

News You Can Use



August 2011

ACT provides this monthly newsletter to inform students and their parents about college and career planning. ACT is a not-for-profit organization that serves millions of people in schools, colleges, professional associations, businesses and government agencies with programs and services that help people achieve their education and career goals. Visit www.actstudent.org for more information and services.



College Planning ACT

Key Dates

August: Students can now sign up to take the Sept. 10 ACT[®] exam. The registration deadline is Aug. 12, and late registration, with an additional fee, will be accepted until August 26.

The ACT student video contest begins Aug. 1. The winning entries will be rewarded with thousands of dollars in scholarship money. Students looking for a way to express themselves creatively are encouraged to participate. Register online at www.actstudent.org/videocontest.

September: Students looking to take the ACT exam Oct. 22 must apply by Sept. 16 to avoid a late fee.

College planning checklists

There are specific things you can do during each year of high school to plan and prepare for college. Check out our website for college planning checklists to keep track of your progress and view important application deadlines. Here are some ideas to start thinking about.

Freshman year: Establish goals for each school year. Talk to your counselor about what you should be doing now to advance toward your plans for college and career.

Sophomore year: Start collecting information about the colleges and universities you're interested in. Find out whether your high school course selections match what most colleges require for admissions.

Junior year: Register for the ACT. You should be academically ready to take it by spring. If not, take the ACT test in June or fall of your senior year. If you choose to wait until your senior year you need to keep in mind college scholarship and application deadlines.

Senior year: As you prepare to apply to colleges and universities, ask for personal references from your teachers, school counselors or employers early in the year. Follow your school's procedure for requesting recommendations and always allow at least two weeks before application deadlines.

Seniors, take your ACT early in the school year

If you haven't already done so, register now to take the ACT. Be sure to plan ahead. Some early decision college application deadlines are set in November and December and you don't want to experience any last minute panicking hoping your results arrive to your desired college or university before the deadline. ACT score reports are usually mailed within 3 to 8 weeks after each test date. And if you take the Writing Test, your score report will be mailed only after all your scores are available, including Writing, usually 5 to 8 weeks after the test date.

Choose your high school classes wisely

Colleges care about which courses you're taking in high school. The courses you take in high school show colleges what kind of goals you set for yourself. Are you signing up for advanced classes, honors sections, or accelerated sequences? Are you choosing electives that really stretch your mind and help you develop new abilities? Or are you doing just enough to get by?

Colleges will be more impressed by respectable grades in challenging courses than by outstanding grades in easy ones.

It's vitally important your high school course selections match what most colleges expect you to know. For example, many colleges require two to four years of foreign language study. Of course, each college and university may have different high school course requirements. Be sure to check with the colleges you're interested in to see what they recommend or require.

Helping you find your way as early as eighth grade

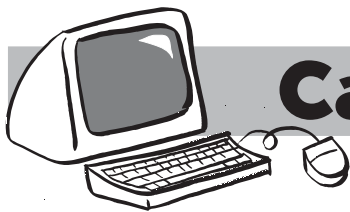
If you're still in the process of discovering which schools or fields of study are right for you, ACT offers a variety of programs that can help.

For instance, EXPLORE[®] is designed to help eighth and ninth graders explore a broad range of options for their future. It prepares students for their high school coursework as well as life after graduation by highlighting areas of strength and those that need work. EXPLORE can also give you an idea of which career fields might be a good fit.

ACT also offers PLAN[®] which helps 10th graders build a solid foundation for future academic and career success. It's a resource that helps students measure their current academic development, explore career and training options, and make plans for the remaining years of high school while looking ahead to graduation and beyond.

EXPLORE and PLAN can help all students—those who are college-bound as well as those who are likely to enter the workforce directly after high school. ACT research shows that all students need the same strong academic skills to succeed in both college and the work place. Each of these tools is designed to provide vital information that will prepare you for both.

Make sure to ask your guidance counselor if these programs are offered at your school.



Careers

ACT[®]

Using your skills to excel in your future career

Whether you plan to enter the workforce following college or immediately after high school it's important to start evaluating your skills and see how they relate to any given career.

ACT's WorkKeys[®] is the perfect place to begin. WorkKeys measures your work skills in areas such as applied mathematics, locating information, and reading for information. Skill levels are evaluated on a scale from one to seven, with seven being the highest. Once you get your scores, you can view the required WorkKeys score levels needed for particular jobs to see where you rank. If your school doesn't offer the tests, visit the ACT WorkKeys website at www.act.org/workkeys/careerseekers to find a testing location near you.

WorkKeys test scores also serve as the basis for the National Career Readiness Certificate. The certificate is an easily understood and universally valued workforce credential. By qualifying for one of four certification levels—platinum, gold, silver, or bronze—you demonstrate your initiative and confirm your skill readiness for potential employers and possible college internships.

Find out more about the National Career Readiness Certificate by visiting act.org/certificate.



Check It Out

ACT[®]

ACT video contest

ACT's first ever video contest is calling on students to tell their friends why they should take the ACT. Winning entries could win thousands of dollars in scholarship money.

The contest encourages students to think creatively as they make plans to attend college. Participants must be U.S. high school students who plan to apply for admission to a U.S. two-year or four-year institution in 2012 or 2013.

The top 10 videos will appear on the ACT student website where students from across the country will have the chance to vote on their favorites. The student with the winning video will receive a \$5,000 scholarship to the college of his or her choice and the winning video will be featured on the ACT website. Second- and third-place winners will receive \$2,500 and \$1,000 scholarships, while others finishing in the top 10 will receive \$500 scholarships.

Winners will be selected based on creativity, visual appeal and overall impact. Important contest dates and deadlines:

- **Submissions:** Aug. 1 – Sept. 11, 2011
- **Online Voting:** Sept. 26 – Oct. 9, 2011
- **Winners Announced:** Oct. 10, 2011

For more information, visit actstudent.org/videocontest.

ACT on social media

Did you know that if Facebook were a country it would be the third largest in the world, and that more than 100 million Tweets are sent each and everyday? ACT is becoming more active in this unique new world of social media. You can find us by looking up **The ACT Test** on Facebook and **ACTStudent** on Twitter.

We discuss the Question of the Day, provide information about upcoming tests, answer your questions and share the ACT experience.



Test date reminder

The next national ACT test date is Sept. 10, 2011. The late registration period, with an additional fee, is Aug. 13-26, 2011. Register online today at actstudent.org.

Other test dates during the 2011–12 school year are: Oct. 22, 2011; Dec. 10, 2011; Feb. 11, 2012; April 14, 2012; and June 9, 2012. Registration deadlines for these dates are about five weeks before the test date.

An optional Writing Test is available in addition to the multiple-choice achievement test. Go to actstudent.org/writing to learn more about the Writing Test, including the colleges that require it.

The ACT student website can help with test prep, including many free tools. Sample questions are available, along with *Preparing for the ACT*, a booklet with a complete practice test, scoring key, writing prompt and sample essays. Plus, the ACT student website has test-day tips, a list of what to bring to the test location and approved calculators for use on the Math test.

Want more? Sign up for ACT Online Prep™, the only test prep program developed exclusively by ACT test development professionals. At only \$19.95 for a year's use, it's a great tool.

For all your questions about the ACT test, visit actstudent.org.