

Which College Entrance Exams are Right for You?

By Mick Rosenblum

While some colleges and universities require the SAT Reasoning Test, others prefer the ACT. Some schools may even request two or three of the SAT Subject Tests. So how do you decide which of the college entrance exams are appropriate for you? Like many of life's endeavors, you can do the leg work yourself or you can hire a professional to help you figure things out.

If you decide to do things on your own, you should first determine which college or university you are interested in attending and whether or not your GPA is good enough for that particular school. It makes no sense to aspire to attend a school that is out of reach, only to have your dreams shattered and your time wasted. Pick a set of schools that are within your grasp and that are situated in parts of the country where you would not mind living for four years.

Once you have narrowed your search to five or six colleges or universities, check each school's admissions requirements. Incidentally, the lightest ink is better than the best memory, so write everything down. If you know how to use Microsoft Excel or Access, compile a spreadsheet or database of colleges and universities including their requirements and contact information. This will help you to sift through a myriad of requirements and determine which paths are best for your needs.

If, on the other hand, you have the financial resources to hire a professional to guide you in your quest, you must be careful to select an appropriate college admissions counselor. Generally, tutors, teachers, and high school guidance counselors are poor choices for this task. Instead, you should seek a private counselor who specializes in the admissions process and who can help you choose schools that are appropriate for you.

If, after all of your diligent research, you still are not sure to which universities you will apply, or you would like to reserve the option of modifying your list at a future date, then I recommend you plan to take the SAT Reasoning Test, the ACT, and three SAT Subject Tests. In that way you will avoid burning the proverbial bridges and limiting your college admissions opportunities.