

College Testing Frequently Asked Questions

Do I have to take the ACT/SAT/SUBJECT tests?

If you intend to apply to 4-year colleges, MOST require either the [SAT](#) or the [ACT with Writing](#). You may also need to take [SAT Subject Tests](#) for some colleges. The best way to keep all of your options open may be to take both the SAT or the ACT with Writing and at least two SAT Subject Tests. **You can check admission test requirements in Naviance and on college websites.** Students who will attend community college are not required to take SAT or ACT exams.

What about the PSAT?

The [PSAT](#) is a practice test for the SAT that is useful for diagnostic purposes and to give you individual feedback. It is offered one time per year in October and registration forms are available at Raven Readiness and on the CCA website. No colleges will see your score results. By taking the PSAT you will prepare yourself for the SAT and discover your strengths and areas that may need improvement before you take the official SAT. It is based on norms for 10th and 11th grade students, and 11th grade students who take the PSAT may qualify for National Merit consideration.

Are there any colleges which do not require the SAT or ACT?

You can enroll at a community college without taking the SAT, ACT, or Subject Tests. You can also apply to many four-year colleges that do not require standardized tests. **You can check admission test requirements in Naviance and on college websites.** Keep in mind that taking the tests and not needing them may be better than not taking them and needing them! Click here for [colleges that “deemphasize” the SAT/ACT.](#)

When should I take the tests?

PSAT – It can be taken in 9th and 10th grade for SAT practice, and 11th grade for [National Merit](#) qualification.

SAT or ACT – The “best” time to take any test is when you are academically ready to do so. Review the content and material covered in the [SAT](#) and [ACT](#) and utilize their practice questions and prep materials. To determine your optimum test time, consider the following:

- You should have recently finished English 11 or AP English Language and prepared with practice questions.
- You should have finished at least Integrated Math 3 or Trigonometry and prepared with practice questions.

In order to be adequately prepared to apply to colleges in 12th grade, we recommend that students test at least once (SAT and/or ACT) in the 11th grade. By doing so, students will receive scores and still have at least one more opportunity to re-test in 12th grade.

SAT SUBJECT TESTS – In general, a student should take the subject test as soon as possible after completing the corresponding course and when s/he feels best prepared. Factors such as whether the student has reviewed the exam practice material and taken other relevant courses should also be considered. The [College Board](#) is the best source for information regarding the SAT Subject exams, preparation and the content of the exams. The college preparatory class in a subject should adequately prepare a student for the content outlined. Advanced Placement courses are not aligned with the SAT Subject exams but much of the content overlaps and students may review additional areas.

When are the tests given and how do I sign up?

Tests are offered throughout the year. You can only register & send scores at the official websites. [CollegeBoard.org](#) or [ACT.org](#)

Are any of these tests going to be administered at CCA?

The PSAT is currently offered at CCA in the fall term. For the ACT and SAT, when you register you will be asked to input your zip code and a list of local sites will match the closest available sites.

Should I sign up for a test preparation program or tutoring?

Content knowledge, practice, and specific instruction about the ‘mechanics’ of taking the test can improve one’s test results. Because test-prep from outside sources charge for their services, CCA cannot endorse any particular service or individual. Our College & Career Center and Library/Media Center do have online and text practice guides available. Many such guides contain actual tests from prior years, test-taking strategies, and much more.