



**PSAT™ 8/9**

**2024**

**PSAT™ 8/9**

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# Understanding Scores

**FOR STUDENTS AND FAMILIES**



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# PSAT 8/9

## Score Resources

Congratulations to your student for taking the PSAT 8/9 at their school. Included is information about scores that may be helpful for students and their families.

### What's Included

This document delves deeper into the meaning of your student's scores, including what the assessment measures, how it is scored, and how students and their families can use the data to monitor their progress.

The document also provides:

- Information about estimating how much a score may change from the PSAT™ 8/9 to the PSAT™ 10 and PSAT/NMSQT®.
- A sample PDF score report walk-through so you can interpret your student's score reports.


### Related Resources

Visit our **PSAT 8/9 Score Information** page at [satsuite.collegeboard.org/psat-8-9/scores](https://satsuite.collegeboard.org/psat-8-9/scores) to find information about:

- Score release dates
- Managing access to online scores
- Resources for online score reports
- Downloadable Understanding Scores for Students and Families documents in English and Spanish

### CONTACTS FOR STUDENTS AND PARENTS

 [psathelp@info.collegeboard.org](mailto:psathelp@info.collegeboard.org)

 U.S.: 866-433-7728

INTERNATIONAL: +1-212-713-8105

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# The PSAT 8/9 and the SAT Suite of Assessments

## The SAT Suite of Assessments

The SAT® Suite of Assessments is an integrated system of tests that includes the SAT (for students in grades 11 and 12), the PSAT/NMSQT and the PSAT 10 (for grades 10 and 11), and the PSAT 8/9 (for grades 8 and 9).

The tests measure the same skills and knowledge in grade-appropriate ways. They work together to show college readiness over time so educators, students, and parents can monitor student progress. Their content reflects the kind of meaningful, engaging, and challenging work that students find in middle school and high school courses taught today.

## Going Digital

While the transition to digital brings a number of student- and educator-friendly changes, many important features of the SAT Suite have stayed the same. The SAT Suite continues to measure the knowledge and skills that students are learning in school and that matter most for college and career readiness. The digital SAT Suite is easier to take, easier to give, more secure, and more relevant. We haven't simply created a digital version of the current paper and pencil tests—we're taking full advantage of what digital testing makes possible.

This Understanding Scores brochure includes information about how to interpret and use scores on the PSAT 8/9.

The PSAT 8/9 that students take in 2024 will be delivered digitally. It includes the following sections:

### READING AND WRITING

The Reading and Writing section measures comprehension and reasoning skills and focuses on close reading of passages in a wide array of subject areas. It also measures a range of skills, including command of evidence, expression of ideas, and the use of standard English conventions in grammar and punctuation.

### MATH

This section includes multiple-choice and student-produced response questions, and students are permitted to use a calculator on all math questions. The Math section assesses skills in algebra, problem solving and data analysis, manipulation of complex equations, geometry, and trigonometry.

## How the PSAT 8/9 Is Scored

All test questions are first scored as correct or incorrect. There is no penalty for guessing. The difficulty level and other qualities of each question (such as how well it differentiates skill level or how easy it is to guess on a question) as well as whether the student got the question right or wrong are taken into account when calculating a student's score. This score is then converted to the reported scaled score of 120–720 on each section. Every test conforms to a standardized specification of question types and qualities, so all students have equitable opportunity to demonstrate their strengths.

## How the Digital PSAT 8/9 is Organized

The digital SAT Suite uses multistage adaptive testing (MST). Relying on MST means we can fairly and accurately measure the same things with a shorter, more secure test while preserving test reliability. Both the Reading and Writing and the Math sections are divided into two equal length and separately timed stages, each composed of a module of questions. The first module contains a mix of easy, medium, and hard questions. Based on how a student performs on the first module, the second module of questions will either be more difficult or less difficult.

By adapting to a student's performance level, the responsive test will provide students with a more efficient assessment of their academic strengths.

# PSAT 8/9 Scores

## Total Scores

The total score is the sum of the two section scores; its range is 240–1440.

## Section Scores

Students receive scores in the range of 120–720 for each of two sections.

