

8 Things To Do The Week Before The SAT

If you're nervous about taking the exam, use the following few tips to help get you prepared to ace the SAT.



1. Do a few practice questions each day this week.

Use the [College Board website](#) to find real SAT practice questions. There are a lot of free options on the site and it can be overwhelming. Don't try to work through hundreds of questions at a time. Carve out 30 minutes to focus on 3 math questions, 3 reading questions, and 3 grammar questions. This will help you feel comfortable and confident. Opt for quality review over quantity.

2. Exercise at least 30 minutes a day.

It might sound silly but exercising during the week can actually help you on test day. It will help you blow off stress, maintain your focus, and sleep more soundly. It also gives a nice little boost to your immune system so you can ward off any last minute bug that so many of my students seem to catch right before their [SAT test dates](#).

3. Eat an extra helping of veggies or fruit at each meal this week.

Similar to item #2, this tip can help you keep sickness at bay and boost your energy. It's important to do everything you can to feel your best on test day!

4. Go to bed earlier than usual this week.

The fact of the matter is that most of my students are running on very little sleep these days. Junior and senior year is tough, and all-nighters are not uncommon. The problem is that if you keep your usual habits and then try to rest up the night before the test, you'll have a hard time falling asleep. Try to adjust your bedtime to a slightly earlier time this week so that you won't have trouble falling asleep the night before the exam. An extra hour each night will do wonders!

5. On Friday, collect all of the items you'll need in one place.

The last thing you need the morning of your exam is to realize your printer has run out of ink and you can't print your admission ticket. Set out everything on the checklist below on Friday night so that you can grab it and go on Saturday morning.

You'll need the following on test day:

- Your SAT admission ticket
- An official photo ID
- 3 sharpened **non-mechanical** #2 pencils
- A good eraser
- Your calculator (with an extra set of batteries)
- A few healthy snacks (and maybe some dark chocolate to keep you going!)
- A bottle of water

To access your admission ticket and to see a list of approved calculators, visit [the College Board website](#).

6. Wake up 30 minutes early on test day.

We want to keep your stress level as low as possible on your **SAT date**. Save your energy for the exam. Wake up early to ensure that you have plenty of time to eat breakfast and get to your test site. If you've been resting up all week (see #4), an extra 30 minutes of sleep won't be as hard to forgo!

7. Eat a good breakfast the morning of the test.

This is *imperative*. I can't tell you how many times I meet with students post-practice test and I can tell by lower-than-average-scores that they didn't eat. If anything is amiss in the score, "Did you eat?" is always my first question. It might seem silly, but lack of food is often the culprit of lower-than-expected scores.

Your brain is an organ. It needs food to maintain focus. The SAT is a lot like a marathon so eat up! Scrambled eggs and oatmeal with a side of fresh fruit makes a great, filling start on test day. It will keep you powering through but won't weigh you down. Avoid breakfasts with too much fat or lots of refined sugar. The former will make you feel groggy; the latter will pep you up initially but cause you to crash mid-exam.

No matter how you prepared (or didn't), you're going to take this test. If you did a great job preparing, trust what you've learned. As I always say – **test taking techniques are not training wheels, they are the wheels. You won't go anywhere if you don't use them!** Trust what's helped you improve on your practice tests to get your higher score on test day.

If you didn't prepare for this test, don't get hung up on shoulda-coulda-wouldas. If you feel you can do a better job preparing, then you can do so after this exam. Do your very best with what you've got in this moment on this test day. That's all anyone can ask of you!

Good luck to you, and may higher scores be yours!
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