

SAT Tricks

1. If you can eliminate one or more choices as incorrect, you should make an educated guess...otherwise, leave it blank. You will be penalized $\frac{1}{4}$ of a point for a wrong answer; however, no points are deducted for questions left blank. (*The only exception is with the math grid-in questions. These are NOT multiple choice and there is no penalty for a wrong answer).
2. Before the exam, read the directions carefully on practice tests in order to save yourself some time on the actual exam.
3. Review basic math formulas before the exam.
4. Know how to use process of elimination. You may not know which answer is right, but you probably know a few are definitely wrong. Draw a line through any answer you know to be wrong. Never waste time reading it again.
5. Know that the questions within a section are statistically more difficult as you progress through the section. Most students miss the last questions- so know why the answer you choose is correct.
6. Know which questions are best for you by doing practice tests. You might want to begin with answering those on the actual test rather than start at the beginning of each section.
7. Spend time on the questions that you have the best chance of getting right.
8. Keep track of time during the test. Develop a habit of checking your time throughout the test so that you know when you are one-quarter of the way through, halfway through, and when you have five minutes left.
9. Remember that all questions are worth the same amount of points.
10. Don't ponder over alternatives on the first pass through a section. Answer the questions you are sure of first; mark the ones you are unsure of and go back and try to tackle them.
11. With the **Essay Section**, depth is key! You must make sure that you develop your ideas thoroughly if you want to score well. Spend two or three sentences explaining the example, use three or four sentences to connect the example to your position, and then move onto the next paragraph.
12. On the **Math Section**, if it's a really hard question and the answer seems too easy to be true, it probably is. Anytime you see a variable in the answer choice, PLUG IN for that variable.
13. On the **Reading Section**, use this strategy for sentence completion: cover the answers, put your own word in the blank, compare your word to the answer choices, and then select the one that is the closest match.
14. Introductory and transitional words, such as "in addition", "consequently", and "in contrast", can be the key to figuring out the logic of a sentence because they tell you how the parts of the sentence relate to one another.
15. With **Reading Passages**, always read the 'blurb' first; it tells you what the whole passage is about. Read the entire passage before reading the questions (but don't read too specifically; just skim it to get the GIST... you'll read specifically when you're looking for answers to the questions).The questions aren't in any specific order of difficulty. Some question types are easier than others; do those first.