



How Often to Take ACT Practice Tests

Practice test schedules for
varying lengths of prep

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INTRO

Practice Test Frequencies



Taking official ACT practice tests under realistic testing conditions is vital to good ACT prep, but after a certain point you can hit a wall and stop getting any benefit out of it.

In this ebook, we'll discuss the **frequency** with which you should take ACT practice tests.

1: Why Use Official Practice Tests?

- > **Key Point:** Official practice tests, taken under realistic conditions, give you the most accurate idea of how you'll do on the real ACT.



In order to figure out how often to take practice tests, you must first be clear on what you're getting out of them. We've gathered the top four reasons to take official practice tests



Taking Official Practice Tests: Top 4 Reasons

1. Get accustomed to the experience of sitting down and taking the real thing (including becoming comfortable with taking the full test at 8am)
2. Build up your stamina and ability to focus for long periods of time
3. Figure out where your weaknesses are
4. Judge your progress and studying efficacy

Another way of using practice tests is to **break them up** and only go through the particular section you need to work on at a time. For example, if you run out of time on the Reading section, you may want to take several ACT Reading sections in **isolation** to work on your time management. This way of using official practice tests is a good way to **focus your studying**

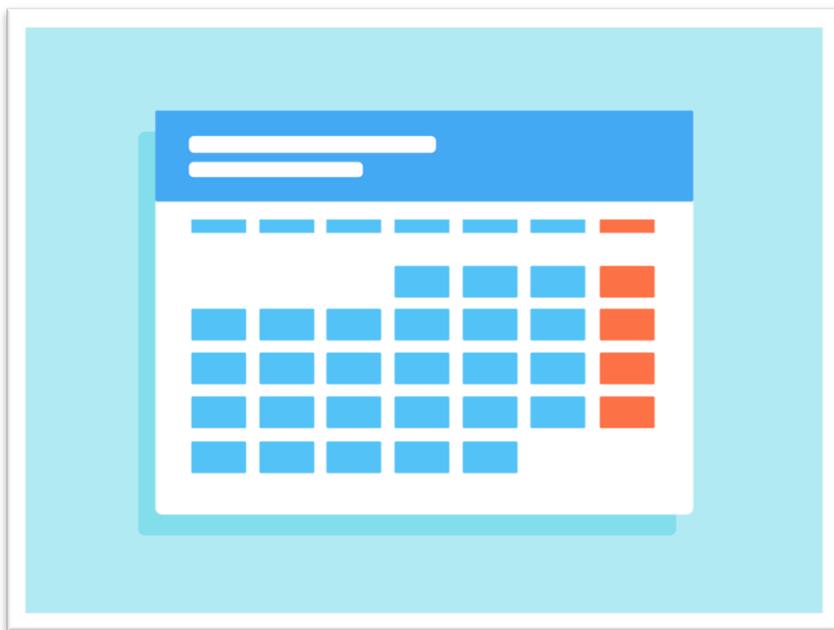
and break up the monotony of doing complete practice test after complete practice test. It's also a better use of your time to do this if you're only struggling with particular subject areas or question types.

Because there are a **limited number of official practice tests** available to practice with (either as full tests or broken up into section-specific practice), if you think you have a decent chance of going through all of them, it's important to **plan out ahead of time** when you're going to take ACT practice tests.

> Conclusion: Official practice tests are extremely valuable for ACT prep, so you need to ration them out ahead of time to make sure you don't unexpectedly run out.

2: Set Up a Schedule

- > **Key Point:** How often you take practice tests depends on how far in the future you're planning on taking the real ACT.



Now that we've discussed why students take official practice tests, we'll explain how to **space them out** for students with varying amounts of time before the test. Note that what follows is only a rough guideline to get you started and that you should be flexible in your own studying to make sure you get the most out of each practice test.

We've deliberately only included four complete practice tests in the schedules for various scenarios. For most students, practicing specific sections of practice tests is a valuable and necessary addition to taking full-length official practice tests, so you should break up and use the remaining official practice tests at your own discretion.

In general, we **recommend frontloading your studying with practice tests**, because you're most likely to need the most practice across different sections at the beginning of your studying.

If you're studying effectively, your problem areas should shrink as you go along, making it more advantageous to spend **more time** on **specific sections**, rather than taking full-length practice tests (or if you do take full-length practice tests, you need to be sure to review in between so you can improve). At the same time, you need to make sure that you're taking practice tests close enough to the real ACT to not get rusty.

3: 1-Year Practice Test Schedule

- > **Key Point:** You'll probably want to take more than four practice tests over the course of a year of ACT prep, but they don't all have to be official ones. Spend the time in between practice tests reviewing the questions you got wrong and drilling yourself on questions you find difficult.