- The Reading and Writing section
- The Math section

## Accessing Official Student Scores

Your student's school has access to a downloadable PDF called "Your Score Report" for every PSAT 8/9 test taker. Students can get this score report from their school and review it with their families and with educators at their school. As always, students age 13 and older may use a personal College Board student account to view their scores and additional insights online.

## Information About Scores

In the official score report PDF, the student can view the three scores available in a digital PSAT 8/9—total score, Reading and Writing section score, and Math section score. For each score, the official score report PDF includes:

- The range of possible scores: 240–1440 for total score, and 120–720 for section scores.
- The All Tester Percentile (formally called the "User Percentile") of each score. For example, if a student's score is in the 70th percentile, 70% of a comparison group achieved scores at or below that student's score.

**All Tester Percentiles** are based on the actual scores of the past 3 cohorts of students who took the PSAT 8/9 in 8th or 9th grade, for tests completed anywhere in the world. Students in 8th grade are provided the 8th-grade percentile, and students in 9th grade are provided the 9th-grade percentile. Students testing outside of these grades are provided the nearest percentile to their grade (i.e. a 7th grader is provided the 8th-grade percentile).

## Score Ranges

A student's ability is better represented by score ranges than points. Score ranges are derived from the standard error of measurement and show how much a student's scores would likely vary if they took a different administration of the test under identical conditions.

From recent administrations of the PSAT 8/9, these ranges are approximately:

- Total:  $\pm 40$  points
- Reading and Writing:  $\pm 20$  points
- Math:  $\pm 30$  points

## Information About Knowledge and Skills

Students can view a graphic showing their performance on each of the 8 content areas measured on the PSAT 8/9.

- There are 4 content areas in Reading and Writing, and 4 in Math.
- In each content area, students can view:
  - ♦ The approximate number of questions in the content area and what percentage of the section that represents (e.g., 12–14 questions would be about 26% of the Reading and Writing section).
  - ♦ A visual indication of how the student performed in each content area.
- Students can use this section to identify content areas they may want to focus on to practice and improve.

## Additional Support

The last section of the score report PDF focuses on next steps the student can take after reviewing their scores. A QR code or link will provide them more information on tools and services related to these next steps, which include reviewing the additional insights on their scores, Official Digital SAT Prep on Khan Academy®, and college and career exploration. The score report now includes a Career Insights Snapshot, a list of growing careers in your state that need skills like yours. These careers are examples, not recommendations, and can inspire career exploration earlier in high school. See the score report case study on page 7 for more information.

# Score Scales and Score Changes

## Using PSAT 8/9 Scores to Project PSAT/NMSQT or PSAT 10 Scores

The SAT Suite—from the PSAT 8/9 through the SAT—uses a common score scale for the total and section scores. The ranges reported for each assessment reflect grade-level appropriateness within the common score scale. Thus, while the total range for the SAT is 400–1600, the total range for the PSAT 8/9 is 240–1440.

This common score scale means that a student who took the PSAT 8/9 and received a Math section score of 500 would be expected to also get a 500 on the SAT, the PSAT/NMSQT, or the PSAT 10 if they had taken any of those tests on that same day; a score of 500 represents the same level of academic achievement on all four assessments.

This also means that student growth across the SAT Suite is easy to determine. If a student takes the PSAT 8/9 this year and receives a 500 Math section score, then takes the PSAT/NMSQT or the PSAT 10 next year and earns a 550 Math section score, that student has shown a growth of 50 points, which likely resulted from hard work both in and out of school.

## Differences Between Scores on Digital and Paper and Pencil PSAT 8/9

The digital PSAT 8/9 and paper and pencil PSAT 8/9 measure similar, but not identical, content, so a score on the paper and pencil test is not a perfect predictor of how a student would perform on the digital test (and vice versa).

College Board conducted two concordance studies in the spring and fall of 2022 to establish the direct relationship between paper-based and digital SAT scores. These studies' results support the hypothesis of a direct one-to-one relationship between the two versions of the assessment. In other words, the scores on the two versions of the SAT are comparable, and scores from both tests can be fairly evaluated side by side without a concordance table.

Note that this study process only concorded the two versions of the SAT; concordance between the two versions of the PSAT-related assessments will occur subsequently and may require conversion tables.

