

PSAT SCORE REPORT DESCRIPTION

Important: Your PSAT score will NOT have an impact on college admissions or scholarships, unless you qualify for the National Merit Scholarship. Instead, the PSAT is *practice* for the SAT. The SAT will be very important for college admissions and scholarships, but your GPA is the most important thing of all

PSAT Score Report Description

Each section is scored on a range from 20-80 points.
The national average on each section is approximately 50 points.

Critical
Reading

Math

Writing
Skills

Percentile

“Percentiles” describe how you did on the PSAT compared with other juniors nationwide. The higher your percentile, the better you did. If your percentile on Critical Reading is 15%, that means you did better than 15% of other juniors and worse than 85% of other juniors nationwide.

Expected
SAT
Ranges

The SAT has three scores, just like the PSAT. The difference is that the SAT scores are have an extra zero—in other words they are ten times bigger. For example, a score of 35 on the PSAT Critical Reading Section would be like a score of 350 on the SAT; a score of 52 on the PSAT would be like 520 on the SAT.

The ranges listed on your score report show what you should expect to get on the SAT if you don’t study or practice. For example, if you got a 38 on the PSAT, the expected range for the SAT is that you would score about 350 – 460 points if you don’t prepare for the SAT.

The SAT is scored on a scale of 200-800 points on each of the three sections. The national average on each section is about 500 points. That means that the national average SAT score for all three sections combined is about 1500 points.

Review
Your
Answers

This part of the score report shows you which questions you got right and which ones you got wrong or left blank.

For each section of the test, there are four columns (five columns on math) on the score report:

- Question Number
- Correct Answers for each question number

- Your Answer—this is the answer *you* put on your answer sheet:
 - If there is a check mark, it means you got the question right!
 - If there is a letter, it means you got the question wrong. The letter is the answer that *you* put.
 - If there is a “o” it means you left that question blank
 - If there is a “u” it means they couldn’t score it, which means you either put two answers instead of one, or they couldn’t read your answer
- Difficulty—this tells you whether the question was (e) easy, (m) medium, or (h) hard. If you missed a lot of easy questions, you should slow down when you take the test. If you got most of the easy and medium questions correct, and missed most of the hard, that tells you that you took the test at a good speed and that your score will improve if you learn some more advanced concepts.
- On the MATH sections, you’ll see a fifth column called “content.” This tells you whether each questions was a (num) numbers or operations question, (alg) algebra or functions questions, (geom.) geometry or measurement question, or (data) data analysis or statistical question. If you missed a lot of questions in the same content area, it would be a good idea to review that area before you take the SAT.

Improve
Your
Skills

This part of the score report gives you some suggestions for how to improve your score in each of three content areas: Critical Reading, Math and Writing Skills.

Students who prepare, practice, and review can improve their score substantially, but it takes a lot of effort. You can’t expect to study for just an hour or two. It takes weeks and even months of serious effort for several hours a week.

Some ideas to prepare for the SAT:

- Take a practice SAT exam. When you are finished, look at the questions you missed—especially the easy and medium questions (those are easiest to improve on). Try to understand the difference between the right answer and the answer that you put.
- Take an SAT prep course in the spring (talk to your counselor) or prepare using books found in the library.
- Ask your teachers for extra help and practice, especially your math and English teachers.
- Read as much as you can and try to expand your vocabulary. There’s no question that people who read a lot tend to do better on the SAT.

A note about National Merit Scholarships: PSAT scores are used to qualify for National Merit Scholarships. The qualifying score changes from year to year, but typically the score is somewhere in the 210-215 range. In the far right column of the score report, you’ll see your “selection index.” If that score is near the 210-215 range, make sure you talk to your counselor.