

# Let's Be Pro**ACT**ive!

## What is the ACT all about?

Section	# of Questions &	Content/Skills Covered	Question Types
English	75 questions in 45 min.	grammar & usage, punctuation, sentence structure, strategy, organization, and style	four-choice, multiple-choice usage/mechanics and rhetorical skills ques-
Math	60 questions in 60 min.	pre-algebra, elementary algebra, intermediate algebra, coordinate geometry, plane geometry, and trigonometry	five-choice, multiple-choice questions
Reading	40 questions in 35 min.	reading comprehension of what is directly stated or implied	four-choice, multiple-choice referring and reasoning ques-
Science	40 questions in 35 min.	interpretation, analysis, evaluation, reasoning, and problem solving	four-choice, multiple-choice data representation, research summaries, and conflicting viewpoints questions
Writing (optional)	1 essay in 30 min.	writing skills	essay prompt

"Action is the foundational key to all success."

~Pablo Picasso



### Tips For Taking the ACT

Carefully read the instructions on the cover of the test booklet.

Read the directions for each test carefully.

Read each question carefully.

Pace yourself-don't spend too much time on a single passage or question.

Pay attention to the announcement of five minutes remaining on each test.

Use a soft number two pencil with a good eraser.



## Easy as 1-2-3

1. TIME MANAGEMENT
2. BEING PREPARED AND COMFORTABLE
3. KNOWLEDGE



**Sacred Heart Academy**

*One Community, One Spirit, One Heart*

# Top 10 Ways to Study For the ACT

**1. Set up a study schedule and stick to it.** Don't just wing it when it comes to when and where you're going to study for the ACT. Make a calendar and write in when you are going to study, accounting for conflicts such as extracurricular activities or big tests you might not have thought of without creating a schedule. Pick a time to study each day when you know you will feel alert.

**2. Don't get overwhelmed!** When you first start studying for the ACT, it may seem like 30 days is way too short a time to prepare for such a comprehensive test. Remind yourself of how much someone can improve at something in a month if they put the time in. Instead of thinking of the test as a whole, break it down into manageable parts and master them as best you can bit by bit.

**3. Study in short, frequent spurts.** It is better to study 1-2 hours per day, 6 days a week than to try to cram in two 5 hour study sessions twice a week. You will retain more if you are constantly working with ACT material rather than putting it aside for several days at a time. Sites like grock-it.com offer free ACT prep that is interactive and more fun than reading a book all the time. Also, your attention will be stronger when you work for a shorter period of time.

**4. Read an article per day.** Studying vocabulary is helpful,

but the best way to build vocabulary over a long period of time is to read a lot. Reading or hearing a word in context helps you to understand and retain the meaning of a word better than simply trying to memorize a definition. Each day read an article from a respected newspaper or news magazine. If you don't get the newspaper, you can always read these articles online.

**5. Study vocabulary and don't forget to review it later.** Studying, say, 10 vocabulary words a day and never looking at the words again is not an effective way to learn vocabulary. As you learn new words, continue to study and quiz yourself on them every few days. Repetition will ingrain those tough words in your head!

**6. Do two full-length practice tests.** It's a great idea to do at least one full-length practice test before the real thing so you can experience the endurance the whole test takes in one sitting. If you can, take a practice test at the beginning of the 30 days to assess your starting point. Then take another practice test one or two weeks before the actual test. A second practice test will not only give you additional practice with the full-length test, but also motivate you by showing you the improvement you have made.

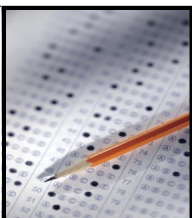
**7. Rotate subjects each study session.** Rotate through the four ACT subjects (English, Reading, Math, and Science) on each study

day. You can even spend half a session on each subject if you get bored easily. If you study the same subject too many days in a row, you might get rusty on the other three subjects.

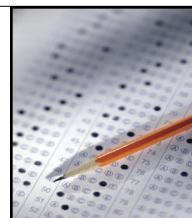
**8. Make one day per week a no-study or light-study day.** It's important to give yourself a break each week, or you could get burnt out quickly. One day a week allow yourself not to study and relax. If you just can't let yourself take a day off, at least have one "light" day where you study the subject that comes easiest to you or cut your session time in half.

**9. Practice writing the essay.** Don't ignore the essay portion of the test. Read examples of high scoring essays, but also practice writing timed essays yourself. You will have very limited time to plan, write, and look over your essay, so practice is essential. Have a trusted peer, teacher, or family member read your essay and give you helpful suggestions.

