

The PSAT: Is it Important?

Absolutely! Every student should take the Preliminary SAT (PSAT) twice as a general rule, the first time being in October of your sophomore year. The first test serves as a “practice” test not only for the “real” SAT but also for your second PSAT test taken October of your Junior year. You should prepare for it by STUDYING!!!

The PSAT is co-sponsored by the College Board and the National Merit Scholarship Corporation (NMSC). The PSAT is also known as the National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test (NMQST) so you may see it referred to as the PSAT/NMQST. The test consists of 3 components: Reading, Math, and Writing and Language.

For most students the sophomore sitting of the PSAT will offer the first opportunity/exercise in taking a standardized test associated with college. The PSAT that “counts” is the October sitting of the junior year. It serves several purposes:

- It enters the student into competition for the National Merit Scholarships from NMSC.
- The test score will reveal to the student which areas of study they need to focus on for the SAT.
- And, when the student checks YES to Student Search Service, they will receive information (lots of it!) from colleges.

The PSAT consists of 4 sections totaling 2 hours and 45 minutes

- Reading: 47 questions/tasks; 60 minutes
- Math: 48 questions; section with no calculator, 25 minutes; section with calculator, 45 minutes
- Writing and Language: 44 questions/tasks; 35 minutes

PSAT/NMQST test scores range from 8 to 38 for each of the 3 components (Reading, Math and Writing and Language). The total test score is referred to as the “Selection Index” and ranges from 320 to 1520. The scores will be converted from the sections score to a similar format to the actual SAT.

PSAT – Websites

<https://collegereadiness.collegeboard.org/psat-nmsqt-psat-10>

This is the main page to go to for free, online help. It is the official College Board web page with all kinds of details and practice about the PSAT (and SAT for later).

<https://www.studyguidezone.com> (In the search for your exam box type in: PSAT)

This website has a number of FREE downloads for practice on all sections. This site also has study and test taking hints as well as a 60+ page study guide.

<https://www.petersons.com/college-search/psat.aspx>

This website will help you prepare for the PSAT with free practice tests and tips for improving your scores.

https://www.testprepreview.com/psat_practice.HTM

This website has a study guide, flashcards and practice test questions.

To Register:

Juniors – Register at the Activities Desk, KSD pays for your testing

Sophomores – Register at the Activities Desk, cost \$16