What is on the enhanced ACT (from September 2025)

Three required multiple-choice sections (English, mathematics, reading) make the composite, 1 to 36, as their average; science and writing are optional and reported separately (science with a STEM score). 131 questions and 125 minutes for the composite sections, against 175 and 175 on the legacy test.

Section	Questions (scored)	Minutes	Reporting categories (share)
English	50 (40 scored)	35	Production of Writing 38-43%; Knowledge of Language 18-23%; Conventions of Standard English 38-43%
Mathematics	45 (41 scored)	50	Preparing for Higher Math 80% (Number and Quantity 10-12%, Algebra 17-20%, Functions 17-20%, Geometry 17-20%, Statistics and Probability 12-15%); Integrating Essential Skills 20%
Reading	36 (27 scored)	40	Key Ideas and Details 44-52%; Craft and Structure 26-33%; Integration of Knowledge and Ideas 19-26%
Science (optional)	40 (34 scored)	40	Interpretation of Data 38-50%; Scientific Investigation 18-32%; Evaluation of Models, Inferences and Experimental Results 24-38%
Writing (optional)	1 essay	40	An argumentative essay on a given issue

What each section asks

[ ] English: passages with underlined parts; purpose and organisation, precise and concise wording, grammar, usage, punctuation and sentence structure.

[ ] Mathematics: Algebra 1 through Algebra 2 and some precalculus (numbers and exponents, equations and systems, functions and graphs, geometry and trigonometry, statistics and probability) plus multi-step 'essential skills' problems; four answer choices; calculator allowed throughout.

[ ] Reading: shorter passages in literary narrative, social science, humanities and natural science, including a pair; main ideas and details, word meaning and purpose, argument and evidence.

[ ] Science (optional): data, experiments and conflicting viewpoints; interpretation, investigation and evaluation, not content recall.

[ ] Writing (optional): one 40-minute essay on an issue with three perspectives.

From sciencewithshobha.com/blog/what-is-on-the-act-the-enhanced-act-sections-english-math-reading-and-optional-science-with-question-counts-and-times-the-reporting-categories-and-what-each-covers-the-composite-and-how-to-prepare/ · 1-on-1 online tutoring for US families, Grade 1 to AP, free 30-minute first class.

The composite, the test day, and the plan

The composite and the scores

[ ] Each section 1 to 36; the composite is the rounded average of English, math and reading (since September 2025); science and STEM scores reported if taken; writing on its own scale.

[ ] Superscores also use English, math and reading only (online from April 2025, all from September 2025).

[ ] ACT's FAQ: removing science changed average composites very little; colleges use the new composite as the old.

[ ] State and district school-day tests moved to the enhanced ACT in spring 2026, with science decided at contract level.

Test day (ACT's estimates)

Sections taken	Dismissed about
English, math, reading	11:00-11:15 am
Plus science or writing	12:00-12:15 pm
Plus both	12:45-1:00 pm

Eight weeks

Weeks	What to do
1	ACT's free guide: the full practice test, timed; sort wrong answers by reporting category.
2-5	English conventions rules; math by category (algebra and functions first); reading at 36 questions in 40 minutes, questions first.
6-7	Decide science and writing by the colleges; two timed practices, the last on a Saturday morning.
8	Review; nothing new in the final days.

My plan

Test date and format; science / writing chosen: _____

Practice 1 section scores and composite: _____

Weakest reporting categories: _____

Practice 2 and 3 dates: _____