



## **ACT PREP GUIDE ASAP - The Ultimate Quick-Study Guide**

### **The weakness targeting strategy**

This approach lets you allocate the time you have between now and test day to target your weak areas and build your skills where you need to most.

**Step 1:** List the number of days you have until your test day: \_\_\_\_\_ days

**Step 2:** Take off a day so you can learn what you need to know about the ACT, including registration, scoring, and getting comfortable with the general format of each test section.

**Step 3:** Take 1 day to find a quiet space and attack a diagnostic test. These tests can take about 3.5 hours to complete, so plan accordingly. As you take the test, take note of any questions that were difficult for you to answer, even if you get them right.

When you finish it, take the rest of your study time for the day to review the detailed explanations of the questions you answered incorrectly and the questions that gave you the most trouble.

**Step 4:** Assess your strengths and weaknesses. Use your diagnostic test results to rank each test sections based on your strengths and weaknesses in each test subject.

We recommend you use your class grades as a guide. Are you science master?  
Have you always gotten great grades in English classes but struggled in math?

Using your academic history as a guide, rank each test sections from 1 (weakest) to 5 (strongest).

**English Test Section:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Mathematics Test Section:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Reading Test Section:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Science Test Section:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Writing Test Section (*Optional*):** \_\_\_\_\_

Remember that your skills levels in each subject may change as you study. This is a good thing. It shows that your studying is paying off. Make sure you adjust your rank in each subject at least once a month or more as needed. You should always have a focus on your weakest area.

**Step 5:** Build your study plan: Divide the number of days/hours you have to prepare among the test sections, splitting your time (days or hours) based on your rankings. You can divide your time however you see fit, as long as you're dedicating the majority of your time to improving your weak spots.

Here's an example of how to do this:

- 30% of your time for the section ranked as 1
- 25% of your time for the section ranked as 2
- 20% of your time for the section ranked as 3
- 15% of your time for the section ranked as 4
- 10% of your time for the section ranked as 5

Once you're comfortable with your initial study plan, fill in your initial study time for each section. To really improve your score, you'll need to be studying for at

least 2-3 hours a day if the test is still months away (thankfully there are 21-22 hours left to do other stuff). But if test day is coming fast, you may need to increase this time.

- English Test Section:** \_\_\_\_\_
- Mathematics Test Section:** \_\_\_\_\_
- Reading Test Section:** \_\_\_\_\_
- Science Test Section:** \_\_\_\_\_
- Writing Test Section (*Optional*):** \_\_\_\_\_

Now, decide how you want to divide your time for each section between *topic review* and *question practice*. Is your math knowledge strong but you aren't a great test-taker and need more question practice? Is the reverse true? For each test section, decide how you want to break up the time you allotted between topic review and question practice.

**English Test Section**

- Topic review: \_\_\_\_\_
- Question practice: \_\_\_\_\_

**Mathematics Test Section**

- Topic review: \_\_\_\_\_
- Question practice: \_\_\_\_\_

**Reading Test Section**

- Topic review: \_\_\_\_\_
- Question practice: \_\_\_\_\_

**Science Test Section**

- Topic review: \_\_\_\_\_
- Question practice: \_\_\_\_\_

**Writing Test Section (*Optional*)**

- Topic review: \_\_\_\_\_
- Question practice: \_\_\_\_\_

**Step 6:** Structure your study calendar. Now that you know the number of days you have to devote to topic review and question practice for each test section of the ACT, take some time to fill in a study calendar so you'll know exactly what preparation you'll be tackling each day between now and test day.

Structure your calendar to suit your study style. Devote each day to a single test section or divide your days so you can work on a section for a set number of hours and switch things up. Whatever keeps you interested, focused, and on track!

Make an actual calendar with this that you can look at. Pick specific times each day where you can just sit quietly and focus on studying. Successful people make dedicated time for the things that matter most, it is a good idea to do the same.

Write in time on your calendar for fun too. Letting yourself feel like you can still enjoy the summer is going to help keep you relaxed and get the most out of your study time.

### **PRO - TIP**

- Using a spaced-repetition technique will help you retain what you study for longer and keep your study routine more interesting. The goal should be spend some time studying each subject each week. Keeps things fresh.
- Make sure you do a quick review of what you studied last time when coming back to a subject, even 10 minutes will help. This helps your brain form stronger connections of the information so it will be easier for you to remember come test day.