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Introduction

If you are reading this, it's likely that you have at least three months to prepare for the ACT. If that's the case, that's a huge relief because that means you have plenty of time to get fully prepped without letting your grades suffer, resorting to unhelpful cramming, and/or suffering undue stress. Three months really is the sweet spot for being well-prepared.

But when your ACT date is in the distant future (three months can seem like *forever*), it can be tough to stay focused and not get distracted by other more pressing deadlines. The best way to stay on track and reach your goal is with a study schedule–so *voilå*!

We present you with our Three-Month ACT Study Schedule!!

Save this study schedule on your computer or phone, print it out, tape it to your mirror, check it off-do whatever you need to do to keep yourself accountable. If you are able to stay on track for the entire three months, you will complete at least seven full ACT tests and hundreds of additional practice questions. That's some really solid prep—you will thank yourself when you ace the test!

How to Organize your Time

Our three-month study schedule is a weekly plan designed with flexibility in mind. ACT prep should not consume your life, so decide which days you will devote a few hours to studying. **One option would be to set aside 2 hours on both Tuesday and Thursday, and 4 hours on Saturday.** Most weeks, you won't need to use *all* of that time, but such a schedule will allow you to accommodate 4 practice exams, which take 4 hours each to complete.

You may even find that splitting your studying into smaller chunks every day of the week might work better for your schedule (save for the 4 hours you'll need for practice tests). The point is to create a routine, which will do wonders for peace of mind and focus. Whether that means studying a little each day during the school week or planning for a marathon study session every Sunday, **create your ACT study schedule as soon as possible.**

How to Prioritize

If you find you can't keep up with the study schedule some weeks, take it easy on yourself and make sure you don't lose momentum. Take note of what you are unable to finish and circle back if you have extra time.

A time management strategy I recommend is **starting each week by answering practice questions and/or taking practice exams first.** Then, you can watch lessons linked to practice questions that you missed. *You should aim to watch at least six lessons per week.* Feel free to change the video speed and take advantage of the transcript box in order to skim through lessons that are more of a review for you.

Jumping Ahead

Feel free to jump ahead or watch lessons out of order. As you answer and review practice questions, you may notice pop-ups with links to the videos related to the question you just answered. If you have the time and energy, definitely watch some! Again, feel free to skim through the transcript in order to decide if the lesson is worth watching all the way through.



There are 3-5 things to do each week, including:

Magoosh Lessons: Our lessons videos cover all the topics tested on the ACT as well as strategy tips. You might feel inclined to go through a lesson quickly if you're already comfortable with a topic (for example, subject-verb agreement). To a certain extent, that's totally fine, but take care to not pass over a lesson completely because you might miss out on tips and tricks that you otherwise wouldn't know.

Magoosh Practice: Click the "Practice" tab at the top of your Magoosh account in order to create a practice session for the topics mentioned in a given week. **If you get a question wrong, make sure you understand why by watching the explanation video**. Arguably the most important part of test prep is tracking your mistakes and learning how to avoid them.

Practice Test: The ACT is a marathon, so it's super important to build your stamina for such a long test. That means that one day a week, plan on taking either a half test (approximately 1.5 to 3 hours) or a full-length practice test (approximately 3.5 hours) using the official released ACT tests or Magoosh tests.

Optional Video Watching And Blog Reading: These ACT blog posts supplement your video lessons by providing additional test-taking and strategy tips.

Optional Quizzes: At the bottom of some lesson groups, you'll find links to short quizzes for additional practice on specific concepts and skills.

Materials and Resources

Magoosh Materials

- <u>Magoosh ACT Premium Account</u>
- <u>ACT Lessons App</u>
- <u>ACT Flashcards from Magoosh</u>
- Magoosh free ACT eBook

act.magoosh.com



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• The Magoosh ACT Blog

Official ACT Materials

- The Official ACT Prep Guide (a.k.a. "The Red Book")
- <u>Preparing for the ACT</u> guide
- Official ACT website