The total scores and section scores have been vertically scaled to allow the accurate measurement of growth from test to test. Students should focus on the section scores if they are curious about the growth they can expect to see in their scores over the next year. Each score report PDF provides a set of projected score ranges for students that reflect typical growth. Of course, a student's individual growth will be shaped by the courses taken and by the practice the student undertakes between assessments.

Students who wish to improve their performance on the SAT Suite should follow these guidelines:

- Develop academic skills through challenging coursework.
- Read extensively and develop strong writing skills.
- Engage in deliberate practice in the 4 math areas that are emphasized the most in the assessments.
- Take full-length practice tests in the digital testing app, Bluebook™, review results in My Practice, and use Official Digital SAT Prep on Khan Academy for free, personalized practice of the skills they need to improve. To learn more, go to [satsuite.collegeboard.org/psat-8-9/preparing](https://satsuite.collegeboard.org/psat-8-9/preparing).

# Benchmarks

## PSAT 8/9 Grade-Level Benchmarks

The SAT Suite offers grade-level benchmarks that can be used to gauge whether students are on track for becoming college ready each year in grades 8–12. Grade-level benchmarks represent the section scores on each assessment that students should meet or exceed to be considered on track to be college ready.

### RECOMMENDED USES

Families can compare their students' scores to the grade-level benchmarks above to help them:

- Understand their unique path to success in college and career readiness.
- Identify areas where they may need extra support while there is still time for improvement.
- Consider their readiness for more challenging coursework.

Educators know that grade-level benchmarks shouldn't be used to assign academic tracks, to discourage students from pursuing college, or to keep students from participating in challenging courses. Rather, the benchmarks are intended to help **all** students better prepare for life after high school.

Students and families can review the student's scores together to develop an understanding of what those scores mean. Here's how:

### TALK ABOUT COLLEGE AND CAREER READINESS

For each section, the online score report, available via the K–12 score reporting and student portals, includes an indicator that shows whether the student's score meets the grade-level benchmark. These benchmarks allow students and their teachers to understand how students are progressing toward college and career readiness.

- If your student is meeting the benchmark for a section, remind them to continue to take rigorous courses and work hard to stay on track for college success.
- If your student is not meeting the benchmark for a section, work with their teacher to connect them to classroom work that is focused on areas that need improvement.
- Help your student think of ways to develop each of the skills they have identified for focus and improvement. Khan Academy can help supplement this work.
- Use the career examples to talk about career interests and options with your students.

For further guidance on interpreting score reports, visit [satsuite.collegeboard.org/psat-8-9/scores](https://satsuite.collegeboard.org/psat-8-9/scores).

## What the Benchmarks Mean

The College and Career Readiness Benchmarks for the current SAT predict a 75% likelihood of achieving a C or higher in related first semester, credit-bearing college courses. The benchmarks are set at the section level, so there is a benchmark for Reading and Writing and a benchmark for Math. Below are the PSAT 8/9 benchmarks for 8th and 9th grade:

PSAT 8/9 Grade-Level Benchmarks		
	Reading and Writing	Math
<b>8th Grade PSAT 8/9</b>	390	430
<b>9th Grade PSAT 8/9</b>	410	450

Score reports on the K–12 score reporting portal for the PSAT/NMSQT, PSAT 10, and PSAT 8/9 include grade-level benchmarks based on how students grow from year to year toward the SAT benchmarks.

Through the online K–12 score reporting portal accessed by the school, the PSAT 8/9 score reports separate benchmarks for eighth and ninth graders to help their teachers understand students' level of readiness for college and career training programs. Equipped with this information, teachers can address challenge areas for their students while there is still time for improvement. Teachers can also accelerate the progress of students who meet or exceed the benchmarks.


### HOW SCHOOLS MAY USE SCORES

Through our K–12 score reporting portal, educators can access the official downloadable score report PDF for printing and sharing with the student. Educators can also see additional interpretive insights about the student's results. The PDF, titled "Your Score Report" (sample shown on page 8) clearly summarizes a student's current achievement levels and encourages next steps to increase college and career readiness. Teachers can go over the official score report PDFs with students to help them understand what their scores mean. Reviewing their scores can also help students see their strengths, which can increase their confidence and show them content areas in which they can handle more advanced coursework.

# The PSAT 8/9 Score Report

## A Case Study: Sample PSAT 8/9 Score Report

Take a look at the sample score report below and on the next page. Use the corresponding information to help you interpret your student's PSAT 8/9 score report.



