ACT Basic Information

Multiple choice (similar to EXPLORE and PLAN)

Accepted by all four-year colleges and universities

Offered in September, October, December, February, April, and June (In March all Kentucky 11th graders take the ACT). Go to ACTstudent.org to register to take the ACT.

Highest possible score: 36

Scores will be available on ACTstudent.org within four weeks after the test.

Colleges don’t automatically see all of your scores. You can submit just your highest score.

*Breakdown of ACT questions:*

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| English (45 Minutes) | Usage Mechanics | 40 questions |
| Rhetorical Skills | 35 questions |
| Mathematics (60 Minutes) | Pre-Algebra/Elementary Algebra | 24 questions |
| Intermediate Algebra/Coordinate Geometry | 18 questions |
| Plane Geometry/Trigonometry | 18 questions |
| Reading (35 Minutes) | Prose Fiction | 10 questions |
| Social Science | 10 questions |
| Humanities | 10 questions |
| Natural Science | 10 questions |
| Science (35 Minutes) | Data Representation | 15 questions |
| Research Summaries | 18 questions |
| Conflicting Viewpoints | 7 questions |

*What score should I shoot for?*

It depends where you want to go to college and what you want to study. The “Getting In” book your senior advocate gave you has the average ACT score of last year’s freshman class. You can use that as a general guideline. Always remember: you are much more than a test score! Your extracurricular activities, community service (volunteering), leadership, recommendations, and GPA will also be considered when applying to colleges. But your ACT score *is* important to most schools.

General Tips for the ACT:

Since you don’t have time to study everything that will be on the ACT, study what will help your score the most.

* The school has paid for some great resources! Use Method Test Prep (it’s on your ILP). Answer Study Island ACT questions. When using MTP or SI, click to find out why you got an answer wrong and how to answer the question correctly. Analyze the types of questions you’re missing. Ask a teacher for help if needed.
* Use your test booklet as scratch paper.
* Don’t get bogged down by a hard question.
	+ Skip it and come back! Answer easy questions before hard questions.
		- Use process of elimination to narrow down your answer choices.
* Be careful bubbling in your answers.
	+ Make sure you bubble in an answer for every question! When time is running out, choose a *letter of the day* and bubble it in.
	+ However, if you already eliminated your *letter of the day* using process of elimination, bubble in a back-up letter of the day.
* Know the section directions in advance – they don’t change. I’ve included them in this packet.
* Read each question carefully and thoroughly before deciding on an answer. Take advantage of being able to mark in the test booklet to help ensure you’re answering what the question asks (see subject tips below for more on this).
	+ Pay attention to each question’s wording – especially when something is emphasized in **bold**, *italics*, or CAPS. Also note qualifying words like: *all, most, some, none, always, usually, never, best, smaller, etc.*
* Work quickly, but do not rush. Be wary of answers that come too easily – especially if they are toward the end of a section. Learn to skip and come back: if you’ve spent a few seconds on a problem and don’t know how to work it, skip it. Circle the number of the problem to easily find it again.
* Cross out obviously wrong answers. Use process of elimination to find right answers.
* Answer EVERY question. Choose a letter (or position) of the day for questions you aren’t going to get no matter how long you stare at them.

**Prepping – Very important!**

Practice, practice, practice, practice, practice answering ACT-type questions and taking practice ACTs. This is a long test. Build your endurance. Don’t start off by taking an entire practice ACT at one sitting – take it a section at a time – or even one passage at a time.

Method Test Prep (MTP) is configured for 20 weeks. Since you have only two weeks, choose one subject area: English, Math, Reading, or Science. Instead of following the weekly schedule, follow the schedule on the following pages for the subject you choose. Use the checklist to keep track of your progress.

To access MTP:

Login to your ILP

Click “My ILP”

Scroll down and click on “Method Test Prep”

**The 12 hours before the test…**

Do your best to relax and eat healthily! But, let’s say you were up all night stressing (please don’t do that to yourself – you know you can take this test again, right?), but if you didn’t sleep well…

Eat healthy food the night before and the morning of the ACT and bring a snack to eat in the hall during your break. Keep your brain fueled!

Mama Colbert says “Lay out your clothes the night before.” Plan to wear layers - room could be an oven or a frozen tundra. Also, consider borrowing a watch to wear – there’s no guarantee the room will have a clock. Make sure it’s a quiet, no-beep watch.

Mama Colbert also says “Starting your day off with a shower and clean hair will wake you, refresh you, and make you feel good!” Same with brushing your teeth.

If you feel stressed, know that science shows that a little stress can actually sharpen your senses and help you focus!

