

Table 259. ACT Program Scores and Characteristics of College-Bound Students: 1970 to 2008

[For academic year ending in year shown. Except as indicated, test scores and characteristics of college-bound students. Through 1980, data based on 10 percent sample; thereafter, based on all ACT tested graduating seniors]

Type of test and characteristic	Unit	1970	1980	1985	1990 ¹	1995 ¹	2000 ¹	2005 ¹	2006 ¹	2007 ¹	2008 ¹
TEST SCORES²											
Composite	Point	19.9	18.5	18.6	20.6	20.8	21.0	20.9	21.1	21.2	21.1
Male	Point	20.3	19.3	19.4	21.0	21.0	21.2	21.1	21.2	21.2	21.2
Female	Point	19.4	17.9	17.9	20.3	20.7	20.9	20.9	21.0	21.0	21.0
English	Point	18.5	17.9	18.1	20.5	20.2	20.5	20.4	20.6	20.7	20.6
Male	Point	17.6	17.3	17.6	20.1	19.8	20.0	20.0	20.1	20.2	20.1
Female	Point	19.4	18.3	18.6	20.9	20.6	20.9	20.8	21.0	21.0	21.0
Math	Point	20.0	17.4	17.2	19.9	20.2	20.7	20.7	20.8	21.0	21.0
Male	Point	21.1	18.9	18.6	20.7	20.9	21.4	21.3	21.5	21.6	21.6
Female	Point	18.8	16.2	16.0	19.3	19.7	20.2	20.2	20.3	20.4	20.4
Reading ³	Point	19.7	17.2	17.4	(NA)	21.3	21.4	21.3	21.4	21.5	21.4
Male	Point	20.3	18.2	18.3	(NA)	21.1	21.2	21.0	21.1	21.2	21.2
Female	Point	19.0	16.4	16.6	(NA)	21.4	21.5	21.5	21.6	21.6	21.5
Science reasoning ⁴	Point	20.8	21.1	21.2	(NA)	21.0	21.0	20.9	20.9	21.0	20.8
Male	Point	21.6	22.4	22.6	(NA)	21.6	21.6	21.4	21.2	21.4	21.3
Female	Point	20.0	20.0	20.0	(NA)	20.5	20.6	20.5	21.0	20.5	20.4
PARTICIPANTS⁵											
Total⁶	1,000	788	822	739	817	945	1,065	1,186	1,206	1,301	1,422
Male	Percent	52	45	46	46	44	43	44	44	45	45
White	Percent	(NA)	83	82	73	69	72	66	63	60	63
Black	Percent	4	8	8	9	9	10	12	12	12	13
Obtaining composite scores of—⁷											
27 or above	Percent	14	13	14	12	13	14	14	14	15	16
18 or below	Percent	21	33	32	35	34	32	34	33	32	33

NA Not available. ¹ Beginning 1990, not comparable with previous years because a new version of the ACT was introduced. Estimated average composite scores for prior years: 1989, 20.6; 1988, 19.87, and 1986, 20.8. ² Minimum score, 1; maximum score, 36. ³ Prior to 1990, social studies; data not comparable with previous years. ⁴ Prior to 1990, natural sciences; data not comparable with previous years. ⁵ Beginning 1985, data are for seniors who graduated in year shown and had taken the ACT in their junior or senior years. Data by race are for those responding to the race question. ⁶ 788 represents 788,000. ⁷ Prior to 1990, 26 or above and 15 or below.