

Understanding Your PSAT/NMSQT Results

There are 4 major parts to the PSAT/NMSQT Score Report:

- Your Scores
- Your Skills
- Your Answers
- Next Steps

The score report shows how you performed on each of the three sections of the PSAT/NMSQT:

- Critical Reading
- Mathematics
- Writing Skills

Your Scores

PSAT/NMSQT scores are reported on a scale from 20 to 80. Below the score is a score range. Ranges show how much your scores might vary if you took the PSAT/NMSQT again before gaining new knowledge or skills. PSAT gives two-digit scores from 20 – 80 and SAT gives three digit scores from 200 – 800. To get a comparison on how you might do on the SAT, take your PSAT score and add an extra 0 to the end of each score. For example, if you scored 50 on the math test, that means you would have scored a 500 on the SAT. If your PSAT combined score was 150, your SAT combined score would have been 1,500.

How did I do compared to others? Percentiles help you compare your performance on the PSAT/NMSQT to the performance of all other juniors or sophomores who tested. For example, if you scored in the 55th percentile, you scored higher than 55 percent of students who took the test. It also means that 45 percent of students had a score equal to or higher than yours.

Another way to understand percentiles is to visualize 100 students lined up from the lowest (or first) percentile to the highest (or 99th) percentile. If you are in the 55th percentile, you would be the 55th student in line, scoring higher than 54 students and lower than 45.

Note: Juniors are compared to all juniors who took the test; sophomores and younger students are compared to all sophomores who took the test.

Below your scores, you'll find information about eligibility for scholarships available through the National Merit Scholarship Corporation. Each student who takes the PSAT/NMSQT has a *Selection Index*. The *Selection Index* is the sum of the Critical Reading, Math, and Writing Skills scores (CR+M+W).

If your *Selection Index* has an asterisk (*) next to it, this means you do not meet all the eligibility requirements for entrance into the competition. Typically, it is because you are not currently an 11th grade student. More than 1.5 million juniors enter this competition each year. About 50,000 qualify for recognition, and about 9,700 of these students receive an award. If your Selection Index places you among the 55,000 high scorers who qualify for program recognition, you will be notified next September.

Your Skills Section

The "Your Skills" section is a valuable part of your PSAT/NMSQT results, showing you a complete picture of how you performed on the different skills tested by the PSAT/NMSQT. Take a closer look to see where you did well and where you might want to improve.

The same skills are tested on the SAT. To get more practice before you take the actual SAT test, try the hundreds of practice questions available online at www.collegeboard.com/quickstart.

Review Your Answers Section

The middle section of the report is the “Review Your Answers” section. When you receive your results, you will also get your test book, the one you used when you took the test. Be sure to ask for your test book if you don’t have it.

Use your Test Book:

Using your actual test book will help you make the most of the “Review Your Answers” section, since you’ll be able to go back to questions you got wrong and, with the help of the explanations available on www.collegeboard.com/quickstart, figure out why. You can also look at the notes you made in your test book to see how you got to your answer.

Four Columns: The Critical Reading, Mathematics, and Writing Skills sections of your score report all contain the following information.

- The first column displays the number of each question as it appeared in the test booklet.
- The second column displays the correct answer to each question.
- In the third column you will see the answers that you chose:

-a checkmark means CORRECT

-O means OMITTED

-an alphanumeric letter shows the incorrect answer you chose

- In the fourth column we see the letters E, M, or H, which identify the level of difficulty of each question.

-E means EASY questions

-M means MEDIUM difficulty

-H means HARD (the most difficult questions on the test)

- Remember: This test is for high school juniors who are preparing for college, so it’s possible that an E or easy question might seem difficult to younger students.
- Review Your Answers: Mathematics Student-Produced Responses
- Not all the math questions on the PSAT/NMSQT are multiple-choice. The Math section contains Multiple-Choice and Student Produced Response Questions, or “grid-ins”. Here, you solved problems and then recorded answers on a grid.
- Only answers gridded in the ovals are scored. You receive no credit for answers, even correct ones, written in boxes and not gridded or gridded incorrectly.

What’s next?

Use the access code on your report to log in to My College QuickStart, a personalized college and career planning kit. There you can:

- Search for colleges
- Get a personalized SAT study plan
- Take a personality test to find majors and careers that fit you

www.collegeboard.com/quickstart