

OXBRIDGE MATH TUTORS

PARENT EDITION

VOLUME 2 · THE DEEP-DIVE COMPANION

# Digital SAT Maths

---

A decision path, a policy tracker,  
in-test strategy, Desmos tips  
and a practice plan.

Facts last checked: October 2026

Online Tutoring · Dubai · Sharjah · Abu Dhabi · Muscat · London

## START HERE

### If You Read Only One Page

The Digital SAT is a test of speed, strategy and a narrow set of topics, not of how good a student is at school maths. Capable students underperform because of timing and tool use far more often than because of ability.

#### The five things worth knowing

- **The format:** 44 maths questions in two modules of 22, 35 minutes each, on a laptop or tablet in the Bluebook app.
- **A calculator is allowed on every question**, and a Desmos graphing calculator is built in.
- It is adaptive: performance in Module 1 affects the difficulty of Module 2. Scoring uses item characteristics and answers across both modules.
- Pacing matters: average time is about 1 minute 35 seconds per question; some questions need longer.
- **Whether your child needs it depends on the universities.** Policies are changing quickly. Check each university's own page.

#### Five questions to ask before booking anything

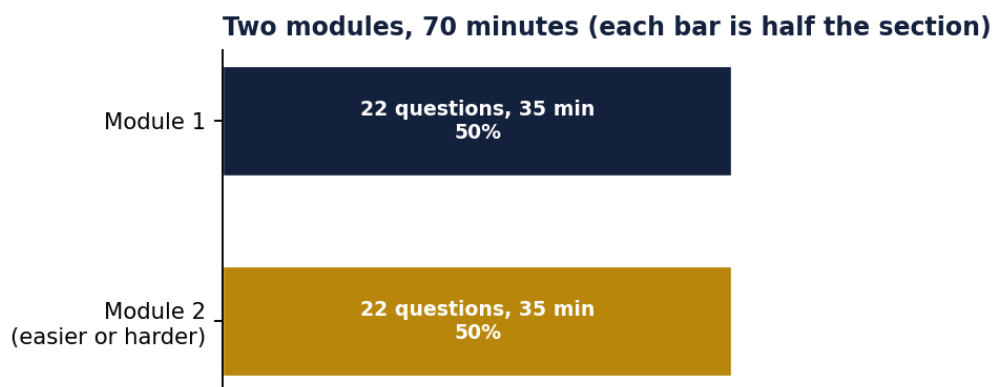
- Which universities is my child really considering, and what is each one's current testing policy?
- Does the policy differ for international applicants, or for scholarships?
- When does the first sitting need to be, to leave room for a retake?
- How does each university treat multiple attempts?
- Does the school's counsellor have a view on whether the SAT helps this applicant?

#### One thing to do this week

List the universities your family is considering. Open each admissions testing page and record its policy and the date checked. Use the tracker on page 4.

## SECTION 1

# The Test at a Glance



| Feature            | Digital SAT Maths                                                                                                                                                                     |
|--------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Questions          | 44 in total: 22 in each of two modules                                                                                                                                                |
| Time               | 70 minutes in total, 35 minutes per module. About 1 minute 35 seconds per question.                                                                                                   |
| Calculator         | Allowed on every question. Use the Desmos graphing calculator built into Bluebook or your own approved calculator.                                                                    |
| Question types     | Mostly multiple choice, with some where the answer is typed in.                                                                                                                       |
| Content areas      | Algebra, Advanced Math, Problem-Solving and Data Analysis, Geometry and Trigonometry.                                                                                                 |
| Unscored questions | Each module includes 2 unscored questions, which look the same as the rest. You cannot tell which ones they are.                                                                      |
| Adaptive           | The test adapts once per section: Module 2 is easier or harder depending on how Module 1 went. You can move back and forth within a module, but not back to Module 1 once time is up. |
| Scoring            | 200 to 800 for Maths. Total with Reading and Writing: 400 to 1600.                                                                                                                    |

## A typical preparation sequence



## SECTION 2

### Should My Child Take It? A Decision Path

There is no reliable static list of which universities require the SAT. Several highly selective universities have reinstated requirements, others remain test-optional, and policies can differ for international applicants. Use this path, and always check the university's own page.

| Step | What to do                                                                                                                                |
|------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1    | List the universities your child is genuinely considering.                                                                                |
| 2    | For each, find the admissions testing page. Record the policy, any international-applicant rules, the deadline, and the date you checked. |
| 3    | If any require or strongly encourage scores, plan a first sitting early enough to leave room for a retake.                                |
| 4    | If all are test-optional, ask whether a strong score would strengthen the application. Talk to the school's counsellor.                   |
| 5    | Recheck each page before the application deadline. Policies can change between cycles.                                                    |

#### Policy tracker

| University | Policy (required / optional / other) | International rules | Deadline | Date checked |
|------------|--------------------------------------|---------------------|----------|--------------|
|            |                                      |                     |          |              |
|            |                                      |                     |          |              |
|            |                                      |                     |          |              |
|            |                                      |                     |          |              |
|            |                                      |                     |          |              |
|            |                                      |                     |          |              |
|            |                                      |                     |          |              |

Test-optional does not mean scores are ignored. Many test-optional universities still treat a strong score as a positive.

#### A conversation to have at home

Review one timed Bluebook maths practice together. Ask whether each missed question reflects content, timing, reading or tool use. Let the student explain the method. Check each university's own testing policy before deciding whether to book a sitting.

## SECTION 3

# Working Smarter Inside the Test

### The two-pass method

In each module, go through the questions once and answer everything that takes under about a minute. Flag anything slower. Then use the remaining time on the flagged ones. This protects the easy marks from running out of time.

