enhanced	
	Number of Items	Percentage of Section	Number of Items	Percentage of Section
Key Ideas & Details	21-24	53-60	12-14	44-52
Craft & Structure	10-12	25-30	7-9	26-33
Integration of Knowledge & Ideas	6-9	15-23	5-7	19-26
Total	40		36*	

*Total number includes nine embedded field-test items that do not contribute to score points.

Enhanced ACT Blueprint: Science

Reporting Category	Science			
	ACT - Legacy		ACT - Enhanced	
	Number of Items	Percentage of Section	Number of Items	Percentage of Section
Interpretation of Data	16-20	40-50	13-17	36-47
Scientific Investigation	8-12	20-30	6-11	17-31
Evaluation of Models, Inferences, & Experimental Results	10-14	25-35	8-13	22-36
Total	40		40*	

*Total number includes six embedded field-test items that do not contribute to score points.



Flexibility, Spring 2026, and Beyond

- For state and district testing, the **Composite battery (EMR)** must be administered in one sitting.
- **Flexibility can be offered** for science and/or writing by allowing students to sit a second time.

The Schedule Flexibility Policy document can be found here:

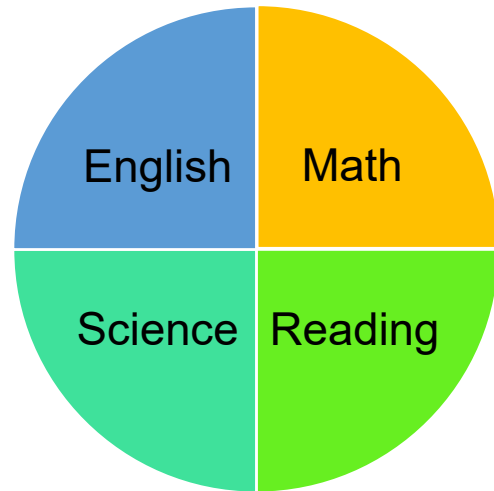
<https://www.act.org/content/dam/act/secured/documents/S&D-ACT-and-PreACT-Assmts-Schedule-Flexibility-Policy.pdf>.

Enhanced ACT: Content Updates

Sections	Updates to Content
English	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Add stems for all items• Reduce the length of some English passages• Argumentative essay now included in possible essay types• Rebalance reporting categories
Math	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Reduce the number of answer options in math from 5 to 4• Reduce the number of items aligned to Integrating Essential Skills reporting category• Reduce the number of items aligned to advanced topics (higher grade level items)• Reduce the number of items with context (require longer time to read)• Rebalance reporting categories
Reading	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Reduce the length of some reading passages• Increase the percentage of items aligned to Integration of Knowledge and Ideas (IKI) reporting category• Rebalance reporting categories
Science	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ensure at least one passage per form addresses an engineering and design topic• Increase the number of items requiring scientific background knowledge• Rebalance reporting categories
Writing	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• No change

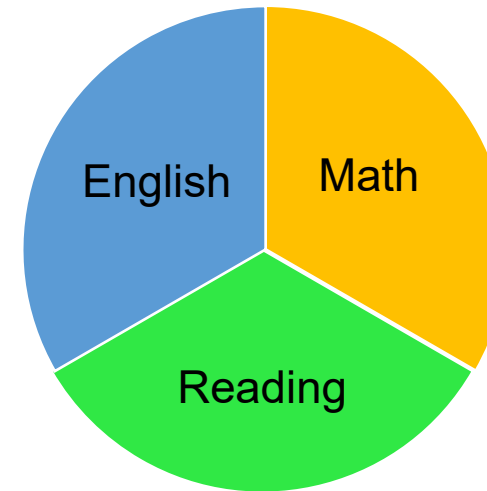
The New Composite Score: English, Math, Reading

Legacy Composite



All Students receive a STEM Score
+ **Writing** for an ELA Score

New Composite



+ **Science** for a STEM Score
+ **Writing** for an ELA Score

Note: Score reports will only report one ACT Composite score. The score will be referred to only as the “Composite score” (“Legacy” or “New” will not be indicated).