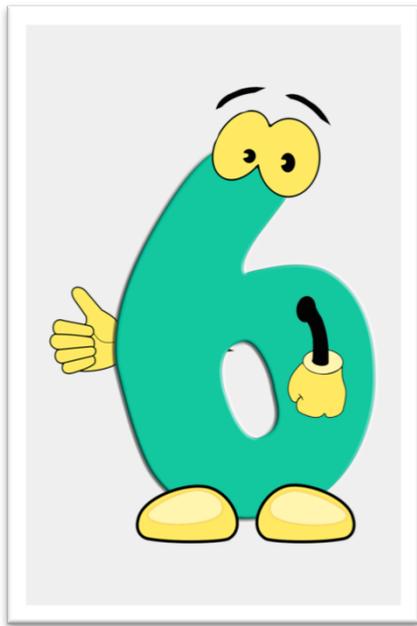


If you have a full year to study before the ACT, we recommend planning out your official test taking so that you take...

- one practice test when you **begin** studying
- one practice test **2-3 months** into your studying
- one practice test **6-8 months** into your studying
- one practice test **a week or so before the ACT**

4: 6-Month Practice Test Schedule

- > **Key Point:** The way you space out practice ACTs over a six-month study period is similar to the yearlong study schedule, but the time between each test is a little more condensed.



Plan on taking an official practice ACT...

- at the **start** of your studying
- **1-2** months into your studying
- **4-5** months into your studying
- **a week** or so before the real ACT

5: 3-Month Practice Test Schedule

- > **Key Point:** With just three months of studying before the test, the timing of official ACT practice tests will get even tighter.



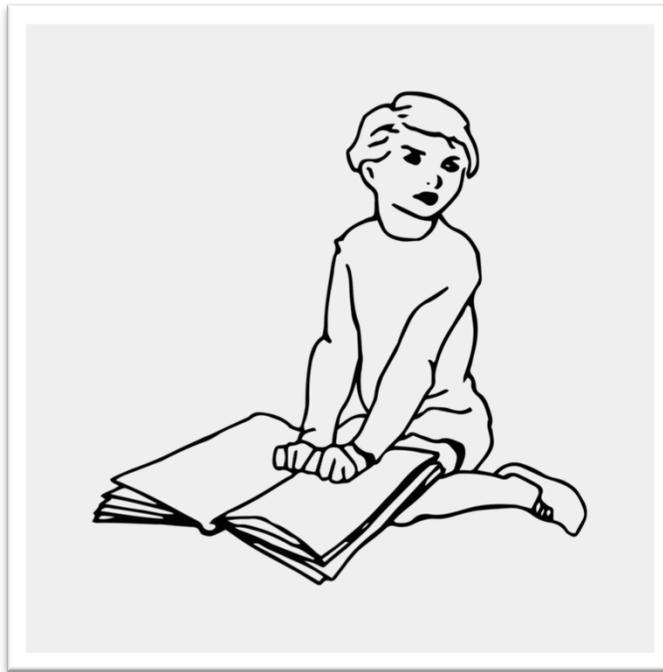
You'll want to take an official ACT practice test...

- at the **beginning** of your studying
- **three weeks** into your studying
- **1-2** months into your studying
- a **week** or so before the ACT

If you compare this to the six-month practice test schedule, you'll see that there are a lot of similarities; the main difference is in the timing of the second practice test, which needs to happen much sooner if you're only studying for the ACT over a period of three months.

6: 1-Month Practice Test Schedule

> **Key Point:** With only one month to study, you'll be cramming a lot of work into a short amount of time.



The same basic principles of lessening practice test frequencies still hold, but because you only have a month in advance of the test, there's less wiggle room.

On the next page, we've mapped out a sample schedule for **students who only have one month to study** for the ACT.

6: 1-Month Practice Test Schedule

	Sun.	Mon.	Tues.	Weds.	Thurs.	Fri.	Sat.
Week 1	Practice Test						Practice Test
Week 2							Practice Test
Week 3							
Test Week	Practice Test						ACT!

In the one-month study schedule, we've intentionally put the practice tests on Saturdays and Sundays so that students can take them at the same time of day as they'll be taking the real ACT. However, if you can't do this because of scheduling conflicts, that's fine – just try to keep the same basic shape and spacing as the above schedule.

> Conclusion: With only one month to study, you'll have very little time between practice tests; make the most of that time by reviewing your mistakes and drilling down on your weaknesses.

AND NOW WHAT?

Through this guide, you've learned a lot about planning out how often to take ACT practice tests. Make sure you match your specific test prep plan with the right schedule to get the best results.

We at PrepScholar believe we've built the best ACT prep program in the world. But even if you don't work with us at PrepScholar, we hope you found this guide useful.

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or **call us** at **1(866) 811-5546**, where one of our Academic Advisers will walk you through the best options for you and your family.

We'd love to hear from you.

Finally, if you found this guide helpful, please share it with any other people who might benefit.

Good luck!

-The PrepScholar Team