If you’re so stressed that it’s distracting, try conscious breathing: close your mouth and breathe in through your nose for four seconds, then breathe out your nose for six seconds. Repeat as needed.

Perspective: yes you want to do well on the ACT so you can get into the college of your dreams. But there are bigger issues in the world: Ebola, war, hurricanes, etc. Your ACT is worth working on. It’s not a problem though – it’s a step toward your goals. The test can only help you. Just be your best every moment you’re testing! If your scores end up being lower than you want, let’s figure out why and give this thing another try. ☺

English Tips

**45 Minutes – 75 Questions**

**DIRECTIONS: In the five passages that follow, certain words and phrases are underlined and numbered. In the right-hand column, you will find alternatives for the underlined part. In most cases, you are to choose the one that best expresses the idea, makes the statement appropriate for standard written English, or is worded most consistently with the style and tone of the passage as a whole. If you think the original version is best, choose “NO CHANGE.” In some cases, you will find in the right-hand column a question about the underlined part. You are to choose the best answer to the question. You will also find questions about a section of the passage, or about the passage as a whole. These questions do not refer to an underlined portion of the passage, but rather are identified by a number or numbers in a box.**

**For each question, choose the alternative you consider best and fill in the corresponding oval on your answer document. Read each passage through once before you begin to answer the questions that accompany it. For many of the questions, you must read several sentences beyond the question to determine the answer. Be sure that you have read far enough ahead each time you choose an alternative.**

ACT **English** Prep Sessions will be available to DCHS students on the following dates :

Thurs. Oct. 16th at 7:15 a.m. – Room 135

Mon. Oct. 20th at 3:30 p.m. – Room 135

Wed. Oct. 22nd at 7:15 a.m. – Room 135

Wed. Oct. 22nd at 3:30 p.m. – Room 135

Math Tips

**60 Minutes – 60 Questions**

**DIRECTIONS:** Solve each problem, choose the correct answer, and then fill in the corresponding oval on your answer sheet.

Do not linger over problems that take too much time. Solve as many as you can; then return to the others in the time you have left for this test.

You are permitted to use a calculator on this test. You may use your calculator for any problems you choose, but some of the problems may best be done without using a calculator.

Note: Unless otherwise stated, all of the following should be assumed.

Illustrative figures are NOT necessarily drawn to scale.

Geometric figures lie in a plane.

The word *line* indicates a straight line.

The word *average* indicates arithmetic mean.

ACT **Math** Prep Sessionswill be available to DCHS students on the following dates

Tuesday, October 21 from 3:30 – 4:30 PM (Room 170)

Thursday, October 23 from 7:15-8:00 AM (Room 170)

**A Few Math Strategies….**

Solve the problem first, then locate your answer, rather than plugging each option into the problem.

SHOW YOUR WORK! Seriously, how many times have your math teachers told you this? Writing down the steps as you work them, drawing the graph/shape, writing out equations etc., will help you figure out the problem. Use your calculator. This is not the time for “doing it in your head.”

When you can see a line or shape in front of you instead of being distracted by visualizing it, it’s easier to focus on what you need to do. Seeing an equation written down in front of you helps you remember which step to do first, which can lead to the next step then the next step until the problem is solved.

If you don’t know the answer to a question and the question is in the medium/hard section of 21-60, don’t guess an answer choice whose number appears in the question. This method is not foolproof, but it often works and is statistically better than the 20% chance you’d have by guessing.

Use all of the time provided. Go back and check your work

**If you don’t have a lot of math confidence, do this:**

Do easy questions first, and don’t shortchange them with time or effort

All questions on the ACT are worth the same amount, but the math is the only section that generally goes from easy questions to hard questions with the first 20-ish being the easy-schmeasiest. (If you know the concept being tested, you’ll easily get the question right.) Numbers 21ish to 45-50ish are medium-hard: the test writers will put an extra complication in the problem or try to trick you. These are very doable, but pay attention! The last 10-15 are the most challenging questions – many people don’t get to these or will have to guess on most of them.

Because people are worried about time, they often rush through the easy questions at the beginning making simple mistakes that could have been avoided. Don’t lose easy points by being careless!

**If you’re pretty good at math, do this:**

Blitz the first 20 questions, **moving through them in only 10 minutes.** These are the easiest questions that will appear on the test. Allow yourself **20 minutes for the middle 20 questions.** Then you’ll have a full **30 minutes for the last 20 questions.** There are some "gimmies" at the back of the test that you’ll miss if you never get to them.