New ACT Research & Publications

Linking Study Report for the Enhanced ACT Test

<https://www.act.org/content/dam/act/unsecured/documents/R2515-The-Enhanced-ACT-Linking-Study-Report-2025-03-updated.pdf>

Technical Brief: Initial Evidence Supporting Interpretations of Scores from the Enhanced ACT Test

<https://www.act.org/content/dam/act/unsecured/documents/R2425-Initial-Evidence-Supporting-Interpretations-of-Scores-from-the-Enhanced-ACT-Test-2025-06.pdf>

Test Design Document for the Enhanced ACT Test

<https://www.act.org/content/dam/act/unsecured/documents/R2519-Design-Framework-for-the-ACT-Enhancements-2025-03.pdf>

Interpreting Scores on the Enhanced ACT: Guidance for K-12 and Higher Education

<https://www.act.org/content/dam/act/unsecured/documents/Interpreting-Scores-on-the-Enhanced-ACT.pdf>

The New ACT Composite Score

New EMR-only Composite Score.

Starting September 2025, **all** ACT tests—National (Saturday), International, State and District/School Day testing — will be scored using the updated EMR-only Composite score.

Legacy Composite Score = EMRS

English, math, reading, and science tests

$$\text{EMRS} = \frac{(E + M + R + S)}{4}$$

New Composite Score = EMR

English, math, and reading tests

$$\text{EMR} = \frac{(E + M + R)}{3}$$

Note: Score reports will only report one ACT Composite score. The score will be referred to only as the “Composite score” (“Legacy,” “New,” and “EMR”/“EMRS” will not be indicated).

Legacy and new Composite scores will be in the market simultaneously.

Legacy and new Composite can be used interchangeably with the understanding that there are some practical differences between the two scores.

The Composite scores can be used interchangeably:

- This means that either score can be used:
 - as a measure of general academic readiness for college.
 - as a predictor of general academic performance in college.
 - as a criterion for decisions that are based on general academic readiness.

The scores have practical differences:

- This means that:
 - A student's EMR Composite score may not always equal their EMRS Composite score.
 - The scores will not follow the exact same distribution.

Enhanced ACT: Key Questions



Key Questions

Will students be able to leverage the science choice to “game” their Composite score?

A: No. All Composite scores from all ACT programs (National, International, State & District, paper, online) will move to the new calculated Composite score starting in September 2025. This provides students and higher education with a consistent change over to the new calculation for all tests from that point forward.

Allowing students to choose to take the ACT with or without science does not impact the Composite score distributions across the population of applicants.

If a student elects to take the science section, we will provide their science section score and STEM score on all reports; this includes sending those scores to institutions of higher education and other programs that have used these scores in the past.

Key Questions

When will practice materials be available?

A: ACT has released timed and untimed practice sections in December aligned to the new blueprint. These practice tests are now in the platform students will use on test day, with all the appropriate tools and formatting.

You can find those practice tests here (click link and scroll to bottom of the page):

<https://www.act.org/content/act/en/products-and-services/the-act/test-changes/online-testing/sample-questions.html>

In addition, we are making an addendum to the 2024-2025 *Preparing for the ACT* guide that highlights the different experiences students will encounter if they take the National Online administration in April, June, and July.

Get practice tests



Key Questions

Will the types of items on the ACT change? Or more the structure and length?

A: The ACT test will continue to feature multiple-choice items in the English, math, reading and science sections, and an open-ended prompt-based essay in writing. The standards and skills measured by the enhanced blueprint will remain comparable to those measured on the current ACT. Reporting categories will maintain the same meaning but may be rebalanced proportionally to accommodate stakeholder feedback. By and large, the content of practice materials that are currently available will provide students with experience on the content of questions that ACT will continue to ask.

As noted in the presentation, the structure of some of the items will change (English and math are most affected). In addition, the balance of items that align to the reporting categories in each subject is shifting; therefore, there may be more or fewer items that test specific topics.

View the Reporting Category Tables



Core Takeaways



The enhanced ACT blueprint focuses on reducing testing time, while providing additional time for students to evaluate and respond to each item, and continuous improvement of assessment best practices.



Beginning in April 2025 with the National Saturday Online test, all Composite scores have moved to a simplified English, math, and reading-based calculation.



ACT has provided online testing since 2015 for State and District testing, and since 2018 for international students. We launched online testing for National testing in February 2024 and will continue to expand online testing as a *choice, but not requirement* for students.

Learn More About the Enhanced ACT

- Visit the ACT Test Enhancements webpage.
- Sign up to get the latest updates delivered to your inbox.




ACT Test Enhancements: K-12 Educators

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ACT Enhancements: Supporting Student Success for K-12 Leaders



Evidence for the Enhancements

The ACT test enhancements were designed with today's students in mind, supporting a streamlined testing experience that is more accessible and actionable. The updated format offers schools greater flexibility by allowing a break between core assessments and science and/or writing, while preserving the validity and reliability that K-12 leaders rely on for guiding students toward successful pathways in higher education.