Name: **Nora Notetaker**  
 Grade: **9**  
 Test administration: **PSAT 8/9 Spring 2024**  
 Tested on: **Mar. 4, 2024**  
 Record Locator: **4561264**

### Your Score Report

#### PSAT 8/9 Scores

**TOTAL SCORE**

**1120** | 248-1460 | 75th\*

Score Range: 1080-1160  
Average Score (all test-takers): 1100

**SECTION SCORES**

**Reading and Writing**

**620** | 320-720 | 60th\*

Your Score Range: 600-640  
Average Score (all test-takers): 600

**Math**

**500** | 120-720 | 70th\*

Your Score Range: 470-530  
Average Score (all test-takers): 530

\* Percentiles represent the percent of 9th grade test takers from the past 3 years who scored the same as or below you.  
Score range: This is the range of scores you could possibly get if you took the PSAT 8/9 multiple times on different days.

#### Knowledge and Skills

View your performance across the 8 content domains measured on the PSAT 8/9.

**Reading and Writing**

Information and Ideas (26% of test section, 12-14 questions)

Craft and Structure (29% of test section, 13-15 questions)

Expression of Ideas (20% of test section, 9-12 questions)

Standard English Conventions (26% of test section, 11-15 questions)

**Math**

Algebra (42.5% of test section, 16-18 questions)

Advanced Math (20% of test section, 7-9 questions)

Problem Solving & Data Analysis (25% of test section, 9-11 questions)


Geometry & Trigonometry (12.5% of test section, 4-6 questions)

#### Career Insights Snapshot


Your skills are in demand! Consider exploring these growing careers in your state that need skills like yours. **These are examples, not recommendations,** to help jump-start your career exploration.

INTEREST AREA*	CAREER EXAMPLES	MEDIAN YEARLY INCOME IN MI	NUMBER OF JOBS   JOB GROWTH IN MI**	MOST COMMON EDUCATION LEVEL
Doers	Industrial Machinery Mechanics	\$59,000	25,600   +10%	Certificate
Persuaders	Wind Energy Operations Managers	\$63,000	24,300   +10%	Associate degree
Creators	Graphic Designers	\$46,000	8,900   +9%	Bachelor's degree
Helpers	Critical Care Nurses	\$77,000	107,000   +3%	Bachelor's degree
Thinkers	Mechanical Engineers	\$92,000	33,900   +3%	Bachelor's degree
Organizers	Treasurers and Financial Controllers	\$124,000	21,100   +12%	Bachelor's degree

\* For more information about career insights, including interest areas, visit [satsuite.org/whatsnext](https://satsuite.org/whatsnext).  
\*\*Number of reflects the expected number of new job openings in 2028. Percentage reflects the expected growth in new job openings between 2023 and 2028. Data source: Lightcast.io



**Don't see a career you're interested in?**  
**Learn more about almost 1,000 careers for free.**



[satsuite.org/whatsnext](https://satsuite.org/whatsnext)

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### What are Nora's scores?

Nora's Reading and Writing score is 620, and her Math score is 500, for a total score of 1120. By reviewing her performance on the content domains in each subject, Nora can see where her knowledge and skills are already strong and identify areas where she can improve.

### What are Nora's score percentiles?

Since Nora is in the ninth grade, the percentiles compare her scores with those of all ninth graders around the world who took the PSAT 8/9 in the last three years. Nora scored as well or better in Reading and Writing than 60% of a globally representative group of ninth-grade students. In Math, she scored as well or better than 70% of a globally representative group of ninth-grade students. Putting both scores together, Nora scored as well or better than 75% of students in her grade on the PSAT 8/9 as a whole.

Score Report

## What can Nora learn from this career snapshot?


Since she is based in the U.S., Nora's score report includes Career Insight examples — helpful information about growing careers in her state and that connect to her scores. Whether Nora sees a career she's curious about or not, the examples can spark her interest in learning more about what careers are out there and key information like median yearly income, expected growth rate for new job openings in her state over the next five years, and the most common education level for people in that career. While these might be careers worth watching in Nora's state, she can learn more about careers that reflect her interests at [satsuite.org/whatsnext](https://satsuite.org/whatsnext).