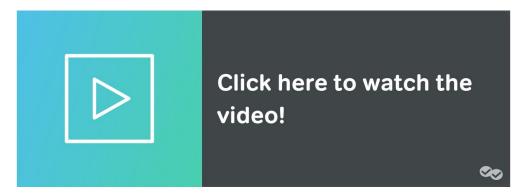
Three Month ACT Study Schedule

Week 1: English and Math

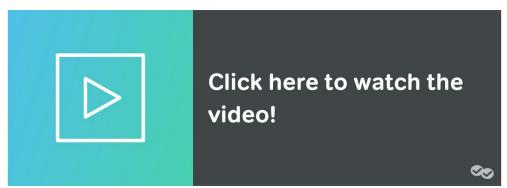
Magoosh Lessons

Tips & Strategies

- Welcome! Getting Started with Magoosh
- Intro to the ACT Sections: Introduction to the ACT English Test



Intro to the ACT Sections: Introduction to the ACT Math Test



English

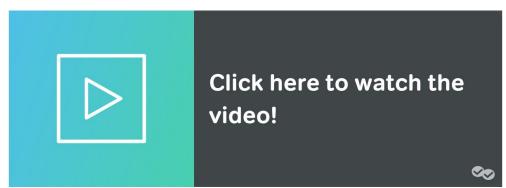
- <u>Commas</u>
- <u>Apostrophes</u>
- Dashes
- <u>Semicolons</u>
- <u>Colons</u>
- Other Punctuation



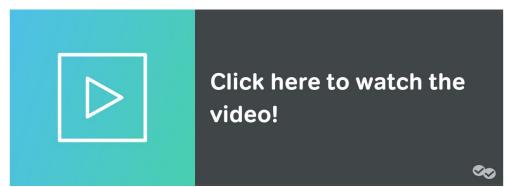
• <u>Subject Verb Agreement</u> or <u>Verb Tense</u>

Math

• <u>Math Strategy: Backsolving</u> (General Math Strategies)

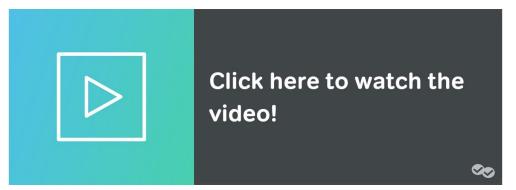


- Math Strategy: Picking Numbers (General Math Strategies)
- Mental Math: Estimation (General Math Strategies)



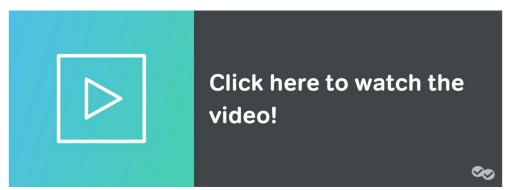
(The lesson videos above will help you learn how to attack math problems on the ACT using smart strategies instead of the methods you normally apply in school.)

<u>Assumptions & Estimation</u> (Geometry)





- <u>Properties of Real Numbers</u> (Arithmetic and Fractions)
- Intro to Decimals (Arithmetic and Fractions) OR <u>Fraction Properties I</u> (Arithmetic and Fractions)
- <u>Simplifying Expressions</u> (Algebra)



• <u>Multiplying Expressions</u> (Algebra)

Magoosh Practice

- 2 English Passages (30 Questions)
- 30 Math Questions (custom practice set for: Arithmetic & Fractions, Word Problems, and Algebra)

After you complete practice questions, review your incorrect answers by going to the "practice" tab and setting the question pool to "incorrect" and the number of questions to "no limit." Start keeping an error log with notes on the questions you struggled with. List each question you got wrong along with the following information:

- The correct answer
- Why you got the question wrong
- What you would do next time to avoid making the same mistake

Official Practice

In the "Improving Your ______ Score Chapters" in <u>The Official ACT Prep Guide</u>, complete the English and Math Sections. Build your stamina by practicing these sections back-to-back. Make sure you check your answers and continue to update your error log!

