



SAT Retaking Guide: How to Maximize your Score

Learn whether or not retaking the SAT
is the right move for you.



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Retaking the SAT isn't fun but is sometimes the best move if you want to reflect your best efforts. Here's a step-by-step guide to help you prepare effectively and make the most out of your retake (and hopefully make this retake the last!):

1. Thoroughly Evaluate Your Previous Performance

- **Review Your Score Report:** Analyze your previous SAT score report to identify strengths and weaknesses. Focus on the sections or question types where you lost the most points.
- **Understand the Test Format:** Familiarize yourself with the SAT format, question types, and timing to pinpoint areas where you need improvement. Do another practice test and see how it compares to your most recent score!

2. Set Clear Goals

- **Define Your Target Score:** Set a realistic target score based on your college goals. Aim for a score that is within reach but still represents a significant improvement from your previous attempt. If you don't think you can improve, then a retake might not be the move.
- **Use the Acely Study Plan Feature:** Input your most recent score and your next test date to get a personalized study plan! Then, allocate specific times each week for focused SAT preparation.

3. Choose the Right Study Materials

- **Official SAT Prep Materials:** Use official SAT resources from the College Board and bluebook.
- **Online Resources:** Use Acely for practice questions tailored to your needs and a dashboard of your strengths and weaknesses!
- **Practice Tests:** Take full-length practice tests under timed conditions to simulate the test day experience and track your progress. Acely and Bluebook are great options!

4. Develop a Study Routine

- **Consistent Study Schedule:** Set aside regular, dedicated study time each week. Consistency is key to retaining information and improving your skills. For example, study from 4–5 PM every day or from 6–7:30 PM every other day. Ultimately, tailor your SAT studying towards your schedule so you can actually meet your goals.
- **Focused Sessions:** Break study sessions into focused topics. For example, spend one session on trigonometry and another on words in context.
- **Review and Practice:** Regularly review material and practice with sample questions. Focus on understanding concepts and strategies, not just memorizing answers.

5. Enhance Test-Taking Strategies

- **Time Management:** Practice pacing yourself during tests. Use a timer during practice tests to get used to the timing of each section.
- **Question Strategies:** Learn strategies for different types of questions. For example, use process of elimination for tricky questions or tackle easier questions first to build confidence.
- **Stress Management:** Develop techniques for managing test-day anxiety. Practice relaxation exercises and ensure you're comfortable with the test environment through practice tests. The best way to reduce stress on test day is to sleep well the night before and eat a good breakfast!

6. Seek Additional Help If Needed

- **Tutoring:** If you're struggling with specific areas, consider working with a tutor who specializes in SAT prep.
- **Study Groups:** Join or form a study group with peers who are also preparing for the SAT. Group study can provide support, motivation, and different perspectives!

7. Take Care of Your Health

- **Sleep:** Ensure you're getting enough rest, especially the night before the test. A well-rested mind performs better.
- **Nutrition:** Eat balanced meals to keep your energy levels up. Avoid heavy or sugary foods right before the test.
- **Exercise:** Regular physical activity can help reduce stress and improve concentration

8. Prepare Logistically

- **Test Registration:** Register for the SAT as early as possible to secure your preferred test date and location. Recently, it has been very difficult to get spots at some testing centers, so make sure not to wait too long!
- **Test Day Essentials:** Prepare everything you need for test day: admission ticket, valid ID, pencils, an eraser, and an acceptable calculator. Familiarize yourself with the test center location and rules. This will also help you reduce stress!

9. Review and Reflect

- **Analyze Practice Test Results:** After taking practice tests, review your answers thoroughly. Understand why you got questions wrong and how you can improve.
- **Adjust Your Study Plan:** Based on your progress and practice test results, adjust your study plan to focus on areas that still need improvement.

10. Stay Positive and Confident

- **Believe in Your Preparation:** Trust in the work you've put in and stay positive. Confidence can significantly impact your performance. Remember, you've already taken it before, so you know what you expect in terms of testing environment and formatting!
- **Visualize Success:** Use positive visualization techniques to imagine yourself succeeding on test day. This can boost your confidence and reduce test anxiety.

By following these steps, you can approach your SAT retake with a clear plan and renewed confidence. With dedicated preparation and strategic practice, you'll be well on your way to achieving your desired score. Good luck!