



ACT Online Prep™ 2016 Release

Student User Guide



www.act.org

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Introduction

This document will help you use ACT Online Prep to prepare to take the ACT® test. We'll introduce you to the enhanced ACT Online Prep* platform and take you on a tour of its features. After reading this document and seeing ACT Online Prep first-hand from your student account, you'll be able to use its features to develop your own learning approach to the ACT.

Note: This User Guide is specific to the computer-based version of enhanced ACT Online Prep.

What is the enhanced ACT Online Prep?

Enhanced ACT Online Prep is a web-based test preparation program provided by ACT. It is designed to be easy for you to use and access. The enhanced version of the platform that you will be able to access provides an interactive element that adjusts along with your learning.

How can the enhanced ACT Online Prep be accessed?

You can access ACT Online Prep using your account, on a 24-hour basis from any computer with online access and a supported browser. Your access is password-protected according to information you provide.

How am I authorized to use the enhanced ACT Online Prep?

Your access to the enhanced ACT Online Prep is tied to a **student license**. You'll receive a student license based on whether you purchase it or are provided one by your school.

You can purchase a student license for the program by placing an order at www.actstudent.org. You'll be sent an email from noreply@onlineprep.act.org confirming your license and providing instructions for you to create your account.

Note: If you register for a test using an ACT fee waiver, you will be given an ACT Online Prep student license at no cost.

* 2016 release

If you're a student participating in the enhanced ACT Online Prep via your school, take the following steps to ensure your access:

- Indicate your interest to your school principal or the “site administrator” (the main person overseeing the school’s access to ACT Online Prep).
- After the order is placed, follow up with this person to make sure you receive a student license. You’ll be given information to create your account.

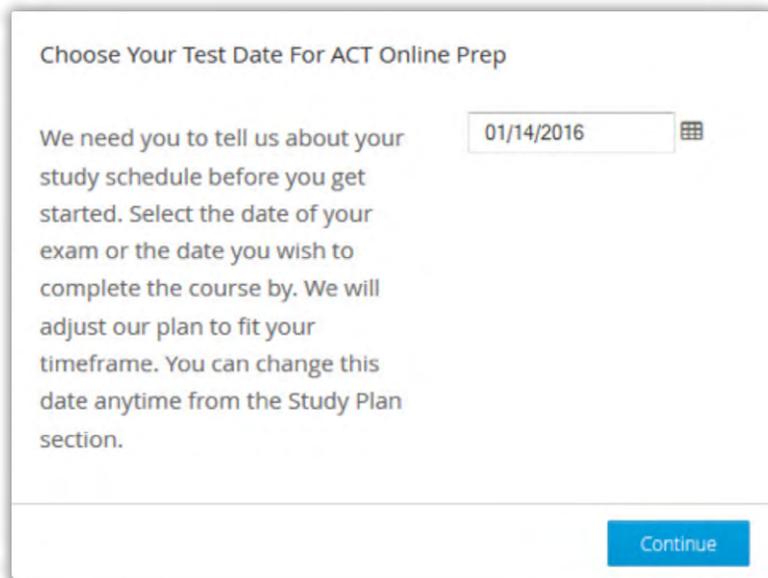
Once you create your account and accept the terms and conditions of use, you’ll be able to access the new program. *Note: If you have a previous account with ACT Online Prep, follow the instructions and use the link in the email to launch the enhanced version.*

Your student license is good for **1 year** from the date you activate your account. If you want to extend your access, you can purchase or receive a new license to continue using the enhanced ACT Online Prep for your test preparation.

If you have more initial questions about ACT Online Prep, you can email us at customerservice@onlineprep.act.org or call us at 319.337.1429.

Getting Started

After creating your account for the enhanced ACT Online Prep program and logging in for the first time, you'll see this prompt on the screen:

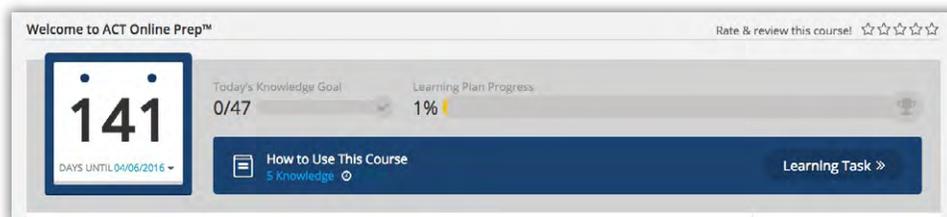


The screenshot shows a white dialog box with a light gray border. At the top, the title "Choose Your Test Date For ACT Online Prep" is centered. Below the title, there is a text area on the left and a date input field on the right. The text area contains the following text: "We need you to tell us about your study schedule before you get started. Select the date of your exam or the date you wish to complete the course by. We will adjust our plan to fit your timeframe. You can change this date anytime from the Study Plan section." The date input field contains "01/14/2016" and has a small calendar icon to its right. At the bottom right of the dialog box, there is a blue button with the text "Continue".

Providing this information about when you are taking the ACT helps the system organize itself to help you. ACT Online Prep will calculate its learning, practice, and testing content based on your test date, so that it can help you prioritize what you need to prepare.

To enter your test date, type in the box or use the calendar icon. Then, select the **Continue** button.

From this point forward, you'll see a countdown calendar whenever you log in to your account:

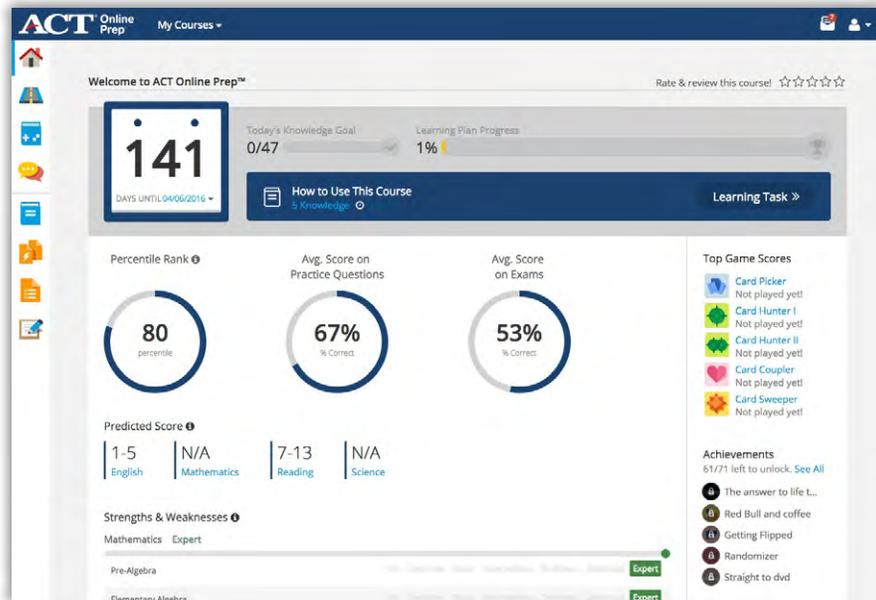


The screenshot shows the top section of the ACT Online Prep dashboard. At the top left, it says "Welcome to ACT Online Prep™". At the top right, it says "Rate & review this course!" followed by five star icons. Below this, there is a large blue box on the left containing the number "141" in white, with "DAYS UNTIL 04/06/2016" written below it. To the right of this box, there are two progress indicators: "Today's Knowledge Goal" showing "0/47" and "Learning Plan Progress" showing "1%". Below these indicators, there is a blue bar with a white icon and the text "How to Use This Course" and "5 Knowledge". To the right of this bar, there is a blue button with the text "Learning Task »".

