

The following pages contain tips, information, how to buy test back, etc.

From ACT.org

- 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 lead No. 2 pencil with a good eraser. Do not use a mechanical pencil or ink pen; if you do, your answer document cannot be scored accurately.
- Answer the easy questions first, then go back and answer the more difficult ones if you have time remaining on that test.
- On difficult questions, eliminate as many incorrect answers as you can, then make an educated guess among those remaining.
- **Answer every question.** Your scores on the multiple-choice tests are based on the number of questions you answer correctly. **There is no penalty for guessing.**
- If you complete a test before time is called, recheck your work on that test.
- Mark your answers properly. Erase any mark completely and cleanly without smudging.
- Do not mark or alter any ovals on a test or continue writing the essay after time has been called. If you do, you will be dismissed and your answer document will **not** be scored.
- If you are taking the ACT Plus Writing, see these [Writing Test tips](#).

Four Parts:

English (45 minutes)

Math (60 minutes)

Reading (35 minutes)

Science Reasoning (35 minutes)

Content Covered by the ACT Mathematics Test

In the Mathematics Test, three subscores are based on six content areas: pre-algebra, elementary algebra, intermediate algebra, coordinate geometry, plane geometry, and trigonometry.

Pre-Algebra/Elementary Algebra

- **Pre-Algebra (23%).** Questions in this content area are based on basic operations using whole numbers, decimals, fractions, and integers; place value; square roots and approximations; the concept of exponents; scientific notation; factors; ratio, proportion, and percent; linear equations in one variable; absolute value and ordering numbers by value; elementary counting techniques and simple probability; data collection, representation, and interpretation; and understanding simple descriptive statistics.
- **Elementary Algebra (17%).** Questions in this content area are based on properties of exponents and square roots, evaluation of algebraic expressions through substitution, using variables to express

functional relationships, understanding algebraic operations, and the solution of quadratic equations by factoring.

Intermediate Algebra/Coordinate Geometry

- **Intermediate Algebra (15%).** Questions in this content area are based on an understanding of the quadratic formula, rational and radical expressions, absolute value equations and inequalities, sequences and patterns, systems of equations, quadratic inequalities, functions, modeling, matrices, roots of polynomials, and complex numbers.
- **Coordinate Geometry (15%).** Questions in this content area are based on graphing and the relations between equations and graphs, including points, lines, polynomials, circles, and other curves; graphing inequalities; slope; parallel and perpendicular lines; distance; midpoints; and conics.

Plane Geometry/Trigonometry

- **Plane Geometry (23%).** Questions in this content area are based on the properties and relations of plane figures, including angles and relations among perpendicular and parallel lines; properties of circles, triangles, rectangles, parallelograms, and trapezoids; transformations; the concept of proof and proof techniques; volume; and applications of geometry to three dimensions.
- **Trigonometry (7%).** Questions in this content area are based on understanding trigonometric relations in right triangles; values and properties of trigonometric functions; graphing trigonometric functions; modeling using trigonometric functions; use of trigonometric identities; and solving trigonometric equations.

A few Helpful Websites (tons more out there on the web):

Preparing for the ACT (PDF from The ACT):

<http://www.act.org/aap/pdf/Preparing-for-the-ACT.pdf>

Excellent website for ACT as well as other standardized test practice:

http://www.internet4classrooms.com/act_sat.htm

Free Study Guide Strategies for all parts of the ACT:

<http://www.sparknotes.com/testprep/books/act/>

The Khan Academy videos to review/learn many subjects:

<http://www.khanacademy.org/>

iTunes U app contains numerous free lessons on all subjects and is a free app!!!

You can download from the TI website study cards for TI Graphing calculators also.

English

- Be aware of the writing style used in each passage.
- Consider the elements of writing that are included in each underlined portion of the passage. Some questions will ask you to base your decision on some specific element of writing, such as the tone or emphasis the text should convey.
- Be aware of questions with no underlined portions—that means you will be asked about a section of the passage or about the passage as a whole.
- Examine each answer choice and determine how it differs from the others. Many of the questions in the test will involve more than one aspect of writing.
- Read and consider all of the answer choices before you choose the one that best responds to the question.
- Determine the best answer.
- Reread the sentence, using your selected answer.

Mathematics

- Read each question carefully to make sure you understand the type of answer required.
- If you choose to use a calculator, be sure it is permitted, is working on test day, and has reliable batteries. [Use your calculator wisely.](#)
- Solve the problem.
- Locate your solution among the answer choices.
- Make sure you answer the question asked.
- Make sure your answer is reasonable.
- Check your work.

Reading

- Read the passage carefully.
- Read and consider all of the answer choices before you choose the one that best responds to the question.
- Refer to the passage when answering the questions.

Science

- Read the passage carefully.
- Refer to the scientific information in the passage when answering the question.
- Read and consider all of the answer choices before you choose the one that best responds to the question.
- Note conflicting viewpoints in some passages.

For specifics of what not to do so you won't be dismissed visit:

<http://www.actstudent.org/testprep/taking/prohibited.html>

Reading Section;

<http://www.99percentileprep.com/ActReadingTips.html>

Winning Tips to increase your reading speed

As we read, our eyes move along the line in a series of jerky movements, stopping at each word. Fast readers usually taken in 3-4 words in each movement that their eye makes.

The more words you can take in with each movement of the eye, the faster your reading will be.

- Try to avoid focusing on every word, but rather look at **groups of 2 to 3 words**.

e.g. the above sentence could be read as:

Try to avoid / focusing on every work/but / rather look at / groups of 2 to 3 words.