## How can Nora learn more about her scores?

If she's under age 13, Nora can talk to her school counselor to see her full score report and learn how to prepare for future assessments in the SAT Suite. If Nora is age 13 or older, she can also choose to visit [psat.org/myscore](https://psat.org/myscore) to personally find out this information.

## How can Nora measure her progress?

When she becomes a sophomore, Nora can take the PSAT/NMSQT or the PSAT 10 to measure the progress she's made since she took the PSAT 8/9. She can continue to take advantage of practice resources by visiting [sat.org/digital-practice](https://sat.org/digital-practice).



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Average Score (all test-takers): 1100

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[satsuite.org/whatsnext](https://satsuite.org/whatsnext)

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Score Report

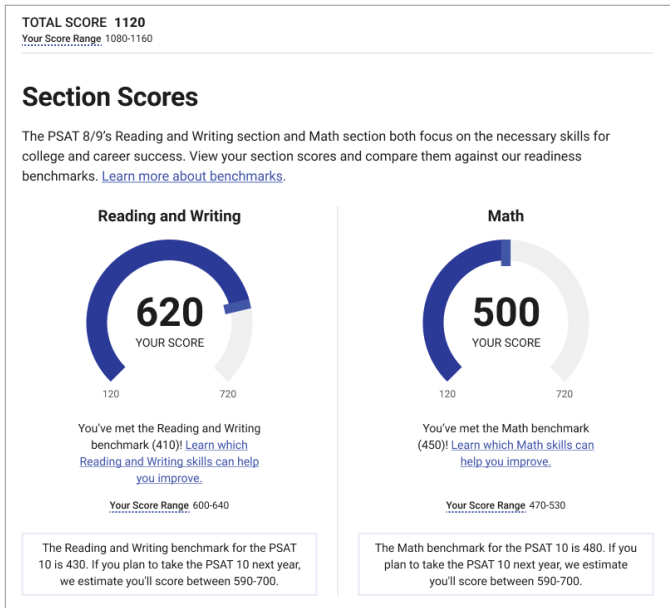
PSAT 8/9 Understanding Scores for Students and Families

7









Online score insights

## More About Knowledge and Skills

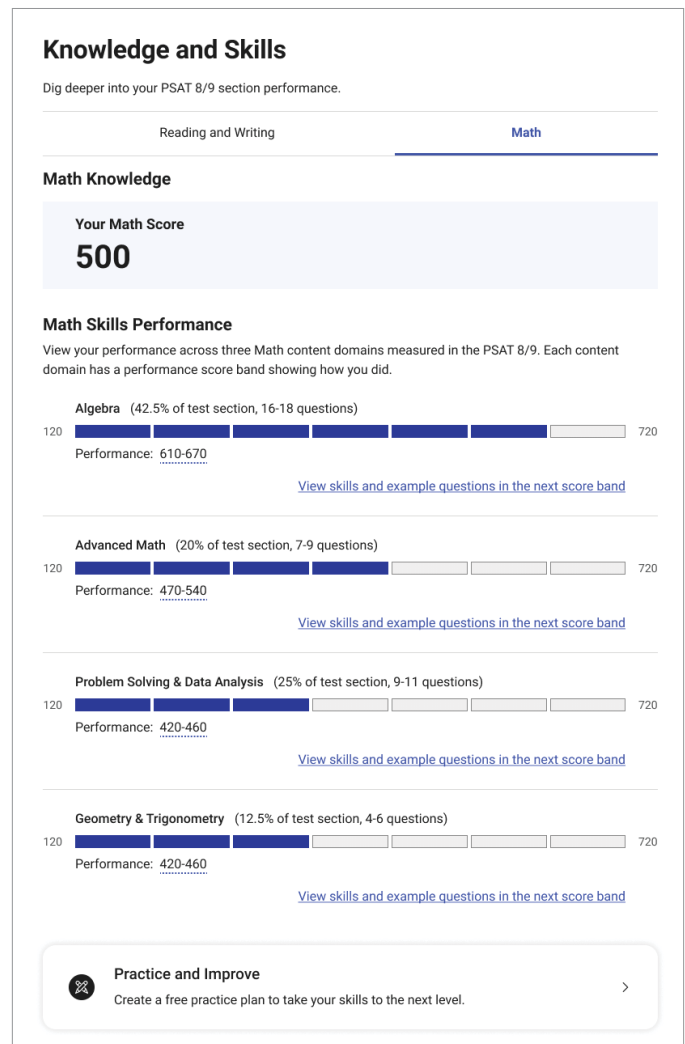
Based on our **Skills Insight™ tool**, we provide students with a deeper dive into the knowledge and skills measured by the PSAT 8/9. Students may view a breakdown of their knowledge and skills across 4 content areas in Reading and Writing and 4 content areas in Math.