### Desmos tips that save minutes

- Type both sides of an equation as two graphs. The intersection is the solution.
- For a system of equations, graph both lines and read the intersection.
- To test an answer choice, type it in as a value and see whether the equation holds.
- Use sliders for a letter such as  $k$ , and watch what happens to the graph.
- Practise these in the real app, not just on paper. The tool only helps if it is fast.

### Five original practice questions, with answers

| # | Question                                                                      | Answer and why                                                   |
|---|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1 | If $3x + 2 = 5x - 10$ , what is $x$ ?                                         | $x = 6$ . Subtract $3x$ and add 10: $12 = 2x$ .                  |
| 2 | $y = 2x + 3$ and $y = -x + 12$ . What is $x$ at the intersection?             | $x = 3$ , $y = 9$ . Set $2x + 3 = -x + 12$ . Or graph in Desmos. |
| 3 | For what value of $k$ does $x^2 - 6x + k = 0$ have exactly one real solution? | $k = 9$ . One solution means discriminant zero: $36 - 4k = 0$ .  |
| 4 | A price rises from 80 to 92. What is the percent increase?                    | 15%. The change is 12, and $12 / 80 = 0.15$ .                    |
| 5 | $(x - 2)^2 + (y + 3)^2 = 25$ is a circle. Give the centre and radius.         | Centre (2, -3), radius 5. Read from the standard form.           |

## SECTION 4

### A Practice Routine and Error Log

| Week | Focus                | How                                                                     |
|------|----------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1    | Diagnostic           | One full timed maths section in Bluebook. Do not coach. Log every miss. |
| 2-3  | Weakest content area | Topic practice, 4 to 5 sessions of 30 minutes. Mix in two-pass timing.  |
| 4-5  | Timed modules        | Full 35-minute modules, two or three per week. Review every error.      |
| 6    | Full practice test   | Both modules, in one sitting, under exam conditions.                    |
| 7+   | Repair and maintain  | Fix the recurring error types. Keep one timed module a week.            |

This is a suggested sequence, not a College Board rule. Your child's starting point and timeline will change it.

#### The error log

| Question | Topic | Why I missed it | Fix | Type |
|----------|-------|-----------------|-----|------|
|          |       |                 |     |      |
|          |       |                 |     |      |
|          |       |                 |     |      |
|          |       |                 |     |      |
|          |       |                 |     |      |
|          |       |                 |     |      |
|          |       |                 |     |      |
|          |       |                 |     |      |

Type: timing, content gap, misread, calculator or Desmos use, careless slip.

## SECTION 5

# What to Say, and What to Do When It Goes Wrong

| When your child says             | Try this                                                                                                                                    | Avoid                                          |
|----------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------|
| "The second module was so hard." | "A harder route can reflect Module 1 performance. Reading a harder Module 2 is not a score guarantee. Which question type slowed you down?" | Reading a harder Module 2 as a failure.        |
| "I ran out of time."             | "Which questions took longest? Could they have been flagged?"                                                                               | Telling them to just work faster.              |
| "My practice score didn't move." | "Is it content, timing, or tool use? Look at the log."                                                                                      | Comparing with friends' scores.                |
| "Do I really need this?"         | "Let's check the policy on each university's page and decide together."                                                                     | Deciding for them from a list on the internet. |

## Signs worth a conversation

| What you see                              | Possible explanation           | What helps                                   |
|-------------------------------------------|--------------------------------|----------------------------------------------|
| Strong school marks, low practice score   | Timing or format, not ability  | Timed modules in Bluebook                    |
| Several questions unanswered at the end   | Pacing                         | Two-pass method                              |
| Avoids geometry and trigonometry practice | Content gap                    | Targeted topic work first                    |
| Panic after a hard second module          | Misreading the adaptive design | Explain what a harder Module 2 usually means |

## Glossary

| Term          | In plain English                                                                       |
|---------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Bluebook      | The College Board's app in which the digital SAT is taken and practised.               |
| Module        | One of the two timed parts of the maths section.                                       |
| Adaptive      | The second module's difficulty depends on performance in the first.                    |
| Desmos        | The graphing calculator built into the test.                                           |
| Test-optional | A university does not require scores, but may still consider them.                     |
| Superscoring  | A university combining a student's best section scores across sittings. Policies vary. |

### Check before you rely on this volume

Confirm the current test format and dates on the College Board's website.

Confirm each university's testing policy on its own admissions page, for your child's year and course.

Recheck before application deadlines. Policies change.

# Official Sources and Use Notes

Reviewed on 5 October 2026. This Volume 2 companion supplements the shorter parent guide. Confirm the student's exam session and specification with the school.

Worked examples and suggested mark allocations are teaching illustrations, not official scoring rubrics, promises of marks or material for assessed submissions. Readiness scores are informal discussion prompts, not validated course-placement tests.

Both adaptive routes can produce a range of scores. A harder second module is not a score guarantee; College Board considers item characteristics and performance across both modules. The practice plan covers maths; a full SAT practice test also includes Reading and Writing.

## Digital SAT: structure and timing

## Digital SAT: adaptive scoring and unscored questions

## SAT calculator policy

## Make an enquiry through the website

The diagnostic is 45 minutes: 30 minutes live plus 15 minutes independent. Launch price: AED 150. Written report within 24 hours; the full fee is credited if a programme starts within seven days.

Calculator policy checked October 2026: only non-CAS handheld devices are allowed. Remove programs with algebra functionality and stored documents. Bluebook's built-in tools are distinct from handheld-device permission. Recheck the official College Board calculator policy before the sitting.

Parent discussion tables offer possible explanations, not established causes. Work samples, observation and school context are needed before attributing a difficulty to a cause. Informal readiness bands do not validate a diagnosis or predict a grade.