

Standardized Tests

SAT (Scholastic Achievement Test)

The SAT is an internationally recognized college admission test that shows colleges what you know and how well you can apply it. It tests your knowledge of reading, writing, and mathematics. The SAT is an aptitude test aimed at testing reasoning and verbal abilities, rather than grade-specific content. See www.collegeboard.org for more information.

ACT (American College Test)

The ACT is an achievement test, measuring what you have learned in school. The ACT has up to five components: English, mathematics, reading, science, and an optional writing test. See www.actstudent.org for more information.

Recommendations for the ACT or SAT tests:

1. Begin taking the ACT or SAT at the end of sophomore year. There is no penalty for sending scores to colleges early in your high school career. Colleges realize you will do better over time and will take the higher scores.
2. Take both the ACT and SAT multiple times. Ideally, you should take at least one of them four times.
3. Choose to stay with the test that is best for you.
4. Don't worry about test preparation until you have taken the ACT or SAT once or twice.
5. Some colleges superscore, meaning they take the very best scores of each of the sections taken, rather than taking the average of the sections (called "composite"). To see which colleges superscore click [here](#).

PSAT/NMSQT (National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test)

The PSAT/NMSQT is a preliminary version of the SAT. Not only does the PSAT help prepare you to take the SAT or ACT, a great score on the PSAT can also open the door to National Merit Scholarships and other awards.

Westminster provides this test to the sophomores and juniors in mid-October. This test, which only counts toward college scholarship the junior year, could get you more money than any other college scholarship. There are tutors and classes available to help you prepare for the PSAT/NMSQT, but they are not recommended until junior year. See www.collegeboard.org for more information.

CLT (Classical Learning Test)

The CLT is being offered as an alternative to the ACT or SAT tests for private and classically trained students. The test focuses more on aptitude and not a specific body of knowledge. For more information about this, see [the CLT exam](#). To find schools that accept the CLT, click [here](#).