If you need to adjust the calendar date, select the date outlined in blue at the bottom of this area. Use the tools to adjust the date and then select **Set Deadline** to save the change to your account.

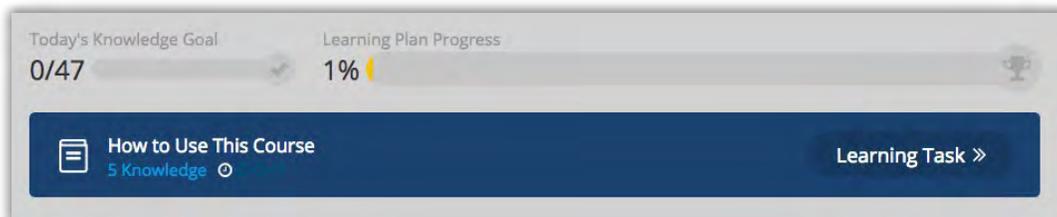
Every time you log in to your account, keep an eye out for this indication of your test date, as a “heads-up” about what you should be focusing on and when.

Once the system loads the latest content and you arrive at the main dashboard, take some time to look around the screen:

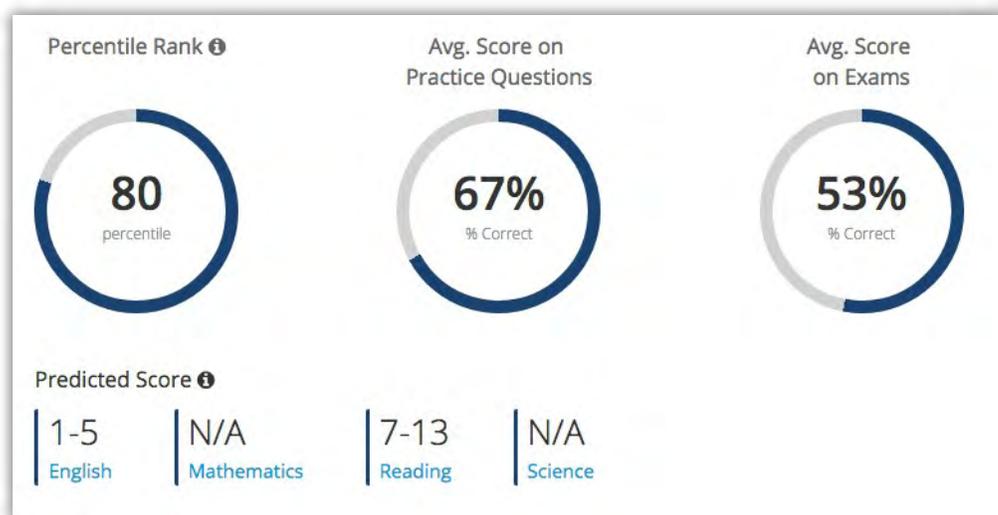


There's a lot of information to take in from this screen, but we'll help you make sense of it all.

Next to the calendar notice, you'll see information about your daily learning “goals” related to your overall progress, as well as a specific suggestion of learning content on the left of the blue area. You can access this content right from this page by selecting the note about “knowledge points” under the title of the content, or by selecting **Learning Task**.



Below this information, which orients you to what you need to learn, you'll see some performance statistics that will keep updating as you use the program:



There are four types of statistics:

- **Percentile Rank:** This shows your position relative to other students using ACT Online Prep. It's based on both your answers to practice questions and overall test scores. If you hover over the **i** icon, this information will be presented to you as a reminder.
- **Average Score on Practice Questions:** This presents an overall percentage score based on your answers to different sets of practice questions for different subjects.
- **Average Score on Exams:** This shows an overall percentage score based on your answers to the different tests you've taken in ACT Online Prep.
- **Predicted Score:** These scores for the four different subject tests (English, mathematics, reading, and science) are based on the same 1-36 range that will be given to you after you take the ACT. In ACT Online Prep, these scores are calculated from both abbreviated subject tests and the full-length Practice Test you'll take. Remember, these are predicted scores and are not a guarantee of your performance on the ACT. If you hover over the **i** icon in this section, this information will remind you of this last point.

Below the performance information on the dashboard, you'll see listings of your testing progress by different subjects and sections within those subjects:

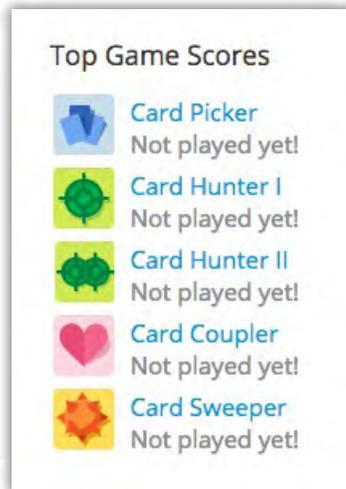
Strengths & Weaknesses ⓘ							
Mathematics Expert							
Pre-Algebra	N/A	Beginner	Basic	Intermediate	Proficient	Advanced	Expert
Elementary Algebra	N/A	Beginner	Basic	Intermediate	Proficient	Advanced	Expert
Intermediate Algebra	N/A	Beginner	Basic	Intermediate	Proficient	Advanced	Expert
Plane Geometry	N/A	Beginner	Basic	Intermediate	Proficient	Advanced	Expert
Coordinate Geometry	N/A	Beginner	Basic	Intermediate	Proficient	Advanced	Expert
Trigonometry	N/A	Beginner	Basic	Intermediate	Proficient	Advanced	Expert
Science Expert							
Data Representation	N/A	Beginner	Basic	Intermediate	Proficient	Advanced	Expert
Research Summaries	N/A	Beginner	Basic	Intermediate	Proficient	Advanced	Expert
Conflicting Viewpoints	N/A	Beginner	Basic	Intermediate	Proficient	Advanced	Expert
English Beginner							
Usage/Mechanics - Punctuation	N/A	Beginner	Basic	Intermediate	Proficient	Advanced	Expert
Usage/Mechanics - Grammar and Usage	N/A	Beginner	Basic	Intermediate	Proficient	Advanced	Expert
Usage/Mechanics - Sentence Structure	N/A	Beginner	Basic	Intermediate	Proficient	Advanced	Expert
Rhetorical Skills - Strategy	N/A	Beginner	Basic	Intermediate	Proficient	Advanced	Expert
Rhetorical Skills - Organization	N/A	Beginner	Basic	Intermediate	Proficient	Advanced	Expert
Rhetorical Skills - Style	N/A	Beginner	Basic	Intermediate	Proficient	Advanced	Expert
Reading Beginner							
Prose Fiction	N/A	Beginner	Basic	Intermediate	Proficient	Advanced	Expert
Social Studies	N/A	Beginner	Basic	Intermediate	Proficient	Advanced	Expert
Humanities	N/A	Beginner	Basic	Intermediate	Proficient	Advanced	Expert
Natural Sciences	N/A	Beginner	Basic	Intermediate	Proficient	Advanced	Expert

Each subject and section within subjects is given one of the following ratings once you start to answer test questions in the program:

- Beginner
- Basic
- Intermediate
- Proficient
- Advanced
- Expert

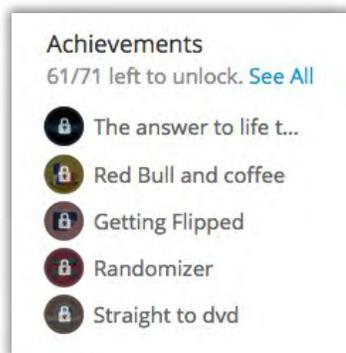
Don't worry if the listing of subjects and sections seems daunting at this point. As you use the program, this part of the dashboard will be filled in and you'll be able to track your specific progress. Pay attention to what this area of the dashboard says about what you still need to focus on.

