

Tips for taking the ACT test

Register to take the ACT at www.act.org

6 digits codes you'll need during ACT test registration process -

High School Code: 012-111

Test Center Code : 235010

The items below will be covered in this document:

- When should I take the ACT test for the 1st time?
- How many times should I take it?
- Should I take the Writing portion?
- Should I send my score report to PHS?
- Fee waivers
- ACT Prep Tips
- Links to FREE ACT Practice Test

When should I take the ACT test for the 1st time?

ACT suggests that you should take the ACT test during the 11th grade year. However, in order to score as high as possible, you should take the ACT as soon as you finish your Geometry course. Why? Geometry is a completely different math from any other math course that a student will take in high school. Of the 60 questions on the math portion, usually about 20 questions are Geometry based. If you took Geometry in the 10th grade and decide to wait until your 11th grade year, you will most likely forget those Geometry skills that you learned because you don't use all of them in the higher level math classes. **DO NOT wait until the state-required test in Spring of your 11th grade year to take the ACT, unless you are finishing Geometry in the Spring semester of your 11th grade year.**

How many times should I take the ACT test?

The ACT offers 6 - 7 opportunities per year to take the test, and they are offered at PHS on Saturdays. The months they are offered are September, October, December, February, April, and June (July offered at other schools). Because of a high burnout rate, an average of 3 times is usually best. If your score does not increase any out of those 3 times, the likelihood of your score increasing after that many times of testing are very slim.

Should I take the Writing portion?

NO!!! Most colleges DO NOT require the Writing anymore, so do not waste your time and/or money (about 15 extra dollars) to take the Writing portion of the ACT. ALL 11th graders will take the Writing portion in the free state-required ACT in April of their 11th grade year.

Should I send my score report to PHS?

YES!!! Always send your score to PHS when you take the ACT test! That way we will have it posted on your transcript for scholarship purposes. Also, each time you register to take the ACT, make sure you send your score report to 4 colleges. During the registration process to take the ACT, you can send your score report to up to 4 colleges for FREE! If you wait until after you take each test, ACT will charge you \$13 for each college you request your scores to be sent to. If you wait until after you take the test & you then need it sent to 4 colleges, it will cost you an extra \$52. You can only send your score report to colleges directly from ACT at www.actstudent.org. Please, please, please DO NOT worry about a college seeing a score that you do not feel is your best score! They ONLY look at your HIGHEST score for both admissions and for scholarships!

Fee Waivers & Free Online Test Prep from ACT:

Fee Waiver Eligibility – A student can receive TWO separate ACT Fee Waivers if they are in the 11th or 12th grade AND receive Free/Reduced lunch. They only receive TWO during those 2 years of high school. PGHS keeps up with the number of waivers a student receives, but if somehow a student receives an extra waiver, ACT will deny it & the student will be billed. The free state-required ACT with Writing test in April of the 11th grade year DOES NOT count as an ACT Fee Waiver! So, an eligible student can take the ACT 3 times for free.

Fee Waiver Procedures – If you meet the 2 requirements above, you can come to the Guidance office to register with an ACT Fee Waiver. This process takes 20 minutes, so come with a pass from your teacher.

Section	# of Questions & Time Limit	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 questions
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 questions
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

ACT Prep Tips: For ALL sections – DO NOT waste time reading the directions/instructions for each section! When you are doing test prep up until the test date, take time to look over each of the sections’ directions/instructions so you are familiar enough with them and you don’t have to waste precious time reading those on the test date. **If you can afford it, spend the extra \$20 to get your whole test returned to you after you take it. During preparation, time your practice tests just like you would on the actual test day.**

English section –When in doubt, leave it out – do not choose the most wordy or redundant answer. Because of time restraints on this section, the **shortest answer** is correct for 80-90% of questions!

Math section – Use the “Two Pass Method”

First pass – On the 1st go around, solve all the problems you know how to complete quickly, and in the test book circle & skip the ones that you can do with some work, but will take you a bit longer.

Second pass – Solve all the ones you circled, and attempt the ones you didn’t have circled. You may have a few left that you can’t complete, so when the 5-minute warning is called for the section to end, mark the same answer for all of the ones you didn’t have circled. (For example, mark answer “C” for all of them.)

Reading section – Four reading sections with 10 questions each – 40 questions must be completed within 35 minutes. These 4 reading passages DO NOT have to be completed in the order presented in the Reading section. Choose the section with the subject matter you like the LEAST and leave it until last. **Complete three passages REALLY well, and consider bubbling in dummy answers for the fourth section.** If timing allows, you can attempt the fourth section, but if you used your time wisely on the other three passages, you probably won’t have time for a good attempt.

Science section – There are typically 6 sections within the Science section. You do not have to complete these 6 sections in order. Take a few moments to study graphs/charts BEFORE reading the question. **PRACTICING reading charts/graphs over and over again – this is truly the ONLY way to improve your Science score.**

FREE ACT Practice Tests:

<http://www.act.org/content/act/en/products-and-services/the-act/test-preparation.html>

<http://blog.prepscholar.com/printable-act-practice-tests-5-free>

<https://www.march2success.com/main/learnmore/collegeprep>

<http://masteryprep.com/category/tips/>