- If you find yourself moving your lips when reading, force yourself to read faster by following the first point above so that you can **no longer move your lips**.

- **Read more!** 15 minutes a day of reading an average size novel equals 18 books a year

at an average reading speed!

- Determine your **purpose** before reading. If you only need main ideas, then allow yourself to skim the material. Don't feel you must read every word.
- Spend a few minutes a day reading at a **faster than comfortable rate** (about 2 to 3 times faster than your normal speed). Use your hand or an index card to guide your eyes down the page. Then time yourself reading a few pages at your normal speed. You'll find that often your normal reading speed will increase after your skimming practice.
- If you have poor concentration when reading, practice reading for only 5 - 10 minutes at a time and gradually increase this time.
- There are several books on increasing reading speed available in most bookstores. If you are serious about increasing your rate you may want to work systematically through one of these books.

You can also look at the [Winners' Guide to ACT Reading Comprehension](#) for more quick tips to improving your Critical Reading

Science Section

This section is... not (usually) about science at all.

The science section of the ACT is mostly graph, table, and chart interpretation. The latter part of this section will likely have you read two short statements from two different scientists and compare and contrast them, whoop dee do. Can't help you much there, just read both viewpoints and make mental notes of the similarities and differences.

The first part is the easy part. You'll be given some background information about each chart/graph/table, and about the experiment as a whole... this is all trash. Don't bother reading it unless you're completely lost, it takes too much time. You're given the same 35 minutes for 40 questions that you were in the Reading section, only this time there is no speed reading.

Many of the science questions will direct you to certain charts, or by the way they're worded, indicate that you need to look at the chart that contains "the average yearly rainfall in Brazil" and "the annual flood rate of Brazil" and make a comparison of the two. It really isn't that hard as long as you carefully (but quickly) examine and take in all of the available information.

Unfortunately, the science section has been known to stray from the above and actually require some basic (or advanced) knowledge of science. So, just know this. On a previous test, I only did well because my knowledge of two of the topics was based off of my class experiences. I'm willing to bet that the others who hadn't taken the appropriate classes... didn't fare so well. If they do stray

from the above concept, they usually base their questions on biology. So, study up!

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

Math Tips:

1. Make two passes through the questions:
 - a. Answer all the questions you know; guess on the ones you have no idea
 - b. Save the questions that you could solve with more thought or time
 - c. Remember: Do Now: You know how to solve it and it won't take long
Do Later: You may or may not know how to solve but know it has multiple steps/time consuming
Do Never: You have no clue so guess and move on
2. Use POE: Process of Elimination - Use logic to eliminate the illogical answers, estimate when possible, trust your eyes on most drawing as far as scale goes
3. Take questions in chunks: Organize, underline, important or key words, draw the diagram, label the diagram, divide the diagram into chunks, etc.
4. Avoid Traps: verify your answer, partial answers, simple math on difficult questions, too much/extra info that is not needed to solve the problem
5. Other strategies:
 - a. substitution; use your answers to plug in your answer choices
 - b. work backwards
 - c. in the absence of numbers, make up numbers instead of using variables
6. When/why to use the Letter of the Day?
 - a. On questions where you will be making a random guess only
 - b. In theory this will increase your chances of at least getting some correct as most letters are equally likely to be an answer
 - c. Only use this strategy when you cannot use POE to eliminate answers

Major topics: area, perimeter especially of triangles, rectangles, parallelograms or shaded regions, evaluate expressions or formulas, basic trig for right-triangles, number sense, solve equations, inequalities, routine arithmetic or real-world problems AKA word problems, write expressions, inequalities, or equations to model a situation, percents, rates, proportions, angle properties, quadratics, exponent rules, average/mean, volume or surface area of 3-D object, midpoint, FOIL, parallel or perpendicular lines, Pythagorean Theorem or distance formula, simple probability, properties or parabolas, circles, triangles, slope, patterns, diagonals, basic geometry and algebraic principals

Answer every question. Most tests supervisors give a 5-minute warning!

Requesting a Copy of Your Test Questions and Answers

If you order and pay for a **Test Information Release** (TIR) form and test at a national test center on a national test date that offers this service, you will receive a list of your answers, a copy of the multiple-choice test questions used to determine your score, the answer key, and scoring instructions. (If you took the Writing Test, you will also receive a copy of the writing prompt, the scoring rubric, and the scores assigned to your essay by two readers.) Information about ordering a photocopy of your answer document (including your essay if you took the Writing Test) for an additional fee will be included with your materials.

See current [ACT fees](#) for details about additional fees (a TIR was \$20).

Which test dates offer this service?

If you took the ACT at a national test center on one of the national test dates listed below, you can order a TIR form when you register, or during the three-month period **after** your test date. This service is not offered on any other test dates or for any non-national administrations (for example, International, Special).

2014–2015 Saturday National Testing

- Saturday, December 12, 2015
- Saturday, April 09, 2016
- Saturday, June 11, 2016

If for any reason the ACT has to replace the test version scheduled for use at your test center or reschedule the administration, this offer becomes void, and ACT will refund your fee for this service. If you order and pay for this service when you register and test on an ineligible test date, ACT will automatically refund this fee.

To order this optional service by mail, you may download the [Test Information Release Order Form](#) (PDF; 1 page).

<http://www.act.org/aap/pdf/release.pdf>

Your request must be postmarked no later than three months after the test date.

Again, you may also purchase online when you register!

Materials are normally mailed about four weeks **after** you receive your score report. You cannot expect to receive them before the registration deadline or in time to study for the very next test date.

All orders received after score reports are first issued will be mailed three to five weeks after receipt at ACT.