On the right side of the dashboard, you'll see some information related to the game and achievement content of ACT Online Prep. First off, Top Game Scores are listed:



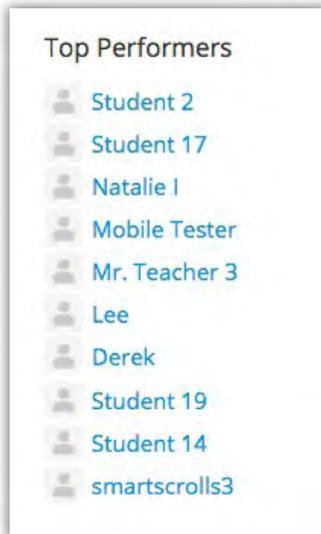
We'll explain the different games later. When you do play and rack up points on these games, your top scores will be shown here on the dashboard.

Below the Top Game Scores, you'll see the list of Achievements that are available but "locked" and those you've "unlocked" by progressing through ACT Online Prep:



The different achievements are given unique icons and titles, and become available as you access and progress through test content, and customize that content. You can think of them as “badges” of accomplishment in ACT Online Prep.

Finally, on this side of the screen you’ll see the accomplishments of other students listed as Top Performers:



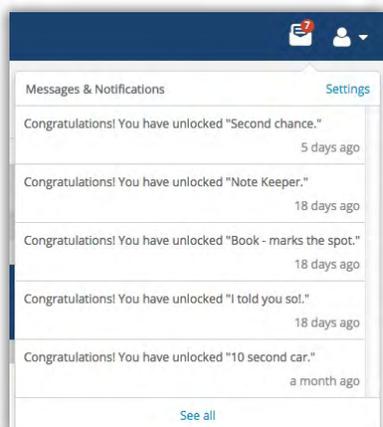
You can think of this as a little “friendly competition” between yourself and other students, either on a national or local basis. If you’re participating in your school’s access to ACT Online Prep, you might even know some of the students listed here!

See if you can get on this list as you progress through the program’s content.

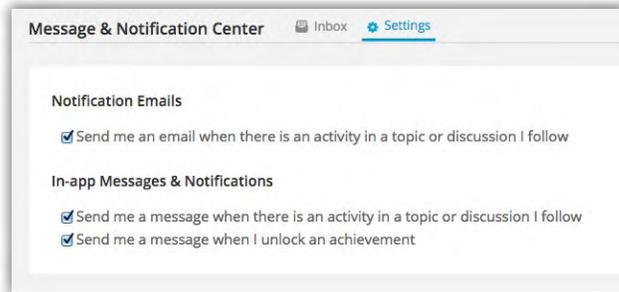
As a final note about getting started, you’ll see these icons in the upper right of the dashboard screen:



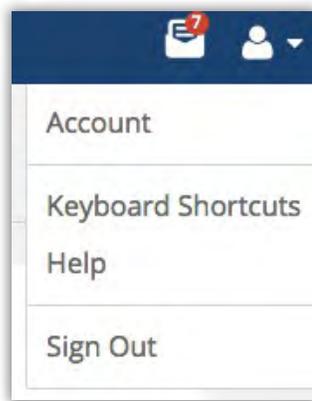
The “envelope” icon shows if you’ve received any new notifications about your progress, in the form of notes about any achievements you’ve unlocked, or about any activity in the system you’re participating in. If you select this icon, you’ll see a mini-menu of recent achievements:



You can change the settings for receiving notifications by selecting the Settings link and then making any changes on the following screen. By default, all notification options are turned on, but you can uncheck a box to turn an option off.



The “person” icon provides information about your account and the way to sign out of the program when you’re done learning or want to take a break. When you click on the arrow next to the person, you’ll see these options:



- Under Account, you’ll be able to view and edit your personal information.
- Under Keyboard Shortcuts, you’ll be able to view some keyboard options for navigating through the program.
- Under Help, you’ll find a FAQ about various issues you might experience with ACT Online Prep and want to troubleshoot.
- Under Sign Out, you’ll be able to exit the program.

You can also access these icons at the top of any screen in ACT Online Prep.

Navigating the Dashboard Tabs

The left part of the main dashboard screen features “tabs,” which you’ll use to access all the content in ACT Online Prep. You’ll use these tabs to do various things:

- Adjust your style of learning
- Participate in games and discussions
- Review with lessons and flashcards
- Practice with subject and full tests



Home



Learning Path



Game Center



Discussions



Lessons



Flashcards



Practice



Tests

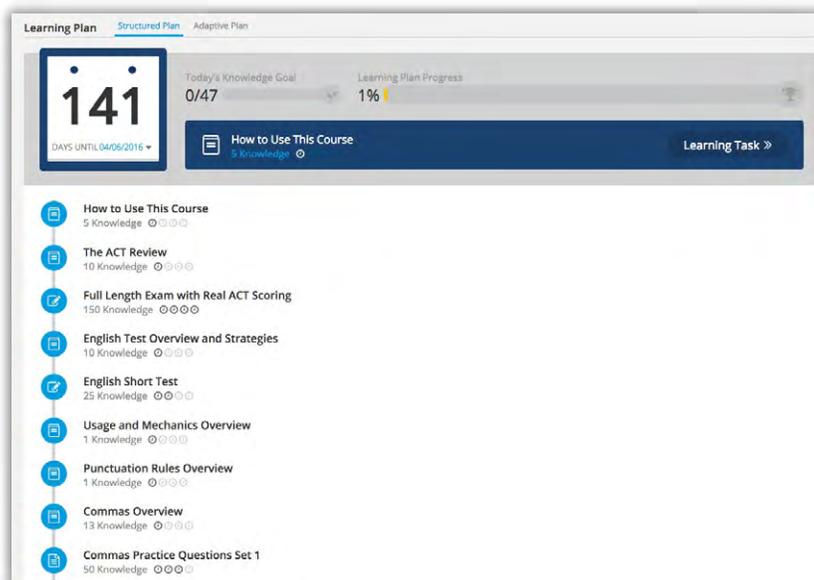
Anytime you want to access content under each tab, all you have to do is select the icon for the content you want. Now we’ll discuss each tab in detail beyond the Home tab , which you already know as the main dashboard screen in the program.

The Learning Path Tab

This tab presents you with the choice of following either the “structured” or the “adaptive” learning path. By default, the program assigns you the structured learning path.

In the **structured path**, you’re presented with content in a pre-determined order for the various subjects. The order of “tasks” does not change based on your performance, but rather adjusts to the timeframe you have (according to the calendar showing your test date that we discussed earlier).