Optional Blog Reading

• How to Study for the ACT



- <u>How to Study for an ACT Retake</u> (if applicable)
- ACT English
- ACT English Study Guide
- ACT Math
- Math Formulas on the ACT

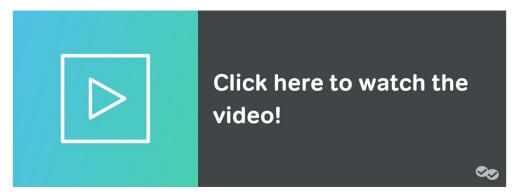


Week 2: Reading and Science

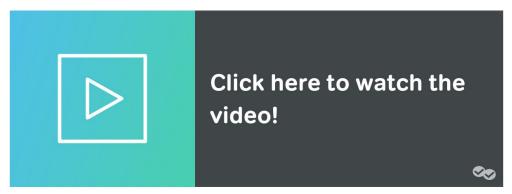
Magoosh Lessons

Tips & Strategies

- Should you set a Score Goal? OR Registering for the ACT (What Students Need to Know)
- How to Focus and Master Distractions
- Intro to the ACT Exam Sections: Introduction to the ACT Reading Test



Intro to the ACT Exam Sections: Introduction to the ACT Science Test



How to Read the ACT Science Test

Reading

<u>ACT Reading Passage Types</u>

Science

- Intro to Science Test Passage Types
- Using Key Terms

Magoosh Practice



- 2 Reading passages (20 questions)
- 2 Science Data Representation passages, 2 Science Research Summaries passages (go to the "practice" tab and set the "Section" to Data Representation and Research Summaries, respectively, under "custom practice")
- Update your error log as you review text and/or video explanations for incorrect answers.

Optional Blog Reading

- ACT Science
- <u>ACT Science Practice</u>
- Science Topics on the ACT
- Has the Format of the ACT Science Test Changed?
- ACT Reading
- The Complete Guide to ACT Pacing and Time Management: Reading

Official Practice

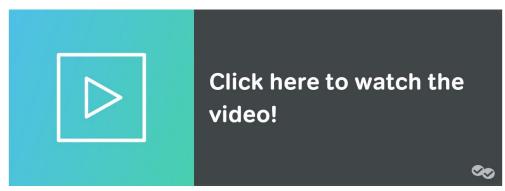
Complete both the Reading and Science Sections from the "Improving Your _____ Score" chapters in <u>The Official ACT Prep Guide</u>. Check your answers and update your error log accordingly.

Week 3: English and Math

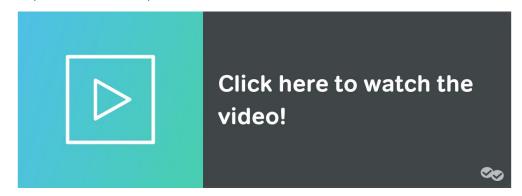
Magoosh Lessons

English

- <u>Adjectives and Adverbs</u> (Grammar and Usage)
- <u>Idioms</u> (Grammar and Usage)



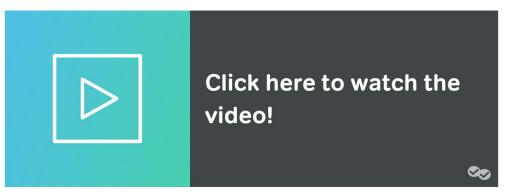
- Singular and Plural
- Dependent and Independent Clauses



- <u>Run-on Sentences and Comma Splices</u> (Sentence Structure)
- <u>Misplaced Modifiers</u> (Sentence Structure)
- <u>Conjunctions</u> (Sentence Structure)
- Parallelism (Sentence Structure)

Math

• Working with Percents (Percents and Ratios)



- <u>Percent Decreases</u> (Percents and Ratios)
- Intro to Ratios (Percents and Ratios) OR <u>Combining Ratios</u> (Percents and Ratios)
- <u>Ratios and Rates</u> (Percents and Ratios)
- <u>Prime Numbers</u> (Integer Properties)
- <u>Prime Factorization</u> (Integer Properties)
- Even and Odd Integers (Integer Properties) OR Testing Cases (Integer Properties)

Magoosh Practice

- 2 English Passages (30 questions)
- 30 Math Questions (custom practice set for: Percents and Ratios, Arithmetic and Fractions, Integer Properties, Word Problems, and Algebra)
- Update your error log as you go through your answers

Optional Blog Reading

- How to Get a Perfect 36 on ACT English
- How to Get a Perfect 36 on ACT Math

Full Practice Test

Make sure to review your error log before you begin so that the mistakes you want to avoid are fresh in your mind.

Take Test 1 in The Official ACT Prep Guide.



