



## 20 Minute ACT Practice

If you attend our ACT prep classes or individual tutoring, you will get the prescription to do better on the test. But like all prescriptions, **you must go home and take your medicine!** At-home practice is the key to a better score. Simply sitting in classes or tutoring sessions won't be enough. You must do some work on your own.

The good news is that **practicing at home doesn't have to take a lot of time!** The tips below and study plan on the next page will show you how, and you can do this without placing too big a burden on your time.

### General Tips

- Find a **dedicated space to practice**. Bedroom, kitchen table, living room couch, the library... it doesn't matter, as long as the space is quiet and **free of distractions**.
- Schedule it! After reviewing the 'schedule and frequency' information on the back page, go ahead and find days/times for dedicated study. Put it on your calendar or planner. Set recurring alarms on your phone to remind you that it's almost time to study.
- **Time yourself!** Get a good idea of how long it takes you to complete a passage or work a set of math problems.
- **Turn your phone off** while you're working. Our short practice regimen can be done in about 15-20 minutes. That text message from your friend can wait!
- **Review missed answers...** AND those you got correct with a lucky guess! This is more important than working the problems.
- **Consistency is key!** Twenty minutes a day-- a few days a week-- for at least three weeks leading up to your test, will have a much bigger impact than trying to cram the week of your test. Four to eight weeks is better, but three is the bare minimum if you want to see an improvement.
- Don't focus on only 1-2 subjects... even if your other sections are really high. It's common for students to only practice the sections of the test where they are getting low scores (ignoring their previous high scoring sections). When scores from the next test arrive, they see that the low sections did improve... but the previous high scores have fallen! Oftentimes, this means your composite doesn't change at all. If you want a better overall score, **you must keep practicing ALL sections of the test!**



## Schedule and Frequency

Follow this schedule-- 20 minutes a day/4 days a week-- and you'll be well prepared on test day:

1. Schedule **one subject per day**. For example: Monday for Reading; Wednesday for Math; Thursday for Science; Saturday for English. Whatever fits your schedule will be fine, but you want to work on all four subjects every week.
2. For Reading, English and Science: **work one passage on that subject's day**. For **math**, work at least 10-15 problems. Double these recommendations if you have 30-40 minutes.
3. Keep in mind the following times (what you have on test day):
  - a. **Reading**: 8:45 per passage (to read and answer questions)
  - b. **Math**: one minute per problem... however, you should be working faster on the 1<sup>st</sup> half of the test. Try to finish the first 30 problems in 20-25 minutes. It will give you extra time for the more difficult problems on the back half of the test.
  - c. **English**: 9:00 per passage
  - d. **Science**: 5:45 per passage... but it's OK to take about a minute longer on the science 'reading' passages ('dueling scientists' or 'students explain' passages). Just remember on test day you may want to save that reading passage for last.
4. Check your answers, and also mark any questions that you may have gotten correct by guessing well.
5. Look closely at your incorrect and 'good guess' answers. **Ask yourself**:
  - a. **Is there a strategy I learned in tutoring or class that could have helped me answer this question?** Review your notes to see if we talked about a similar question. If you still don't know why you missed the question, now ask yourself...
  - b. **Do I have a gap in my content knowledge?** If you just don't understand why an answer is correct, you have some options:
    - i. If working from an ACT prep book, see if they offer an explanation.
    - ii. If still unsure, bring it to us here at BLS or take it to a teacher at school.
    - iii. If you still don't understand, snap a picture of the question and send us an email to [info@bluegrasslearning.com](mailto:info@bluegrasslearning.com). It may take us a day or two, but we will write up an explanation and send it back to you.

**Reviewing missed questions is the most important step!** Closely analyzing your misses is what leads to higher scores!