You’ll see a list of learning content items in the order you’ll take them:



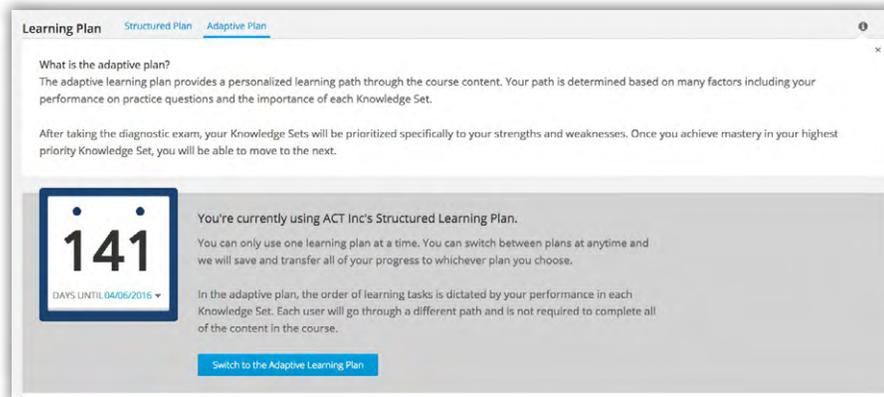
The screenshot displays the 'Learning Plan' dashboard for the 'Structured Plan'. At the top, it shows '141 DAYS UNTIL 04/06/2016', 'Today's Knowledge Goal 0/47', and 'Learning Plan Progress 1%'. Below this is a 'How to Use This Course' section with a 'Learning Task' button. The main content is a list of tasks with progress indicators:

- How to Use This Course (5 Knowledge)
- The ACT Review (10 Knowledge)
- Full Length Exam with Real ACT Scoring (150 Knowledge)
- English Test Overview and Strategies (10 Knowledge)
- English Short Test (25 Knowledge)
- Usage and Mechanics Overview (1 Knowledge)
- Punctuation Rules Overview (1 Knowledge)
- Commas Overview (13 Knowledge)
- Commas Practice Questions Set 1 (50 Knowledge)

Content that you’ve already accessed from this list will be “checked off,” although you can access it again. You also can select a particular section out of order if you want.

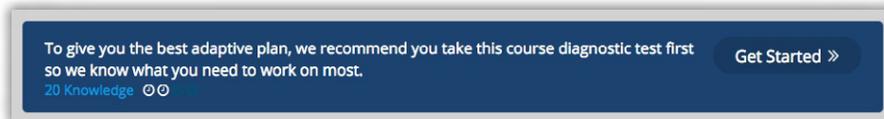
You’ll also notice that the same calendar and progress indicators that appeared on the main dashboard also appear here. Your learning path is closely tied to both your progress and the time you have before taking the ACT.

By contrast, you can select the **adaptive learning path** from the top of the main screen in the Learning Path tab. When you do this, you'll see this text:



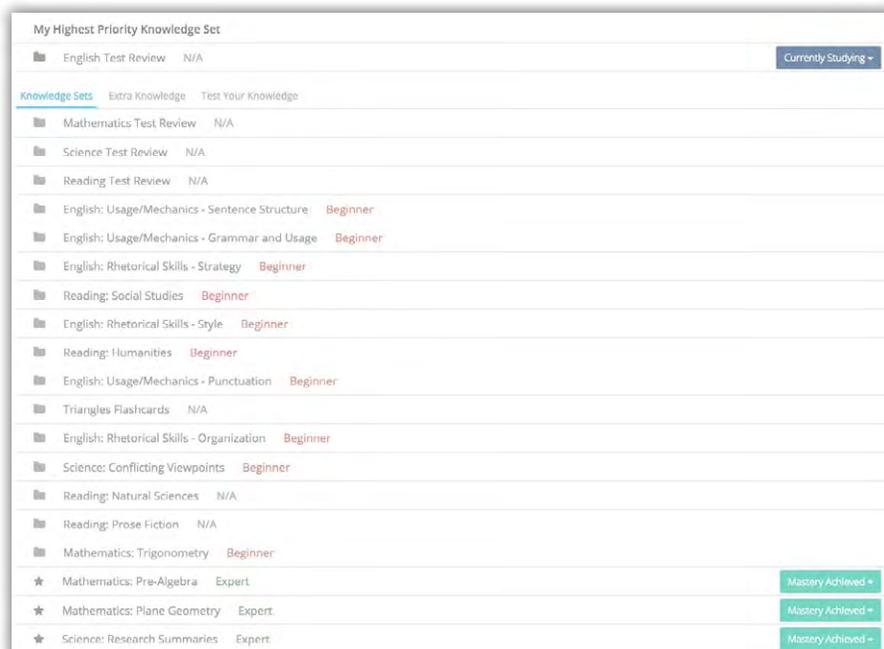
The text explains that the adaptive plan offers a “personalized learning path” through the content. You choose what you think you need to learn from different subjects.

If you choose the adaptive plan, you'll be prompted to start with a full-length practice test:



You'll be able to start this test right from this screen. You can select the “knowledge points” link in blue or the **Get Started** button to start testing.

After you take the practice test and start to review and take other content provided through the adaptive plan, you'll start to see the main screen fill up with different indicators:

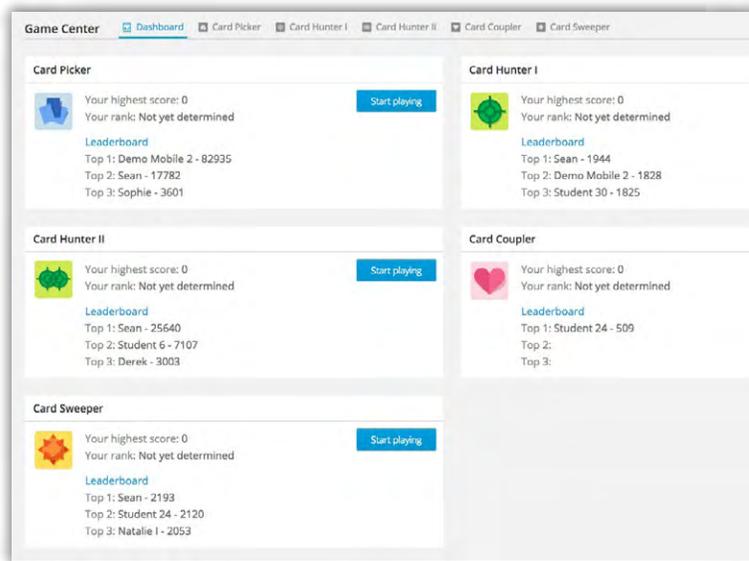


- You'll see a reminder of what you're "Currently Studying."
- You'll see the whole list of learning content, or "knowledge sets," related to the different subjects.
- You'll see an option of "extra knowledge," which provides background information on ACT Online Prep.
- You'll see an option of "Test Your Knowledge," which ties the adaptive learning path to different subject tests and a full practice ACT test.
- Finally, this screen shows your progress indicator for different test learning sections. This screen features the same range of indicators from Beginner to Expert that we saw before. If you reached the level of "Mastery Achieved" for any sections, you'll be able to select that title and mark that section complete in your learning path.

