



## TEST STRUCTURE AND FORMAT

SECTION	PSAT 8/9	PSAT/NMSQT	SAT
READING	55 MIN - 42 QUESTIONS	60 MIN - 47 QUESTIONS	65 MIN - 52 QUESTIONS
WRITING AND LANGUAGE	30 MIN - 40 QUESTIONS	35 MIN - 44 QUESTIONS	35 MIN - 44 QUESTIONS
MATH (CALCULATOR)	40 MIN - 25 QUESTIONS	45 MIN - 31 QUESTIONS	55 MIN - 38 QUESTIONS
MATH (NO CALCULATOR)	20 MIN - 13 QUESTIONS	25 MIN - 17 QUESTIONS	25 MIN - 20 QUESTIONS
ESSAY	N/A	N/A	1 ESSAY - 50 MINUTES
Total Time	2 Hours & 25 Minutes	2 Hours & 45 Minutes	3 Hours (Without Essay)

### Basic Test Strategies

- Read carefully
  - Consider all the choices in each question
  - Avoid careless mistakes that will cause you to lose points
- Answer the easy questions first
  - Work on less time-consuming questions before moving on to the more difficult ones
  - Questions on each test are generally ordered from easiest to hardest
- Eliminate answer choices that you know are wrong
  - Cross out incorrect choices in your test booklet so that you can clearly see which choices are left
- Make an educated guess
  - If you have eliminated the choices that you know are wrong, then take a guess
  - There is no penalty for incorrect answers!**
- Keep your answer sheet neat
  - The answer sheet is scored by a machine
  - It can't tell the difference between an answer and a stray mark or doodle
- Use your test booklet as scrap paper
  - Use it to make notes or write down ideas
  - What you write in the booklet will not affect your score
- Circle the questions you skip in your booklet
  - This will help you keep track of which questions you didn't answer
  - Come back to these questions later
  - Don't leave any questions blank!**
- Check your answer sheet regularly
  - Make sure you are in the right place
  - Check the number of the question and the number on the answer sheet every few questions
  - This is especially important when you skip a question
- Work at an even, steady pace, and keep moving
  - Through practice, you can develop a sense of timing to help you complete the test
  - Your goal is to spend time on the questions you are most likely to answer correctly
  - Keep track of time
  - Be familiar with how much time you have for each section
  - Occasionally check your progress so you know where you are and how much time is left
- Don't grab your calculator too quickly- you have to know how to solve the problems first
  - Calculators can only calculate: they can't think
  - You need to figure out how to solve the problem before you begin calculating
  - Calculators are great for helping you avoid silly mistakes in your arithmetic
- Watch out for careless mistakes on the math section such as:
  - Misreading the question
  - Computation error
  - Punching in the wrong thing on the calculator
  - Answering a different question from the one asked