By working to get through the math blitz, answering the first twenty questions in 10 minutes**,** you'll have ten extra minutes to work through the harder questions!

Reading Tips

**35 Minutes – 40 questions**

**DIRECTIONS**: There are four passages in this test. Each passage is followed by several questions. After reading a passage, choose the best answer to each question and fill in the corresponding oval on your answer document. You may refer to the passages as often as necessary.

The Reading section of the ACT asks you to recall information, summarize main ideas, and infer meaning.

ACT **Reading** Prep Sessionswill be available to DCHS students on the following dates

Monday, October 20 from 3:30-4:30 in room 134

Wednesday, October 22 from 3:30-4:30 in room 134

Science Tips

**35 Minutes – 40 Questions**

**DIRECTIONS**: There are seven passages in this test. Each passage is followed by several questions. After reading a passage, choose the best answer to each question and fill in the corresponding oval on your answer document. You may refer to the passages as often as necessary.

You are NOT permitted to use a calculator on this test.

The Science section tests your ability to apply new information, it does NOT test your prior knowledge! However, pay attention to your lab work in chemistry, biology, physics, and earth science classes. Some of it may be very similar to the ACT questions. ☺

**Passages I through IV are easier than passages V through VII.** This means you don’t need to understand the subtle elements of the experiments in passages I-IV to get the answers. This also means I-IV should take less time than V-VII

* If two answer choices are opposites, there’s a good chance that one of them is the correct answer.
* Within each passage the questions are typically arranged in order of difficulty.

**Types of passages:**

* There are 3 Charts and Graphs passages – 5 questions each (data representation)
* There are 6 Experiments passages – 6 questions each (research summaries)
* There is 1 Conflicting View Point passage – 7 questions (fighting scientists)

**Types of questions:**

* Understanding (look it up!)
	+ These questions are similar to a reading test and assess your ability to paraphrase specific parts of a passage
* Analysis (the big “why”)
	+ These questions call for deeper understanding of the information in the passage. You might be asked to put two thoughts together and figure out why something happened, or predict what’s going to happen.
* Generalization (what if?)
	+ Generalization requires you to look at the “bigger picture.” For example, you might predict the result of an experiment.

**Strategies for the first 4 science passages:**

In the first 30 seconds, skim through the text of the experiment. Pay specific attention to lines that explain the figures (example: Figure 1 shows….”)

When you reach a line that explains a figure, *take a second look at that figure*: pay careful attention to the axes, units, direction of increasing/decreasing values, and what the figure is showing.

Doing the above should take no longer than 30 seconds: remember you don’t need to understand every detail of the experiment.

Most questions will refer you to the chart, table or graph that provides the data or information you’ll need to answer the question.

Read carefully! Most of the questions are straightforward. Answer what the question is asking!

**Strategies for science passages 5-7**

You will need to try harder to understand the experiment.

You will read the experiment descriptions in more depth.

In general, questions will NOT refer you to a graph or chart: you’ll need to know where to look. That means at the beginning, you should try to understand exactly what each figure is showing.

**MTP: English Benchmark is 18**

\_\_\_\_\_ Day 1 = Week 1 warm up set of ACT English questions, Week 2 English evaluation. (Approximately 20 minutes answering questions and ten minutes reading the explanations of questions you weren’t sure of and/or got wrong).

\_\_\_\_\_ Day 2 = Week 3 listen to the first English lesson and take the quiz at the end, Week 4 listen to the second English lesson and take the quiz at the end. (Approx. 30 minutes total)

\_\_\_\_\_ Day 3 = Week 5 listen to the third English lesson and take the quiz at the end, Week 6 listen to the fourth English lesson and take the quiz at the end. (Approx. 30 minutes total)

\_\_\_\_\_ Day 4 = Week 7 listen to the fifth English lesson and take the quiz at the end, Week 8 listen to the sixth English lesson and take the quiz at the end. (Approx. 30 minutes total)

\_\_\_\_\_ Day 5 = Week 9 listen to the seventh English lesson and take the quiz at the end, Week 10 listen to the eighth English lesson and take the quiz at the end. (Approx. 30 minutes total)

\_\_\_\_\_ Day 6 = Week 11 listen to the ninth English lesson and take the quiz at the end, Week 12 listen to the tenth English lesson (It’s vs. Its) and take the quiz at the end. (Approx. 30 minutes total)

\_\_\_\_\_ Day 7 = Week 13 listen to the eleventh English lesson and take the quiz at the end, Week 14 listen to the twelfth English lesson and take the quiz at the end. (Approx. 30 minutes total)

\_\_\_\_\_ Day 8 = Week 15 listen to the thirteenth English lesson and take the quiz at the end, Week 16 work on a set of English practice questions. (Approx. 25 minutes total)

\_\_\_\_\_ Day 9 = Complete English Section from full-length ACT #1 Make sure you read the explanations at the end of the section of the answers you got wrong (45 minutes to complete and 15 minutes to read explanations of incorrect answers).