- Make sure you have 3.5 hours of COMPLETE SOLITUDE. Your goal is to mimic the conditions of the test as closely as possible, so that means no phone, no music, no internet, and no TV!
- Find a quiet place and complete the practice test in the allotted time limits. We'll talk about the essay later in this study schedule, but for right now, don't worry about it.
- Review your answers and update your error log accordingly.



Week 4: Reading and Science

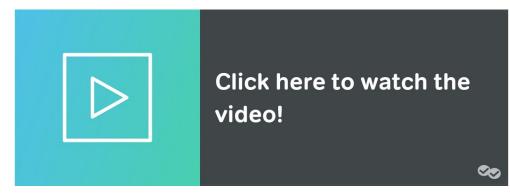
Magoosh Lessons

Tips & Strategies

- <u>Stress Reduction Techniques</u> (Getting Started)
- Pacing & Guessing Strategies: Watch two lessons of your choice from this section

Reading

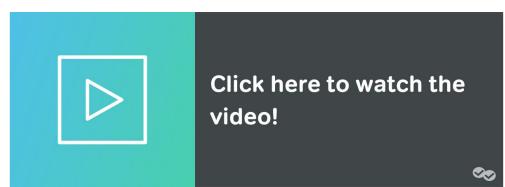
<u>Approaching Passages</u>



- <u>Trap Answer Choices</u>
- Basic Strategies

Science

Unfamiliar Terms



- <u>Understanding Tables, Graphs, and Figures</u>
- Finding Trends and Patterns
- Linking Tables and Graphs



Magoosh Practice

- 20 Reading Questions
- 2 Science Data Representation passages, 2 Science Research Summaries passages (set the "section" to "Data Representation" and "Research Summaries", respectively, on the "custom practice" tab)
- Review text and video explanations for questions you got wrong. Update your error log!

Optional Blog Reading

- Top 3 Tips to Improve Your ACT Reading Score
- Top 3 Tips to Improve Your ACT Science Score

Half Practice Test

Take half of <u>The Official ACT Prep Guide</u> (the Reading and Science sections). Remember to find a quiet space, time yourself, and update your error log when you are done!

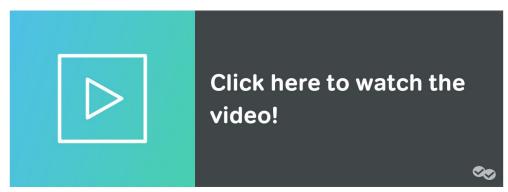


Week 5: English and Math

Magoosh Lessons

English

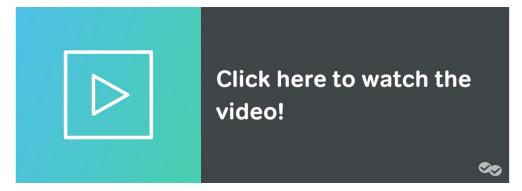
- Parenthetical Information (Sentence Structure)
- <u>Writer's/Essay Goal</u> (Rhetorical Strategy)



- Adding or Deleting Sentences (Rhetorical Strategy)
- Best Illustration Questions OR Least Acceptable Questions (Rhetorical Strategy)
- Introducing and Concluding Paragraphs (Organization)
- Ordering Sentences and Paragraphs (Organization)

Math

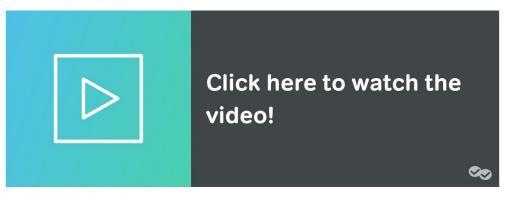
• <u>Triangles – Part I</u> (Geometry)



- <u>Triangles Part II</u> (Geometry) OR <u>Similar Triangles</u> (Geometry)
- <u>Right Triangles</u> (Geometry)
- <u>Quadrilaterals</u> (Geometry) OR <u>Rectangular Solids</u> (Geometry)
- <u>Circles</u> (Geometry) OR <u>Circles</u>, <u>Arcs</u>, <u>and Sectors</u> (Geometry)
- Cylinders, Cones, Spheres (Geometry)



• Intro to ACT Data Interpretation (Data Interpretation)



- <u>Types of Graphics</u> (Data Interpretation)
- <u>Tables of Values</u> (Data Interpretation)

Magoosh Practice

- 2 English Passages (30 Questions)
- 30 Math Problems set for: Geometry, Word Problems, Algebra, Percents & Ratios

Optional Blog Reading

• Idioms on the ACT English Test

Half Practice Test

Take half of Test 2 from *The Official ACT Prep Guide*: English and Math. Remember to find a quiet space, time yourself, and update your error log when you are done!

