

LEARNING MY WAY

EXCEL LEARNING SYSTEMS LLC

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Personalizing SAT Prep

“One size does not fit all” when it comes to music, movies, clothes and sports. Why should it be any different when it comes to preparing to take the SAT? Learning is personal, especially when you need to prepare for a high stakes test such as the SAT.

Use a checklist to help you think through and strategize your approach to the SAT.

SAT Checklist

- When should I prepare?
- How much prep do I need?
- How should I prepare?
- How many re-takes?

When should I prepare?

Timing of preparation depends on a number of factors. Look at your 10th grade PSAT scores and their corresponding percentiles. Is any one of the three scores (Critical Reading, Math and Writing) in the 40's and or well below the 50th percentile? If so, you should begin taking steps in the 10th grade to address your area(s) of weakness. If your 10th grade scores are in the 50's, then continue studying hard and plan on doing your



Learning is Personal

We all learn differently. Some of us learn easily by just listening while many of us must see the information while listening. Many of us learn better by doing something with the material. Also even though we might have attended the same schools, some of us are much stronger in math than

our friends while others of us are better readers. Yes, we know we are different from each other when it comes to how we learn. So, we will prepare for the SAT in different ways.

test prep in the 11th grade. After saying this, I will make an exception. (There are always exceptions to everything.) You have your head and heart set on attending a highly selective school that requires SAT scores at the 700 or higher levels. If you have earned the GPA and taken

the courses that qualify you, but scored in the 50's on your 10th grade PSAT, then you should begin your test prep earlier than your junior year. Another factor to always consider is your availability. As the saying goes, there are only 24 hours in a day (no exception to this

one) so you need to realistically look at your academic load and other commitments (sports, plays, musical productions, etc) and see when you can work test prep into your schedule. In summary, look at your current scores, colleges of interest, and calendar. Plug test prep into your schedule and go for it!

How much preparation do I need?

Find out the median SAT scores for the freshman class for your colleges of interest and compare them to your scores. Also check to see if the colleges use the Writing score for admission purposes. Many do not use it. If you don't need it, why spend your time studying to increase it? After figuring out where you are and what scores you need, decide on how much preparation you need - little (basic review and one practice test), medium amount (review of fundamentals and strategies and two practices tests) or a lot (fundamentals, strategies and three to four practice tests).

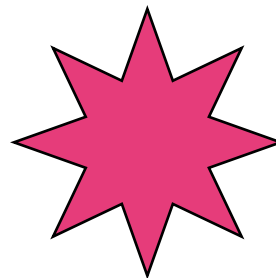
How should I prepare?

Before deciding how to prepare, ask yourself what is the easiest way for you to learn in the areas that the SAT tests - Critical Reading, Math and Writing. For instance, do you need a structured program and schedule that is provided through classroom training? Do you need this structured approach for all three areas or do you need it for just one - let's say Critical Reading? Do you benefit more from one-on-one with an instructor or do you like a group setting? If you prefer a group, what size? Do you like learning online? Do you learn best with an independent study approach - constructing your own program and schedule? After you answer these questions, check into your options and begin studying.

How many re-takes?

It depends on your scores and goals. Once you have earned the scores you need for your colleges of interest, stop! There is no reason to continue

taking the SAT in order to see if you can top 700 in Math if you don't need a 700. The nice thing now about the SAT is that most colleges use the higher score for each component from multiple tests. Let's say you took the SAT twice and scored a 590 on the Math and a 670 on Critical Reading the first time you took it. The second time you took the test, you scored a 650 on the Math, but went down to a 640 on the Critical Reading. Good news! Most colleges use the 670 Critical Reading and the 650 Math for admissions purposes.



Are you ready to begin preparing for the SAT or just starting to gather information? Regardless of your situation, call or email us to find out how we can help you reach your SAT goals. Also, visit our website for our small class schedules and information on our one-on-one, customized SAT Prep programs. At the end of any of our programs, we want you to be able to say, "I reached my SAT goals by learning my way".

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