\_\_\_\_\_ Day 10 = Review English lessons as needed.

\_\_\_\_\_ Day 11 = Review English lessons as needed. If desired, complete English section from full-length ACT #2. Make sure you read the explanations of the ones you got wrong at the end of the section (45 minutes to complete and 15 minutes to read explanations of incorrect answers).

\_\_\_\_\_ Day 12 = Review English lessons as needed.

\_\_\_\_\_ Day 13 = Get a good night’s rest and eat a healthy breakfast in the morning. You’ve got this ☺

**MTP: Math Benchmark is 19** – There are no tricks to math. You improve in math by doing practice problems, seeing why you got them wrong, figuring how to do them correctly and reworking the problems. Reworking the problems is crucial! Again, don’t just think “I got it” and move on to the next problem. ***When prepping***, you need to REWORK the problems you miss in order to improve. (Did I mention the best math prep is to practice and rework the problems you miss?!)

\_\_\_\_\_ Day 1 = Week 1 warm up set of ACT Math questions, Week 2 Math evaluation. (Approximately 20 minutes answering questions and ten minutes reading the explanations of questions you weren’t sure of and/or got wrong).

\_\_\_\_\_ Day 2 = Week 3 listen to the first Math lesson (Plug in Numbers) and take the quiz at the end, Week 4 listen to the second Math lesson (Percents) and take the quiz at the end. (Approx. 30 minutes total)

\_\_\_\_\_ Day 3 = Week 5 listen to the third Math lesson (Strange Symbols) and take the quiz at the end, Week 6 listen to the fourth Math lesson (Proportions) and take the quiz at the end. (Approx. 30 minutes total)

\_\_\_\_\_ Day 4 = Week 7 listen to the fifth Math lesson (Exponents) and take the quiz at the end, Week 8 listen to the sixth Math lesson (Average) and take the quiz at the end. (Approx. 30 minutes total)

\_\_\_\_\_ Day 5 = Week 9 listen to the seventh Math lesson (Slope) and take the quiz at the end, Week 10 listen to the eighth Math lesson (Ratio) and take the quiz at the end. (Approx. 30 minutes total)

\_\_\_\_\_ Day 6 = Week 11 listen to the ninth Math lesson (Be Careful with Fractions and Negatives) and take the quiz at the end, Week 12 listen to the tenth Math lesson (Remainders) and take the quiz at the end. (Approx. 30 minutes total)

\_\_\_\_\_ Day 7 = Week 13 listen to the eleventh Math lesson (Pythagorean Theorem) and take the quiz at the end, Week 14 listen to the twelfth Math lesson (Perimeter and Area) and take the quiz at the end. (Approx. 30 minutes total)

\_\_\_\_\_ Day 8 = Week 15 listen to the thirteenth Math lesson (Shaded Area) and take the quiz at the end, Week 16 listen to the fourteenth Math lesson (How many combinations) and take the quiz at the end. (Approx. 30 minutes total)

\_\_\_\_\_ Day 9 = Week 17 listen to the fifteenth Math lesson (Median/Mode) and take the quiz at the end, listen to the sixteenth Math lesson (Write out the Math Equations) and take the quiz at the end. (Approx. 30 minutes total)

\_\_\_\_\_ Day 10 = Week 18 listen to the seventeenth Math lesson (Functions) and take the quiz at the end, listen to the sixteenth Math lesson (Absolute Value) and take the quiz at the end. (Approx. 30 minutes total)

\_\_\_\_\_ Day 11 = Week 18 listen to the eighteenth Math lesson (Mixtures) and take the quiz at the end, listen to the nineteenth Math lesson (Trigonometry) and take the quiz at the end. (Approx. 30 minutes total)

\_\_\_\_\_ Day 12 = Complete Math Section from full-length ACT #1 Make sure you read the explanations of the ones you got wrong at the end of the section (60 minutes to complete and 15 minutes to read explanations of incorrect answers).

\_\_\_\_\_ Day 13 = Get a good night’s rest and eat a healthy breakfast in the morning. You’ve got this ☺

**MTP: Reading Benchmark is 20**

\_\_\_\_\_ Day 1 = Week 1 warm up set of ACT Reading questions, Week 2 Reading evaluation. (Approximately 20 minutes answering questions and ten minutes reading the explanations of questions you weren’t sure of and/or got wrong).