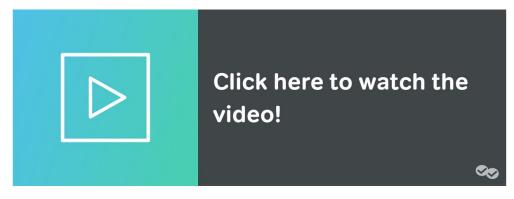


Week 6: Reading, Science, and Essay

Magoosh Lessons

Reading

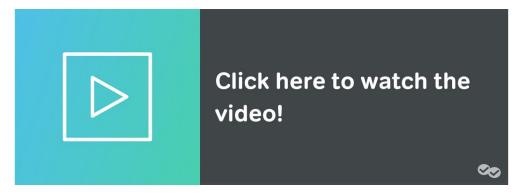
• Using Key Words (Basic Reading Strategies)



- <u>Comparison Passages</u> (Basic Reading Strategies)
- Line Reference (Question Type Strategies)

Science

- <u>Science Knowledge on the ACT Science Test</u> (Content on the Science Test)
- <u>Pacing on the ACT Science Test</u> (Basic Science Strategies)



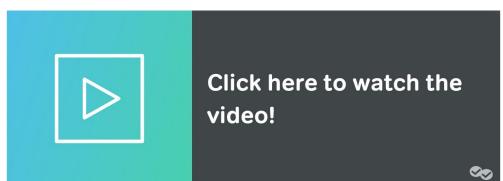
• <u>The Conflicting Viewpoints Passage</u> (Basic Science Strategies)

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Writing

If you are taking the essay, or if you are not sure, make sure to complete all the lessons and essay practice below!

• Introduction to the Essay



- <u>Time Management</u>
- How to Wow the Graders

Magoosh Practice

- 2 Reading passages (20 questions)
- 2 Conflicting Viewpoints passages (set the Section to "Conflicting Viewpoints"), 1 Research Summaries Passage, 1 Data Representation Passage
- Review all incorrect answers. (If you forgot how to do this, go to the "practice" tab, set the question pool to "incorrect" and the number of questions to "no limit.")
- Continue to update your error log.

Optional Blog Reading

- <u>Video: Ways to Boost Your Reading Score</u>
- The New ACT Essay FAQs

Half Practice Test

• Take **Test 3 from** <u>The Official ACT Prep Guide</u>: Reading and Science. Remember to find a quiet space, time yourself, and update your error log when you are done!

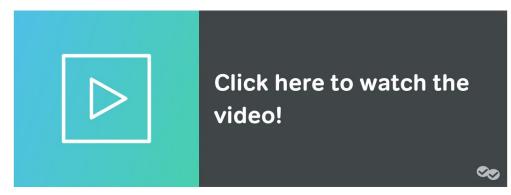


Week 7: English, Math, and Essay

Magoosh Lessons

English

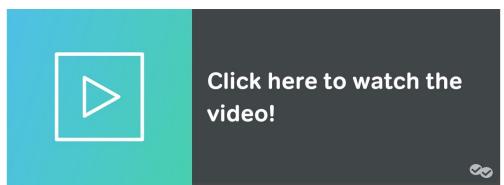
- <u>Pronoun Agreement</u> (Sentence Structure)
- <u>Redundant Meanings</u> (Style)



- Concision and Wordiness (Style)
- <u>Clarity in Phrasing</u> (Style)
- Tone (Style)

Math

• FOIL Method (Algebra)