Think about which learning path will work best for you and why. Then, choose from the structured or adaptive learning path option. You might find that that you need a more organized approach, or that you need more guidance for certain content. You'll be able to switch plans from the Learning Path tab at any time if you find a certain approach isn't working for you.

The Game Center Tab

When you access the Game Center tab, you'll see a dashboard where five different games are presented to you:



You can jump right into a game by using any of the "Start Playing" buttons on this screen. Otherwise, as you occasionally take a "game break" from learning, be sure to look at the dashboard for updates about your highest scores, ranks, and the "leaderboard" showing the scores of other ACT Online Prep users. The dashboard also provides access to individual screens for each game, providing the object of the game, instructions, and a sample practice set.

All of these games involve the use of flashcards to help you learn. We'll talk more about flashcards by themselves in a later section.

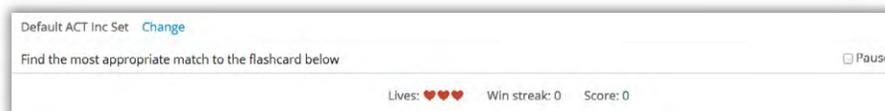
Playing games gives you “points,” which are used for your high scores and the leaderboard showing the scores of other students.

When you start any game, you'll be given instructions on the object of the game and an explanation of how points are awarded. An example from the game Card Picker is shown below:

The object of the game is to correctly match Side 1 of the flashcard with Side 2. Each turn, a different term from Side 1 of the flashcard will show and 6 possible matches will be listed below. It is your job to choose the correct Side 2 from the 6 possible matches. Points are earned for successful pairings based on how fast you select the correct card. Good luck!

After starting a game, you'll also see statistics related to:

- How many “lives” you have remaining related to wrong answers. You start out with three lives.
- Your “win streak” of correct answers
- Your overall score for the game



You can also pause the game to review your answers to any flashcard or set of flashcards, or restart the game.

Here's some information about each game:

Card Picker

You'll match the word on the flashcard shown above to the best definition or explanation in one of the flashcards below.

Card Hunter I

You'll match pairs of flashcards together with the correct combination of word and definition/explanation.

Card Hunter II

In this more complex version of Card Hunter, you can change the level of difficulty to create a more challenging and larger set of flashcards.

Card Coupler

You'll be presented with 10 pairs of flashcards that will each turn over to a blank side. You'll have to remember the content and location of the flashcards so you can match pairs and remove them from the board.

Card Sweeper

You'll see a board of different flashcards that includes only one matching pair. Once you make a successful match, those cards are removed but others are added to the board on the screen.

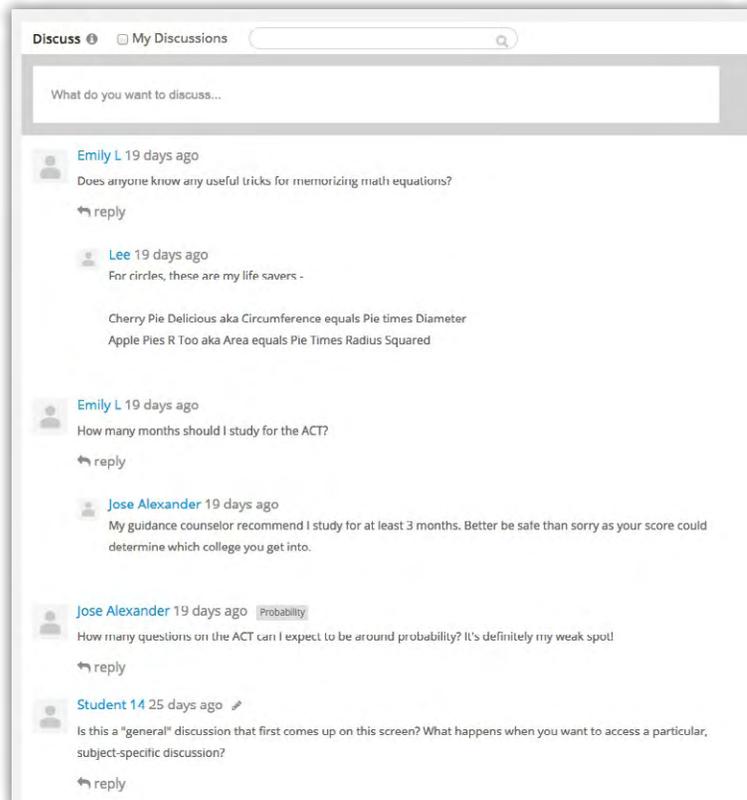
As you play the different games, here are a few tips:

- Pay attention to scroll bars inside any flashcards. This means you might have to scroll down to see all of the content.
- You can't save your scores until you win or lose a game according to the "lives" you have. If you exit a game before that, the system won't save your score.
- Keep in mind that the content of the flashcards is for all the subjects. You might play a game of Card Hunter to help you with mathematical or scientific terms just as much as your vocabulary for English or reading.
- If you've created a community flashcard set (discussed below), you can use this set to play any game, if it has enough cards to be used. On the dashboard for any game, select the "Change" link and then select the title of your set.

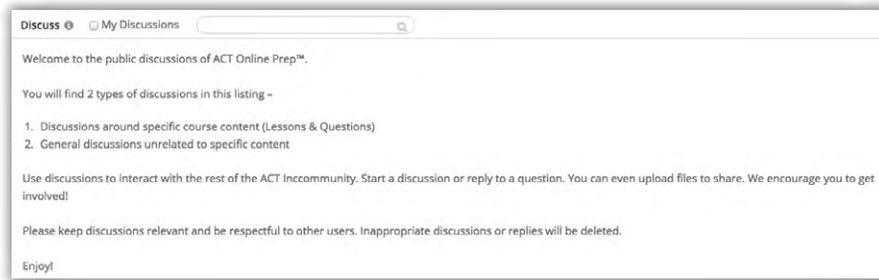
The Discussions Tab

If you're participating in your school's access to ACT Online Prep, you can start or participate in discussions with other users related to what you're learning. This feature of the program is turned off for individual student customers.

On the Discussions dashboard, you'll see the latest discussion comments that have been posted, along with which users submitted them and when they were submitted:



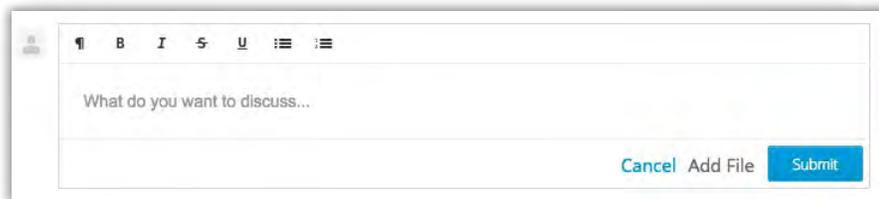
If you select the information icon near the top of the screen **Discuss** ⓘ , you'll see the following background information and guidelines about discussions:



You can participate in the discussion shown on the dashboard screen by typing in the “What do you want to discuss...” box at the top:



You can also reply to any discussion post by selecting the ↩️ **reply** tool. A comment box appears:

