

College Testing Accommodations

TAKING THE ACT OR SAT

Thinking about your future career is exciting and stressful. Many careers today require a college degree in order to be employed. One of the first steps to applying to college is taking a college entrance exam; either the SAT or ACT is typically required. What should you consider before applying to take a college entrance exam? Some considerations are listed below. Your high school counselor may help you with the application process.

Considerations

- Complete and submit your application to take the entrance exam at least 3 months prior to your testing date. Ask your guidance counselor how to apply.
- Consider using accommodations for your college admissions tests ([Link to ACT/SAT Accommodations resources/page](#) see below). Check timelines for the application - requests for accommodations increases the amount of time for the application process to be finalized.
- Go to the website for the specific college exam you are going to take and review the procedures for requesting accommodations.
- Complete all of the required documentation for your hearing loss prior to completing your application to take the test and requesting the accommodations. Documentation generally includes evidence of your deafness or hearing loss (usually an audiogram), the functional effects of your deafness or hearing loss, and the specific accommodations being requested. This documentation must be provided by qualified professionals as stipulated in the documentation procedures for the test you are applying to take.
- Consider taking the exam your junior year. If you do not do well you have time to retake the SAT/ACT before you apply to a university.
- Arrive at the testing site early. Examine the room set up, acoustics in the room, lighting, furniture. You want to make sure that you sit in a place where you have minimal distractions and visual access to the test facilitator. If you are using a sign language interpreter, a separate location may be required. Follow the instructions for the testing company on use of sign language interpreters.
- Consider taking the PSAT (practice) or ACT. Go online and look at sample questions to familiarize yourself with the test format.

- If your hearing aids or cochlear implant have a noise reduction program, you might want to consider changing to that program in order increase your concentration on the test.
- Change your hearing aid batteries before the test. Most testing sites do not allow you access to your purse/backpack during the test. It is better to be safe than sorry!
- Wear a watch and keep track of how much time you have for each section; it may be difficult to hear the test facilitator.
- If you are using accommodations, make sure they are in place before the testing begins.
- Get a good night sleep!! Eat a healthy breakfast!! Take a deep breath!! Do your best...You are one step closer to your college education!

Accommodations

Students with documented disabilities including hearing loss are eligible for accommodations for the SAT or ACT. Each test company is responsible for ensuring appropriate accommodations on its tests for persons with disabilities. Because each student's need for accommodations is individual, accommodations among students cannot be compared. The laws that protect the rights of students with disabilities ensure that a determination is based on each student's individual needs. Accommodations are to 'level the playing field' so that students with disabilities have the same opportunities as students who do not have a disability to demonstrate on tests what they have learned and how they can use what they have learned.

Accommodations for eligible students may include (but are not limited to):

- Extended time
- Reader
- Writer
- Braille
- Large print
- Frequent breaks
- Preferential seating
- Private room
- Alternate lighting
- Multiple days

For a list of accommodations provided to eligible students on the SAT and ACT, check the following Web sites:

- www.collegeboard.org
- www.actstudent.org

Accommodations for Students who are Deaf or Hard of Hearing

While most college entrance exam have no listening component, many students who are deaf or hard of hearing need assistance for the presentation of test directions, which are usually given orally prior to the beginning of the test. It is exam practice to provide a copy of written directions, on request, to students with documented hearing impairments. Where written directions would not effectively accommodate a student's needs for the test, additional testing accommodations, including, if appropriate, a sign language interpreter, will be provided at no additional cost to the student.

The college exam officials are aware that some students who are deaf or hard of hearing may prefer to use a sign language interpreter, even where a written copy of the directions would effectively accommodate their needs. In these situations, students may bring their own sign language interpreter, at their own expense. All testing accommodations, including requests for written test directions and requests for interpreters, must be submitted well in advance of the deadline for the administration date of the specific test of interest.

Adapted from College Board Inspiring Minds.

<http://www.collegeboard.com/ssd/student/accom.html>