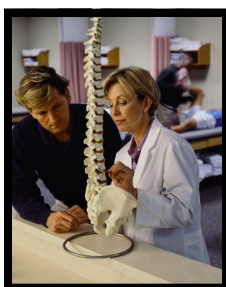
**10. Relax the night before.** Our instinct the night before a big test is often to cram as much as possible. If you have consistently put in the hours over your 30 day study period, this is not necessary and will only stress you out more. At the most review a few concepts that you have trouble remembering and then call it a night. Try to relax, get a good night's sleep, and do your best the next day!



## Pace Yourself



Section	Number of passages/ Questions	Time	Pace
English	Five passages	45 minutes	9 minutes per passage
Math	60 questions	60 minutes	1 minute per question
Reading	Four passages	35 minutes	8 minutes per passage
Science	Seven Passages	35 minutes	5 minutes per passage



## Math, Science and English. Oh My!

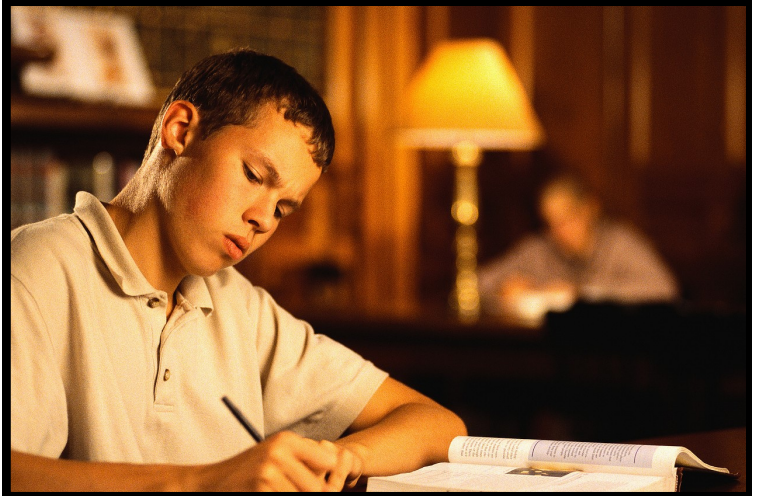
With ACT Math, if you are answering incorrectly, the only solution is practice. Take 10 minutes a day to review one or two [math questions](#), or more time each day if the test is less than two weeks away. You need to know the subject matter well in order to answer the questions quickly enough in the Math section. The Math section tests algebra, geometry, and trigonometry at a high school level.

With ACT Science, the solution is easier – think of Science as a reading test. You don't necessarily have to know equations or facts, you just have to properly read the charts, or correctly read the debate questions between two scientists, in order to get a good score. In fact, relying on outside [knowledge](#) can trip you up while taking the Science section. Read the practice passages and answer the questions directly from the passages, rather than relying on any outside knowledge, and you should see your score improve. If your Science practice score was very low, try to read practice passages for about 10 minutes per day up until the test.

ACT English can have some tricky vocabulary, so focus on the tone of the passage to understand the overall meaning. Vocabulary and spelling will not be tested directly on the ACT. Instead, the questions will focus on punctuation, grammar, and organization. Questions that refer to specific points in the passage will give you line numbers so you can easily jump back to the sentence in question.

# Develop Your Own Study Strategy

- Map out a study schedule
- Simulate exam at least 2 times
- Learn from missed answers
- Have intensive sessions for a few weeks then take a week off, if studying for re-test.
- Develop a motivation (possible scholarship money)
- Don't study the night before the test.



"That some achieve great success, is proof to all that others can achieve it as well."  
~Abraham Lincoln

## Resources

<http://www.actstudent.org/sampletest/>

Official ACT website Practice Questions

<http://www.number2.com/>

Number2.com's online test preparation courses are totally free! By creating an account you can access a customized course that includes user-friendly tutorials, practice sessions that dynamically adapt to each student's ability level, a vocabulary builder, and more.

<http://barronstestprep.com/act/pricing.php>

Free Trial Membership which includes: diagnostic test, ACT personalized Study Plan, ACT skill Report, Video Lessons, Video Solutions, Practice Questions

[http://www.studymyenglish.com/teacher\\_rc.aspx](http://www.studymyenglish.com/teacher_rc.aspx)

Website to help improve reading comprehension

<http://www.mathontime.com/>

Math practice test; problem by problem breakdown of sample math problems

<http://www.shmoop.com/act/about-act/act-science/>

Science reasoning and links to Science and other subject area strategies

<http://www.MHPracticePlus.com/ACT>

Additional ACT Practice Tests