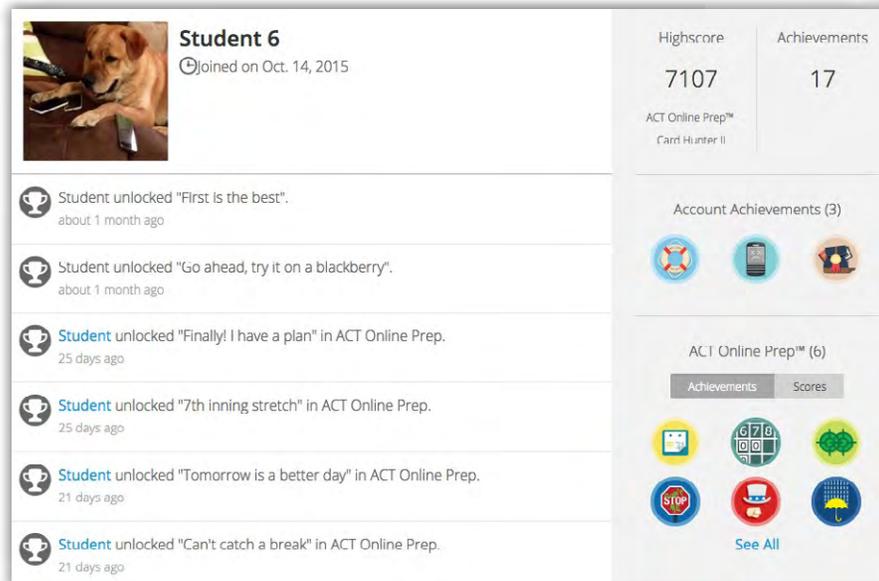


Use this text box to type your reply and then select **Submit**. You'll see it appear on the screen under the original post.

Alternatively, you can search for a discussion on a particular subject or start a new one by checking the “My Discussions” box and/or typing in the search box.

If anyone replies to your discussion post (or to your reply to an original post), you'll see details of their reply under your contribution.

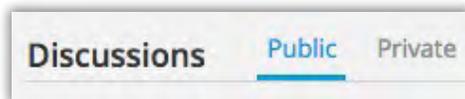
You can view some information about users on the discussion board by selecting their names. The following screen appears:



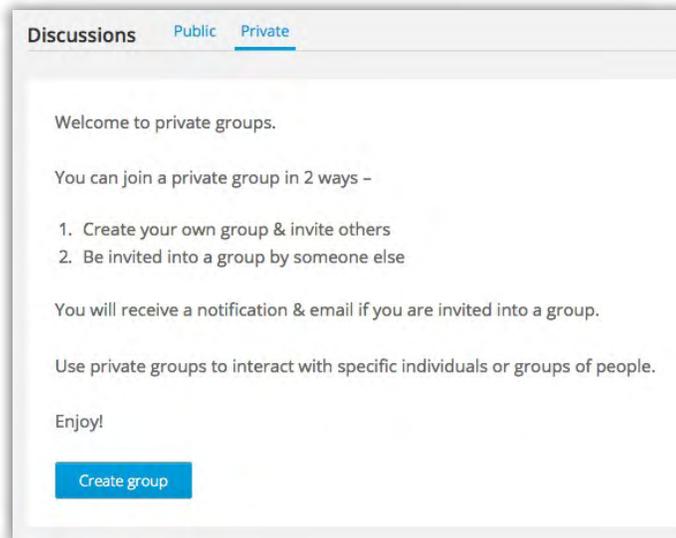
If you want to contact another user, you won't be able to contact her/him directly from this screen, but you can reply on any of the discussion screens.

So far, we've been talking about "public" discussions that all student users at your school can participate in. If your "school admin" for ACT Online Prep allows it, you can also create and participate in "private" discussions for a smaller group of students.

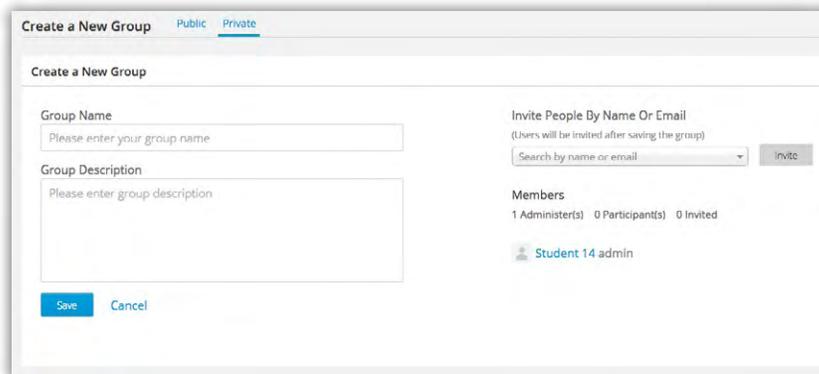
On the top of the Discussions dashboard, you'll see these options:



Selecting the Private option takes you to this screen, which provides guidelines for private discussions:



To start a private discussion, select the **Create Group** button and follow the instructions on the next page to name and describe the group and invite other users to participate. You'll also be designated as the "admin" for this group.

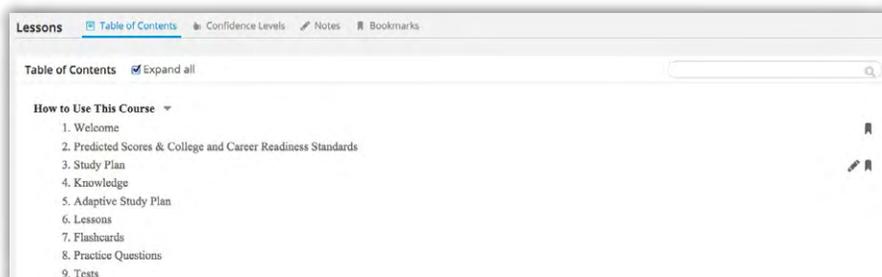


To create your private discussion, select the **Save** button.

Creating a private discussion that focuses on specific learning content may be helpful, but check with your school officials about whether this is allowed. The "school admin" for ACT Online Prep may have to be the "admin" for any private discussion.

The Lessons Tab

The Lessons tab presents a table of contents of all the learning content in ACT Online Prep:

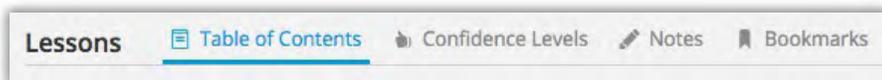


You can access any topic to read explanations and/or definitions for:

- How to use ACT Online Prep
- General preparation for the ACT
- Reviews of subject matter in English, mathematics, reading, science, and writing
- What happens after you take the ACT

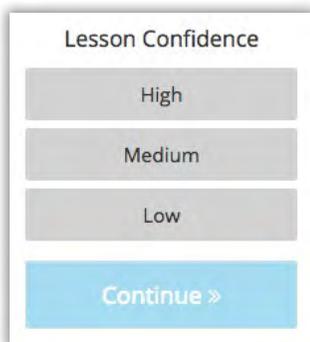
By default, when you first access the Lessons tab, the “Expand all” option is checked so that you see the entire list of topics. You can select the heading of any of the eight titles in the screen image above to collapse one or multiple categories, so that you can focus on only what’s listed for a certain category.