Starting in April 2025, the enhancements will apply to students who opt to take the national test online. The ACT will be shorter, and students can choose to take the test without the science section. These changes will extend to the national paper-pencil test format beginning in September 2025. The ACT Composite score will then be based on English, math, and reading, with science reported separately for students who choose to take it. This update enables colleges to make data-driven decisions with minimal disruption and empowers K-12 leaders to better prepare students for college and career success.

Beginning in Spring 2026, schools and districts can leverage these enhancements when administering the ACT during a school day.



Upcoming ACT-Hosted Webinars

Accommodations - October 22, 2025, 9:00am ([Register Here](#))

- Information will be shared about submitting requests for accommodations as well as administering tests with ACT-approved accommodations.

Test Administration #1 - November 5, 2025, 9:00am ([Register Here](#))

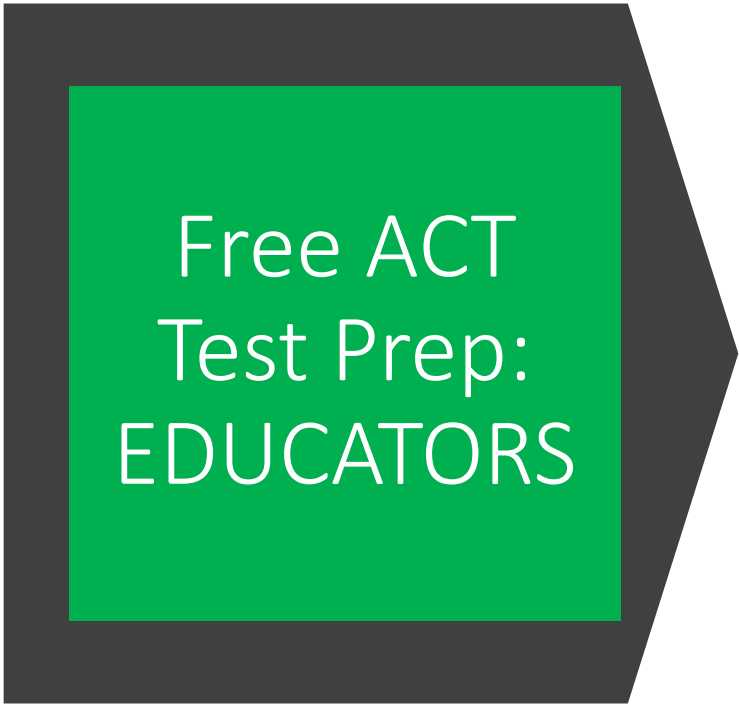
- Topics covered will include updates for Spring 2026 testing (including the new ACT Enhancements), important dates, and required pre-test activities to prepare for the Spring test administration.

Test Administration #2 - February 18, 2026, 9:00am ([Register Here](#))

- The focus of this webinar will be testing day and post-test activities and responsibilities.



<u>QuizMe!</u>
<u>Success.ACT.org Search Results: "Test Prep"</u>
<u>Online Practice PreACT and PreACT Secure Tests</u>
<u>Phoenix Public Library ACT Test Prep Resources</u>
<u>ACT Website Test Prep</u>
<u>ACT Youtube Page</u>
<u>Preparing for the ACT Booklet and Practice Test</u>
<u>ACT Student Blog</u>
<u>Free ACT Practice Test and Resources</u>
<u>MyACT.org</u>
<u>MyACT Profile Questions</u>
<u>Encourage Me</u>



[CCR Standards \(5 content areas\)](#)

[English Curriculum Worksheets](#)

[Math Curriculum Worksheets](#)

[Reading Curriculum Worksheets](#)

[Writing Curriculum Worksheets](#)

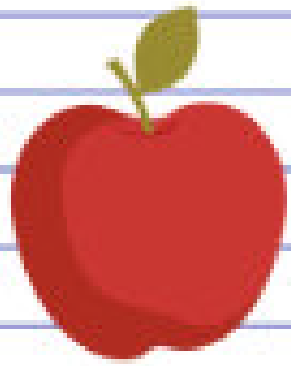
[Science Curriculum Worksheets](#)

[College and Career Readiness Standards Posters](#)

[Ideas for Progress in College and Career Readiness | ACT](#)

[K-12 Administrator Assessment Resources](#)

[College and Career Readiness Workshop Registration](#)



THANK
YOU

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