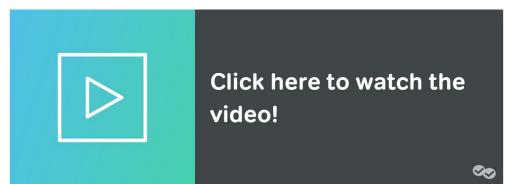
- <u>Two Equations, Two Unknowns I(Algebra)</u>
- Inequalities I (Algebra) OR Inequalities II (Algebra)
- Law of Exponents I (Powers and Roots) OR Law of Exponents II (Powers and Roots)
- <u>Negative Exponents</u> (Power and Roots) OR <u>Square Roots</u> (Powers and Roots)
- <u>Work Questions</u> (Word Problems)
- Intro to Motion Questions (Word Problems) OR Average Speed (Word Problems)



- <u>Arithmetic Sequences</u> (Word Problems)
- <u>Geometric Sequences</u> (Word Problems)

Writing

Example Essay Prompt



- Planning the Essay
- Coming up with Examples
- <u>Structuring the Essay</u>

Magoosh Practice

- 30 Math Problems set for: Arithmetic & Fractions, Powers & Roots, Word Problems, Algebra, Percents & Ratios, Geometry, Coordinate Geometry and Integer Properties
- 2 English Passages (30 Questions)
- Review all incorrect answers. Go to the "practice" tab, set the question pool to "incorrect" and the number of questions to "no limit." Remember to update your error log.

Optional Blog Reading

You might come to the point where studying and life might be getting to you a little bit. These blog posts will help you get refreshed!

- Taking a Break (equally applicable to ACT or SAT!)
- How to Stay Awake and Aware
- <u>The Best Napping Techniques</u>

Half Practice Test + Essay Practice



Find a quiet space to take Test 3 from *The Official ACT Prep Guide*: English and Math. Don't forget to time yourself and update your error log as you check answers!

If you are taking the essay, practice outlining an essay from the ACT <u>here</u> or use one of Magoosh's practice essays (go to the "practice" tab, select "practice test" and skip to the end of a practice test to find a prompt). Spend 15-20 minutes on your outline.

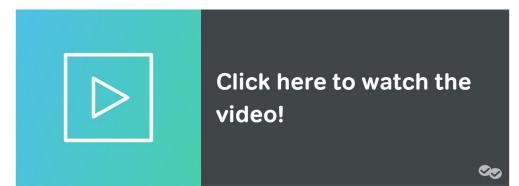


Week 8: Reading and Science

Magoosh Lessons

Reading

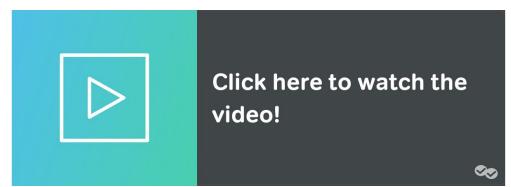
Meaning of Words



- Main Idea
- <u>Inference</u>
- <u>Author's Method (Purpose)</u>
- Author's Voice

Science

- Math Problems on the ACT Science Test
- The Scientific Method
- Answering "Yes/No, Because" Questions
- Finding Clues in the Answer Choices



Magoosh Practice

• 2 Reading Passages (20 Questions)



- 4 Science Passages (of any type)
- Review all incorrect answers. Go to the "practice" tab, set the question pool to "incorrect" and the number of questions to "no limit." Remember to update your error log.

Optional Blog Reading

- Lifehack: Posture
- Lifehack: Get Rid of Decision Fatigue
- The Best Food for Stress Relief

Official Practice

- Complete the practice questions in every section available on the ACT website.
- If you are taking the Writing test, make sure to write a complete essay.



Week 9: English and Math

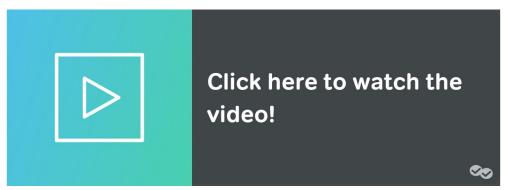
Magoosh Lessons

English

- <u>Comparatives and Superlatives</u> (Grammar and Usage)
- <u>Neither/Nor</u> (Grammar and Usage)
- <u>Who vs. Whom</u> (Grammar and Usage)
- <u>Word Choice</u> (Grammar and Usage)
- <u>Sentence Fragments</u> (Sentence Structure)

Math

• <u>The Coordinate Plane</u> (Coordinate Geometry)