The Lessons dashboard also displays three options for listing or marking topics as you prepare:



- Confidence Levels—to mark your confidence about what you’ve read in a topic
- Notes—to offer some space for remembering something about a topic
- Bookmarks—to enable an easier way to return to a topic

Confidence Levels are noted in the top right area of every topic screen:



To mark a particular confidence level for a topic as High, Medium, or Low, select one of the buttons and then select the **Continue** button, which will turn darker blue when you've marked a confidence level. We'll see this same operation on the screen in terms of answering practice questions later.

Notes and Bookmarks are at the top of topic screens above the Lesson Confidence area:



If you select the Note (“pencil”) icon, you’ll be given space to write a note about the topic. Type your note and then select the **Add** button.

To bookmark a topic, simply select that icon. You’ll see that it has turned darker to confirm your action.

If you return to the Lessons dashboard, you’ll notice that the topic that you added a Note and/or Bookmark for has those icons associated with it. You can hover over the Note icon to view it on this screen.



You can also view a list of any Confidence Levels, Notes, or Bookmarks by selecting those titles from the Lessons dashboard.

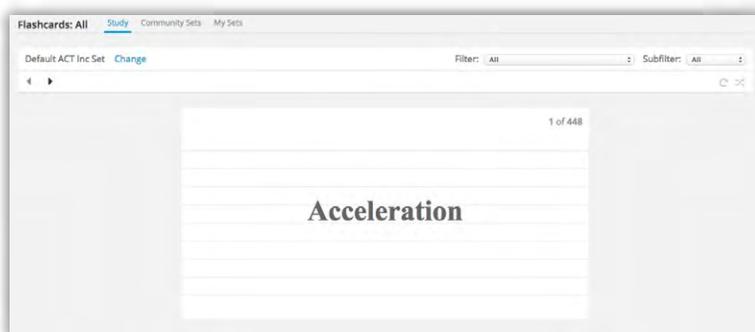
Lessons are a big part of ACT Online Prep’s content. Make sure you review lesson topics alongside taking subject and practice tests.

The Flashcards Tab



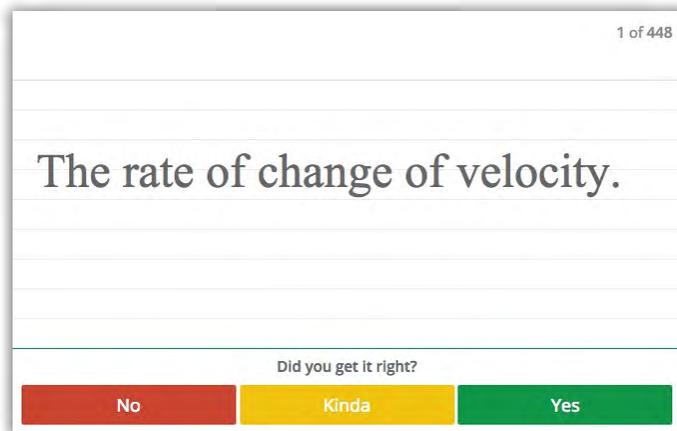
We’ve seen how flashcards are used in games, but the Flashcards tab provides access to a full list of flashcards available to practice with, for every ACT subject and subject section.

When you first access this tab, you’ll see the first flashcard in a given set:



In this case, “Acceleration” is the first, alphabetically listed flashcard in the entire flashcard set.

When you select a flashcard on the screen, it “flips” over and you see a definition or explanation:



Notice that the bottom of this screen has options for you to mark whether you knew about the “flip side” of the flashcard. Similar to marking confidence levels, this option allows you to keep track of how knowledgeable you are about certain subjects, and to identify which ones you might need more information about.

To move back and forth between flashcards in a set, use the ◀ ▶ tools near the top left of the screen. You can also use the ↺ ↻ tools near the top right to randomize the order that flashcards are presented to you.

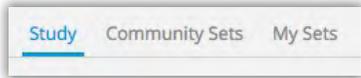
You don’t have to go through the entire set of flashcards to get a sense of what to learn, though. You can use the filters at the top of the page to narrow the set of flashcards to a specific topic or subject:



Use the dropdown arrows in these fields to change the filter and subfilter to options based on different subjects and whether these flashcards were “unanswered,” i.e., encountered in your learning before. The example below shows a more specific flashcard set after filtering:



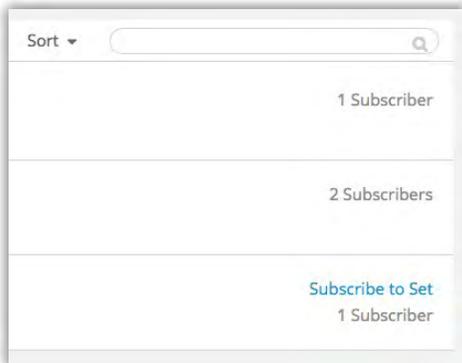
At the top of the Flashcards dashboard, you'll see options related to different flashcard sets you can access:



If you want to see what flashcards other students might be practicing with, select **Community Sets**. You'll see the following screen, which lists available practice sets:



On the right of the screen, you'll see a couple of options to **Sort** or **Subscribe to Set**:



You can sort Community Sets by three options:

- Sort By Popularity
- Sort By Card Count
- Sort By Most Recent

After sorting and finding a community set of flashcards you want to access, select **Subscribe to Set**. If you return to the Flashcards dashboard and select **My Sets**, you'll find the set saved and listed there. You can also stop having access to the community set by selecting **Unsubscribe from Set** from either screen.

Finally, you can create your own flashcard set from the My Sets screen by selecting **Create a Set** or **Create your own**. You'll see this screen asking for information about the new set:

The screenshot shows the 'Create Set' form with the following elements:

- Navigation tabs: Flashcards, Study, Community Sets, My Sets (selected)
- Section: Create Set
- Title: Text input field
- Description: Text area
- Topic: Select one of our topics from the dropdown or add your own. Dropdown menu with 'Select Topic'.
- Access: Radio buttons for Public (selected) and Private.
- Buttons: Create Set (blue), Cancel (grey)

Enter a title and description, choose a topic using the dropdown arrow, set the access to your community set, and then select the **Create Set** button.

The next screen will ask you to create the content of the cards themselves. Details for a sample created set are shown below:

The screenshot shows the 'My sets' screen with the following details:

- Navigation tabs: Flashcards, Study, Community sets, My sets (selected)
- Set Name: Horse physiology | 2 Subscribers | Edit Set Information
- Study horses | Study button
- Topic: bones-and-muscles
- Author: Student 14
- Last Updated: 7 days ago
- Game Center: No
- Table of cards:

#	Front	Back	
1	Neck	Very sinewy	Delete
2	Shoulder	Also sinewy	Delete
3	Sinews	Straining	Delete
4	Feet	They stick out	Delete
5			Delete

Buttons: Add Card, Save Cards

You can enter the content of both sides of a flashcard from this screen, and use **Add Card** to set up multiple cards for the set. You can also return to the previous screen by selecting **Edit Set Information**. To store cards in the community set, select the **Save Cards** button. After saving the set, select the **Study** button to return to the previous screen, where your new set will be shown.

Note: When you create a community set of flashcards, it'll appear in both the Community Sets and My Sets lists. This means that other users also will be able to see your new set.

After you've either subscribed to community sets or created your own, keep in mind that you may only see these sets of flashboards on the dashboard screen. Use the Change option to return to the "Default ACT Inc Set" and filter from the overall set of flashcards.

