

X-Guide

PSAT Tricks and Tips

XAVIER



Prepare for the PSAT and hone your studying skills with our helpful tricks and tips.

What is the PSAT

The PSAT or Preliminary Scholastic Aptitude Test (try saying that five times fast) is a standardized test created to prepare you for the actual SAT or ACT. This exam also determines your eligibility for National Merit Scholarships.

Study tips

With this in mind, it's important to be prepared when taking the PSAT. Here are a few tips while you study:

- + **Make flash cards**
This can be helpful when preparing for the reading and writing portions of the exam. You can use flash cards to practice new vocabulary.
- + **Practice math problems with and without a calculator**
The PSAT math section will test your ability to solve problems with and without a calculator. Practice solving a few problems without your calculator to better prepare for the section that will not permit the use of a calculator.
- + **Take practice tests**
There are multiple websites online that offer free practice questions for the PSAT. You can also utilize websites that offer practice test questions for the actual SAT.
- + **Research different test-taking strategies**
In the section below, you will find some of our favorite test-taking strategies—but there may be others that work better for you! Don't be afraid to do some research on your own to see what strategies work best for you.
- + **Take care of your mental and physical health**
Big tests can often become stressors. The PSAT is meant to help you by giving you the opportunity to better prepare for the SAT or ACT. In the weeks leading up to the test, get plenty of sleep, eat well-balanced meals, and take care of yourself.

Day-of tips

- + **Go to sleep at a reasonable time**
Don't stay up late for a last-minute cram session the night before. Get some sleep so you're well-rested.
- + **Eat breakfast**
One of the biggest mistakes often made is going to the test on an empty stomach. Try to eat something before the PSAT to boost mental stimulation—it's called brain food for a reason!
- + **Wear something comfortable**
Don't worry about dressing up or looking nice – comfort is key on test day. It's also a good idea to wear layers in case the room is too cold or too hot.
- + **Give yourself enough time in the morning**
Make sure you have plenty of time to get to your testing location and get organized. You'll be a little less nervous if you aren't rushing in the morning.
- + **Breathe**
It's okay to be nervous or anxious! You've got this, just breathe.

During the test

- + **Read each question all the way through**
Make sure to read each question completely so you understand what it is asking. If you skim questions or don't read the entire prompt, you may miss important information.
- + **Answer all of the questions you already know**
Don't get stuck on a problem that you aren't sure how to answer. Work your way through all of the questions you already know then circle back to the harder questions that may require more time.
- + **Use the process of elimination**
If you aren't sure of an answer to a question, try to eliminate multiple choice options you know are not the answer.
- + **Use all of the allotted time**
Even if you complete a section before time is up, go back and check your answers.
- + **Breathe again**
Don't panic. You've studied and you're ready for this!

Now that you're ready for the PSAT, get to know a little more about Xavier by clicking the links below:

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Office of Admission

513-745-3301

XUadmit@xavier.edu

3800 Victory Parkway

Cincinnati, Ohio 45207-5131

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