

A COUNSELOR'S GUIDE TO

SAT & ACT ACCOMMODATIONS

a webinar by



OVERVIEW OF PRESENTATION

The goal of this presentation is to familiarize you with the testing accommodations process for the SAT and ACT, so you can better advise students who qualify.



Types of accommodations



Compare and contrast



FAQs



Q & A

PART I

TYPES OF ACCOMMODATIONS

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COMMON DISABILITIES:

- ADHD
- Dyslexia
- Executive function disorders
- Physical disabilities that impair writing
- Visual impairment
- Visual processing disorder
- Mood/anxiety disorder

COMMON ACCOMMODATIONS:

- Extended time: 50%, 100%, or more
- Use of a computer
- Extra or extended breaks
- Calculator on SAT no-calculator section
- Large-type or Braille exams
- Other accommodations

PART II

COMPARE AND CONTRAST

SIMILARITY #1

Best to apply with the help of a school administrator

- Ease of submission
- (Usually) less strict documentation
- Experience

SIMILARITY #2

Common reasons for denial

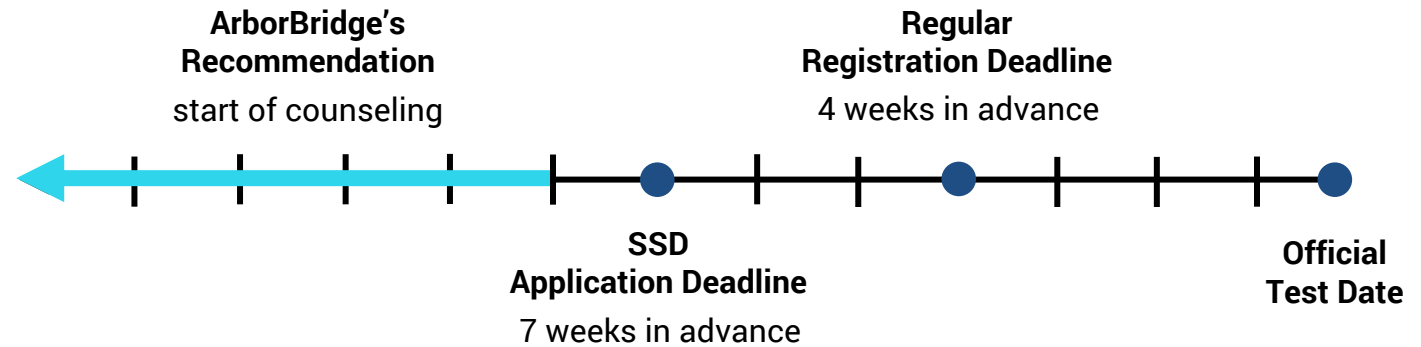
- Skeptical of recent diagnoses
- Stricter documentation needed from students who do not receive accommodations at school

SIMILARITY #3

Apply as early as possible

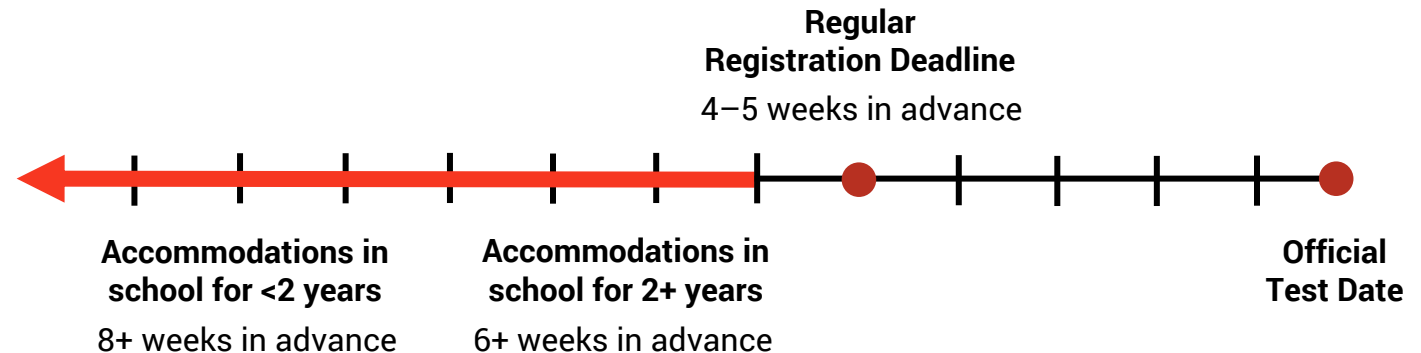
SAT:

