

SAT Subject Tests at Menlo

SAT Subject Tests (which used to be called SAT IIs) are designed to measure content knowledge in various subjects. They are all multiple-choice tests; there are no essays. Each test lasts an hour, and we recommend that students sign up to take these tests at the May and June administration dates.

Navigating through the SAT Subject Test choices

Literature: This is a skills-driven test and does not require knowledge of specific novels, poems, or plays. All Menlo juniors should be well prepared for this test, but they should familiarize themselves with the format of the test in advance.

American History: This 90-question exam tests specific content knowledge from Colonial America to the 1990s. Students in AP US History should be well prepared for both the breadth and factual nature of the test. Our regular US History courses, however, tend to go into more depth on certain topics and thus skim over some others. Regular US history students will have covered much of the material on this test but not all. You can prepare yourself by studying the Brinkley text.

Math IC: This test is mostly algebra and geometry. Since the SAT I will incorporate more advanced math concepts, the University of California will no longer accept the Math 1C test. Some private colleges will continue to accept it. Students who have completed algebra 2 are ready for this test.

Math IIC: In addition to algebra and geometry, this test includes trigonometry and functions. Students finishing precalculus are ready to sit for this exam. Because our course continues to cover relevant material until the very end of school, recommend students take it June, not May.

Biology: There are two different biology SAT tests – ecological and molecular. Our biology course covers about 70% of the curriculum for the ecological test and slightly less for the molecular. Students who have done well in biology and are willing to do some extra work to cover the additional topics can do well on this test.

Chemistry: Because we spend some time going into more depth on certain topics, our regular sophomore course does not cover every topic on this test. It does, however, cover about 90% of the material. We recommend students who have done well in chemistry to attend our review and study sessions in the spring and take this test. Students completing AP Chemistry are very well prepared for this test.

Physics: As our course is in conceptual physics, our students are not well prepared for this test. AP Physics students, however, are very well prepared to do well on this exam.

Latin: Students who have completed 3 Honors or Latin 4 are well prepared for this grammar, translation, and reading comprehension test.

French: Students who have completed 3 Honors, 4, or AP Language are well prepared for this vocabulary, grammar, and reading comprehension test. Students who are confident with their listening skills should take the **French with Listening** test.

Spanish: Students who have completed 3 Honors, 4, or AP Language are well prepared for this grammar, vocabulary, and reading test. Students who are confident with their listening skills should take the **Spanish with Listening** test.

Japanese: Advanced Japanese students who are motivated to prepare themselves for this test and get extra help from Ms. Sakamoto can do well on this listening, usage, and reading comprehension test.

There are also tests in **Italian, Modern Hebrew, Chinese, German, and Korean.** While we do not teach these subjects, students who have advanced proficiency can take these tests.

General Tips

Plan ahead when you are going to take the tests. It makes most sense to take Subject Tests at the end of the school year, when the material is freshest in your mind. We recommend that juniors take the SAT I in March to leave the May and June test dates available for Subject Tests.

Subject Tests take one hour, so you can take up to three tests on one exam date.

We recommend that you take as many tests as you feel qualified for, and all students should plan on taking at least three.

Familiarize yourself with the format of the test, its instructions, and how it is scored well in advance of the test date. You can prepare yourself for these tests without hiring anyone outside. The College Board website (collegeboard.org) has sample questions, and our college counseling office has sample tests.