- The online insights go further by helping students view their performance across 7 defined performance score bands to get a sense of how they did in each area.
- Students can:
  - ♦ Click **View Skills and Example Questions in Next Score Band** to access the Skills Insight tool and see skills and example questions that students in the next performance score band are typically able to demonstrate, as well as examples of the kinds of questions that these students are likely able to answer correctly.
  - ♦ From the next performance score band, they can navigate to any other performance score band in the Skills Insight tool, including their current performance score band.

## Section Benchmarks

Another set of insights students can view in the online scores portal are the section level readiness benchmarks. We will indicate if the student has met the section benchmark or not, providing links to resources to help them analyze what skills to focus on for improvement.

Additionally, we show students their score range and provide a link to information about how a score range more accurately reflects their level of knowledge and skills than a single score.



Online score insights

### Career Insights Snapshot

Your skills are in demand! Consider exploring these growing careers in your state that need skills like yours. **These are examples, not recommendations**, to help jumpstart your career exploration. Don't see a career you're interested in? Learn more about almost 1,000 careers for free on [bigfuture.org](https://bigfuture.org).

#### CAREER EXAMPLES

Industrial Machinery Mechanics	
Median Yearly Income in MI	\$59,000
Interest Area*	Doers
Number of Jobs/Job Growth in MI**	25,600 /+10%
Most Common Education Level	Certificate
<a href="#">See Career Details</a>	

Wind Energy Operations Managers	
Median Yearly Income in MI	\$63,000
Interest Area*	Persuaders
Number of Jobs/Job Growth in MI**	24,300 /+10%
Most Common Education Level	Associate degree
<a href="#">See Career Details</a>	

Data source: Lightcast.io

\* For more information about career insights, including interest areas, visit [bigfuture.org](https://bigfuture.org).

\*\* Number reflects the expected number of new job openings in 2028. Percentage reflects the expected growth in new job openings between 2023 and 2028.

[Explore Careers](#)


## Career Exploration

To expand on the information in their downloadable score report PDF, students can:

- View even more potential careers online at [bigfuture.org](https://bigfuture.org).
- Explore careers tailored to their interests with [Career Quiz](#).
- Find free resources to help them take the next steps down their career path.

Online score insights

### Your Future, Your Way



Need help with planning your life after high school? Our free, personalized tools can help.

- Explore up to 1,000 careers, and more
- Discover 4,000+ colleges in the U.S. and worldwide
- Search over \$4 billion in scholarship opportunities

[Explore BigFuture](#)

Online score insights

## Further Guidance

Students can view next steps with linked resources to do more with their score, including:

- Finding practice resources to improve their score.
- Learning more about the SAT Suite of Assessments.
- Planning for their future using their PSAT 8/9 score on BigFuture®.

## Next Steps for Students and Parents

View a video walk-through of the score report: [satsuite.collegeboard.org/psat-8-9/scores/understanding-scores/your-score-report-explained](https://satsuite.collegeboard.org/psat-8-9/scores/understanding-scores/your-score-report-explained)

Learn more about understanding and using scores: [satsuite.collegeboard.org/psat-8-9/scores](https://satsuite.collegeboard.org/psat-8-9/scores)

Connect to scholarships: [collegeboard.org/sat-suite-scholarships](https://collegeboard.org/sat-suite-scholarships)

Practice for the SAT: [sat.org/digital-practice](https://sat.org/digital-practice)

## About College Board

College Board reaches more than 7 million students a year, helping them navigate the path from high school to college and career. Our not-for-profit membership organization was founded more than 120 years ago. We pioneered programs like the SAT® and AP® to expand opportunities for students and help them develop the skills they need. Our BigFuture® program helps students plan for college, pay for college, and explore careers. Learn more at [cb.org](https://cb.org).

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