- Earliest: any time in high school
- Latest: 7 weeks in advance



ACT:

- Earliest: must know your actual test date
- Latest: no set minimum



DIFFERENCE #1

Support for English Language Learners

ACT gives support for English Language Learners who fall into one or more of the following categories:

- Difficulties in speaking, writing or understanding the English language
- Enrolled in an English language program at a school located within the U.S.
- Receives the requested support on classroom test via a formalized plan
- Results from an appropriate English language assessment that demonstrate the examinee's limited language proficiency

SAT provides similar support, but *only* for students taking a state-funded SAT during the school day.

DIFFERENCE #2

Choosing a test site - SAT

- Select any test site, as all students do
- SAT will contact test site to ensure it can handle approved accommodations
- SAT will contact students who need to change test sites and work with them to find a solution

DIFFERENCE #2

Choosing a test site - ACT

NATIONAL EXTENDED TIME:

(all must apply)

- Testing in the U.S. or Canada
- Requesting up to 50% extra time
- Using a regular font or large-type test booklet

Can select any test center on any official test date.

SPECIAL TESTING:

- Testing outside of the U.S. or Canada
- Requesting more than 50% extra time
- Needs accommodations other than extra time or a large-type test booklet

Cannot select any test center, take at school (possibly on a school day).

PART III

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

WHICH TEST IS **EASIER** TO GET ACCOMMODATIONS ON?

Because both exams aim to grant similar accommodations for similar learning disabilities, there is no clear-cut answer to this question. Students with verifiable, documented needs should receive appropriate accommodations on either exam. However, recent changes to the SAT accommodations process have made the process itself easier.

WHICH TEST SHOULD MY STUDENT **APPLY** FOR ACCOMMODATIONS ON?

Although we recommend a student *take* the exam they perform best on, we generally recommend that students apply for accommodations on the SAT as a matter of course early in high school. Why?

- The application can be processed at anytime without committing to the SAT
- The accommodation for SAT applies to all College Board exams (AP, PSAT, SAT, Subject Tests)

If a student later decides the ACT is the test he wants to take, then apply for ACT accommodations when registering for a specific ACT test date.

WHICH TEST SHOULD MY STUDENT TAKE?

In the vast majority of cases, a student should choose based on the same reasons that any other student does: which feels more comfortable and which you can get the best score on.

There are a few exceptions:

- In close cases for those with 50% extra time, it is probably more valuable for students to take the ACT because of self pacing.
- If a student is only given extra time on one section of the SAT, take the ACT instead. The ACT always applies extra time across all sections.
- If a student is approved for accommodations on only one exam, always take the approved exam.

**MY STUDENT IS
UNSURE OF WHICH
TEST, IF ANY,
SHE'LL RECEIVE
ACCOMMODATIONS
ON. HOW SHOULD
SHE **PREPARE?****

In this case, this student should prioritize applying for accommodations immediately so that she can make a more educated decision as soon as possible. However, well-designed tutoring can still be valuable even if a student is unsure of which test she'll officially take.

**MY STUDENT WAS
DIAGNOSED WITH A
LEARNING DISABILITY
ONLY RECENTLY.
WHAT SHOULD HE DO?**

A late diagnosis should not dissuade a student from applying for an accommodation for a legitimate need. However, both the College Board and ACT tend to ask for additional documentation of late diagnoses, so it is imperative that students in this situation apply as early as possible.

PART IV

Q & A



THANK YOU

We hope you can join us at our next webinar!