\_\_\_\_\_ Day 2 = Week 3 listen to the first Reading lesson and take the quiz at the end, Week 4 listen to the second Reading lesson and take the quiz at the end. (Approx. 30 minutes total)

\_\_\_\_\_ Day 3 = Week 5 get 15 words into your Words Mastered column (Approx. 40 minutes)

\_\_\_\_\_ Day 4 = Week 6 get 15 more words into your Words Mastered column (Approx. 40 minutes)

\_\_\_\_\_ Day 5 = Week 10 listen to the eighth Reading lesson and take the quiz at the end, Week 11 listen to the ninth Reading lesson and take the quiz at the end, (Approx. 30 minutes total)

\_\_\_\_\_ Day 6 = Week 7 get 15 more words into your Words Mastered column (Approx. 40 minutes)

\_\_\_\_\_ Day 7 = Week 13 listen to the eleventh Reading lesson and take the quiz at the end, Week 14 listen to the twelfth Reading lesson and take the quiz at the end, (Approx. 30 minutes total)

\_\_\_\_\_ Day 8 = Week 15 listen to the thirteenth Reading lesson and take the quiz at the end, Week 16 listen to the fourteenth Reading lesson and take the quiz at the end, (Approx. 30 minutes total)

\_\_\_\_\_ Day 9 = Week 8 get 15 more words into your Words Mastered column (Approx. 40 minutes)

\_\_\_\_\_ Day 10 = Week 17 listen to the fifteenth Reading lesson and take the quiz at the end, listen to the sixteenth Reading lesson and take the quiz at the end. (Approx. 30 minutes total)

\_\_\_\_\_ Day 11 = Complete Reading Section from full-length ACT #1 Make sure you read the explanations of the ones you got wrong at the end of the section (35 minutes to complete and 15 minutes to read explanations of incorrect answers).

\_\_\_\_\_ Day 12 = Week 9 get 15 more words into your Words Mastered column (Approx. 40 minutes)

\_\_\_\_\_ Day 13 = Get a good night’s rest and eat a healthy breakfast in the morning. You’ve got this ☺

**MTP: Science – There’s no benchmark in Kentucky, but the national benchmark is 24**

\_\_\_\_\_ Day 1 = Week 1 warm up set of ACT Science questions, Week 2 Science evaluation. (Approximately 20 minutes answering questions and ten minutes reading the explanations of questions you weren’t sure of and/or got wrong).

\_\_\_\_\_ Day 2 = Week 3 listen to the first Science lesson and take the quiz at the end, Week 4 listen to the second Science lesson and take the quiz at the end. (Approx. 30 minutes total)

\_\_\_\_\_ Day 3 = Week 5 listen to the third Science lesson and take the quiz at the end, Week 6 listen to the fourth Science lesson and take the quiz at the end. (Approx. 30 minutes total)

\_\_\_\_\_ Day 4 = Week 7 listen to the fifth Science lesson and take the quiz at the end, Week 8 listen to the sixth Science lesson and take the quiz at the end. (Approx. 30 minutes total)

\_\_\_\_\_ Day 5 = Week 9 listen to the seventh Science lesson and take the quiz at the end, Week 10 listen to the eighth Science lesson and take the quiz at the end. (Approx. 30 minutes total)

\_\_\_\_\_ Day 6 = Week 11 listen to the ninth Science lesson and take the quiz at the end, Week 12 listen to the tenth Science lesson (It’s vs. Its) and take the quiz at the end. (Approx. 30 minutes total)

\_\_\_\_\_ Day 7 = Week 13 listen to the eleventh Science lesson and take the quiz at the end, Week 14 listen to the twelfth Science lesson and take the quiz at the end. (Approx. 30 minutes total)

\_\_\_\_\_ Day 8 = Week 15 listen to the thirteenth Science lesson and take the quiz at the end, Week 16 listen to the fourteenth Science lesson and take the quiz at the end. (Approx. 30 minutes total)

\_\_\_\_\_ Day 9 = Complete Science Section from full-length ACT #1. Make sure you read the explanations of the ones you got wrong at the end of the section. (45 minutes to complete and 15 minutes to read explanations of incorrect answers.

\_\_\_\_\_ Day 10 = Review as needed

\_\_\_\_\_ Day 11 = Review as needed

\_\_\_\_\_ Day 12 = Review as needed

\_\_\_\_\_ Day 13 = Get a good night’s rest and eat a healthy breakfast in the morning. You’ve got this ☺