A shorter, more flexible ACT is here

The Enhanced ACT gives students more time per question, fewer questions overall, and a choice about whether to include Science.

The Enhanced ACT at a glance

Core sections
English, math and reading are taken by every student.

Science
Now optional on the national test.

Format
Take it online or on paper on national test days.

Scores
Designed to be comparable to the previous test.

ACT®

By the numbers

125

minutes for the core test, down from 195 (excluding writing and science)

3

required sections: English, math and reading

1

optional Science section students can add on

ACT®

What it means for you

STUDENTS

More time to show what you know

Shorter passages and fewer questions mean less fatigue. Ask your counselor whether adding Science fits your goals.

EDUCATORS

Prepare for the new format

Statewide testing moved to the enhanced ACT in spring 2026. Update prep so students practice the format they'll see.

WORKFORCE

Readiness beyond the classroom

ACT WorkKeys and the National Career Readiness Certificate help people show foundational workplace skills.

How we got here

Feb 2024

Digital ACT available to school-day and international testers.

Jul 2024

ACT CEO Janet Godwin announces the planned test enhancements.

Apr 2025

Enhancements begin on the ACT national online test.

Spring 2026

Enhanced ACT rolls out to statewide and district testing.

Ready to plan your next step?

Find test dates, registration deadlines, free prep resources and the latest guidance on the official ACT website.

Visit act.org

ACT®