- <u>Graphing Lines</u> (Coordinate Geometry)
- <u>Slope</u> (Coordinate Geometry) or <u>Distance Between Two Points</u> (Coordinate Geometry)
- <u>Reflections in the x-y plane</u> (Coordinate Geometry)
- <u>Rotations in the x-y plane</u> (Coordinate Geometry)
- <u>Regions of Inequalities</u> (Coordinate Geometry)
- Intro to SOHCAHTOA (Trigonometry) OR SOHCAHTOA and Special Triangles (Trigonometry)

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- <u>Fundamental Trig Identities</u> (Trigonometry)
- <u>Matrices I (Trigonometry)</u>
- Matrices II (Trigonometry)
- Intro to Complex Numbers (Extra Topics)

Magoosh Practice

- 30 Math Problems set for all fields
- 2 English Passages (30 Questions)



Optional Blog Reading

How to Use Your Calculator Wisely

Half Practice Test

Complete two sections of whichever subjects you feel you need the most work on at this point. You can either complete these on Magoosh (go to the "practice" tab and select "practice test") or use the questions on the ACT website under Sample Test Questions.

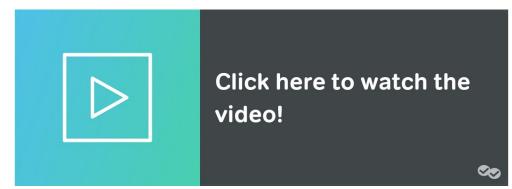


Week 10: Everything + Essay

Magoosh Lessons

Math

- Absolute Value Equations (Algebra) OR Absolute Value Inequalities (Algebra)
- Mean, Median, Mode (Statistics)
- <u>Weighted Averages</u> (Statistics)
- Introduction to Counting (Counting)
- <u>Fundamental Counting Principle</u> (Counting)



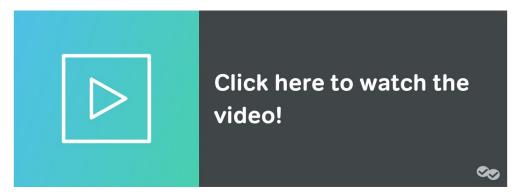
- Intro to Probability (Probability)
- Complementary Events and Simple Rules (Probability)
- Logarithms I, Logarithms II, Logarithms III (Extra Topics)

Writing

- The Introduction
- The Body Paragraphs
- The Conclusion



- The Importance of Style
- <u>Top Grammar Rules for the Essay</u>



Proofreading Your Essay

Magoosh Practice

- 20 English Questions
- 20 Math Questions set for all categories
- 20 Reading Questions
- 3 Science Passages (of any type)
- Review all incorrect answers. Go to the "practice" tab, set the question pool to "incorrect" and the number of questions to "no limit." Update your error log!

Optional Blog Reading

• The Complete Guide to ACT Pacing and Time Management

Full Practice Test

- Use the practice test at the back of the <u>Preparing for the ACT</u> pdf, which is the most recently released ACT test available! Print it out and complete the entire test in one sitting. To fully simulate test-day conditions, you may want to take this at the library or another quiet place where you are surrounded by other people.
- Review your error log before you begin so you are on the lookout for anything that normally trips you up. When you finish the test, continue to update your error log.
- Taking the essay? Ask a trusted friend, parent, or teacher to grade it using the ACT rubric.

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Week 11: Everything

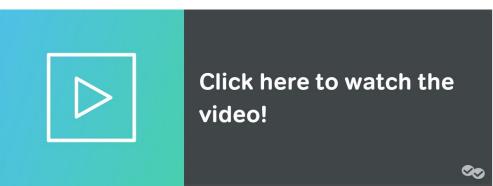
Magoosh Lessons

Tips & Strategies

• Watch two lessons of your choice from Section: What Students Need to Know

Math

• <u>Circles in the x-y Plane</u> (Coordinate Geometry)



- <u>Trigonometric Functions</u> (Trigonometry)
- Inverse Trig Functions (Trigonometry)
- Arithmetic with Complex Numbers (Extra Topics)
- <u>Transformation of Functions</u> (Extra Topics)
- Formal Logic (Extra Topics)

Magoosh Practice

- 20 English Questions
- 20 Math Questions set for all categories
- 20 Reading Questions
- 3 Science Passages (of any type)
- Review all incorrect answers. Go to the "practice" tab, set the question pool to "incorrect" and the number of questions to "no limit." Update your error log!

Rest or Practice Test

Option 1: Take a break! I generally recommend that students take it easy the weekend before the test so they are not burned out for the real deal. If you really need to do some more prep, this is a good



time to brush up on grammar or math concepts you are still struggling with and/or do extra practice on your weakest sections.

Option 2: If you slacked on previous practice test weekends, you can do whichever test you missed this weekend.



Week 12: Final Review/Test Day!

Start going to bed early for at least several days before the test.

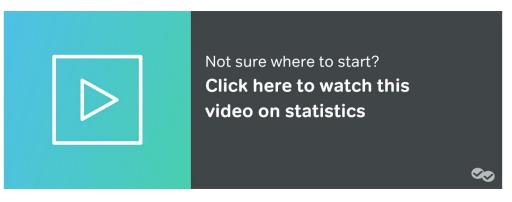
Magoosh Lessons

Tips & Strategies

- Rewatch <u>How to Focus and Master Distractions</u> OR <u>Stress Reduction Techniques</u>
- <u>Test Day and the Week Before</u> (What Students Should Know About the ACT)

Math

- Review your error log and re-watch any lessons on topics you have continued to struggle with.
- Watch any additional math videos on topics you are uncertain about (or want to view the more advanced videos on).



Magoosh Practice

- Review all remaining incorrect responses in Magoosh. (Set the custom practice tab settings to "incorrect" and "no limit.")
- Answer as many of the remaining questions in each subject on Magoosh as possible. (Set "unanswered" and "no limit.")

Blog Reading

- <u>Video: How to Have a Great ACT Test Day</u>
- ACT Tips for Test Day
- Top Ten Things to Avoid Doing on Your ACT Test Day



The day before your test

- Review your entire error log and pay attention to which errors have come up consistently. Make yourself a "cheat sheet" of final reminders to review the morning of the exam (for example, "Watch out for run-on sentences!" and "The area of a trapezoid is (base 1 + base 2)/2 * height").
- Review last-minute test day tips once more and pack your bag.
- Do something you enjoy and go to bed early.

Test day!

It's test day! No last-minute prep! Eat a full breakfast and do some light exercise if you're up for it. Definitely give yourself plenty of time to get to the test center. Don't forget:

- #2 pencils (not mechanical)
- calculator
- watch
- drink
- snack
- admissions ticket
- photo ID
- jacket or sweatshirt

Review your cheat sheet before you go into the testing center so you can walk into the test confident that you have put in three months of hard work and are ready to show it!



Materials for Extra Practice

If you're looking for more practice, try...

Magoosh ACT Study Guide

Our <u>ACT Study Guide</u> includes additional resources to accompany this Three Month Study Schedule, including a printable study calendar and printable checkpoints to help you track your progress.

Magoosh ACT Practice Test PDF

Magoosh's <u>ACT Practice Exam</u> has over 200 questions in printable, PDF form. Take it like you would any other timed practice test, then watch the explanation videos for the questions you missed.

Magoosh Video Lessons

There are several ACT video lessons on Magoosh that we don't have time for in this 3-month plan. For example, there are many Math video lessons that cover more foundational topics than what is covered in this schedule—or take a more advanced look at them. If you find yourself skipping over a lot of topics that are featured in this schedule or if you have extra time on your hands, feel free to substitute or add in more advanced or more basic Math lessons depending on your comfort level. You can also reinforce these lessons with practice from additional questions in Magoosh or the practice questions on the ACT website.



Conclusion

That's all for our three-month ACT study plan! It's a lot of prep, isn't it? But remember: since all this prep is spread over three months before the ACT, it is *super* manageable **as long as you stay on track**. The worst thing you can do is lull yourself into a false sense of security due to the longevity of your prep time—only to find yourself scrambling the days before test day because you didn't see it coming.



Don't let this be you the week before you take the ACT!

If you spend between 6-8 hours each week studying for the ACT over the course of three months, you are guaranteed to improve your score significantly without feeling like you even did that much work. Ready to make your ACT prep experience a breeze? Start prepping with your three-month ACT study schedule today!