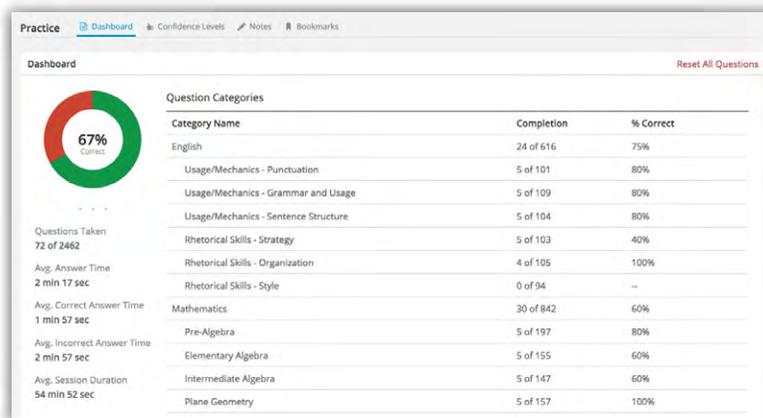
If you create enough flashcards in a community set, you'll also be able to use it to play a game under the Game Center tab. Check the My Sets option on the dashboard for a game to see eligible sets you can use for a game.

Think about how you want to use flashcards to help you learn. Then filter the available flashcards, subscribe to community sets, or create your own to best capture what you want to learn about specific test content.

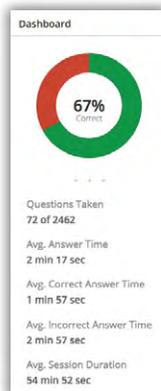
The Practice Tab

After you have set up a learning path and reviewed lessons and flashcards, you should make yourself acquainted with the Practice and Tests tabs. This is where you'll practice with actual test questions in different subjects.

The Practice dashboard shows a lot of different statistics related to your overall testing in ACT Online Prep, as well as statistics for different subjects:



On the left side of this screen, make note of the overall statistics for practice tests:

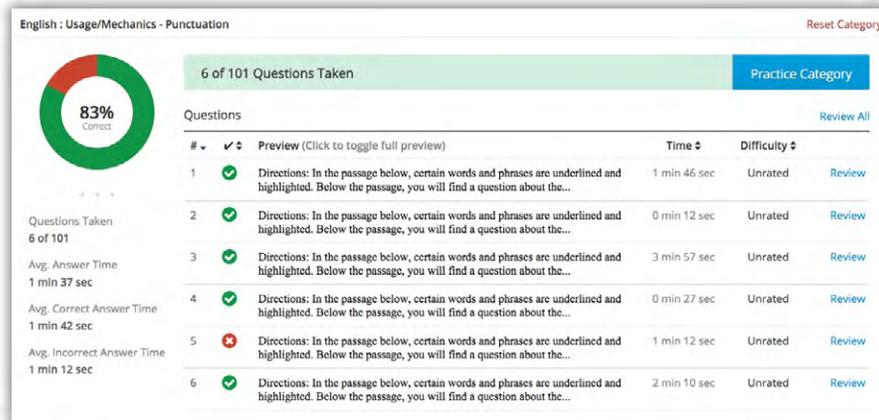


You may want to keep track of your answer time statistics and compare them to what you will likely use or need for the ACT.

The right side of the Practice dashboard shows the “completion” of how many questions you’ve attempted out of the available questions for each subject section, and the percentage that you answered correctly.

You’ll see the same options of Confidence Levels, Notes, and Bookmarks that we saw for the Lessons tab at the top of the Practice dashboard. You’ll use these options to mark practice test items and further document your learning.

Your learning path will suggest which subject section you should take next, but you can also access any section (or an entire subject) directly from the Practice dashboard. When you do so, you’ll see further information based on whether you’ve attempted the section before or not. The example below shows a partially attempted section according to the green check marks or red X’s:



Notice how this screen has the same setup as the main Practice dashboard. You can think of this as the subject section’s own dashboard screen. In addition to listing overall statistics, this screen previews each question, and also provides time and difficulty statistics for the questions. You can filter the listing of the questions by using any of these controls:



In addition to listing questions that you’ve taken, the section dashboard also gives you the option to **Review** any question or all of them. After selecting this option, you’ll be taken to a screen that shows:

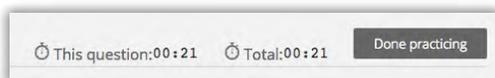
- The text of the original question
- The answer choices that were provided
- Your answer and whether it was correct or incorrect
- The solution to the question based on the correct answer

When you are done reviewing a question, select the **Done reviewing** button to return to the previous dashboard screen.

You can practice any section that you’ve already taken by selecting the blue **Practice Category** button from the dashboard.

When you start a practice section, you'll see the first question presented in this section and a few different bits of information or controls:

- Directions for the question
- The text of the question
- A scroll bar if there is text that continues past the bottom of the screen
- The answer choices presented according to letters
- The marking of your answer in the upper right
- The **Confirm** button when you want to submit your answer. This is light blue until you mark an answer, and then it turns dark blue.
- Time-expired statistics related to this question and the total time of the section. You'll see that the clock keeps running as you stay on a question.

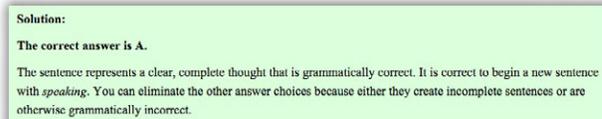


- Finally, a checkbox option to “View answers after confirming”



This is the one option that you won't see using the Tests tab, but here it may help you to immediately review a question and how you answered it.

If you use this option, you'll see either green (for correct) or red (for incorrect) indicators of your answer. Two examples of how the system marks your answer and provides a solution are given below:



At the top of either of these screens, if you select the “Learn more about this topic” link for a correct answer or “Help me learn about this topic” link for an incorrect answer, you'll see related content from the Lessons tab that may help you with future questions.

Note: Although there are timers used for items under the Practice tab, this is to simulate the ACT test experience. There's no sense of rushing to complete a test section before time has expired. You also can't skip ahead to a later question in the section. Focus on answering these questions, although you should also be mindful of how much time you're taking.

When you're done practicing, all you have to do is select the **Done practicing** button from any item screen and you'll be taken back to the main Practice dashboard.

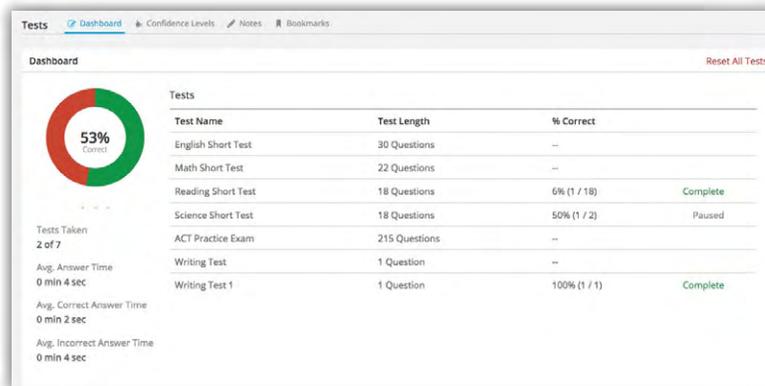
You should regularly visit the Practice tab according to your learning path or other suggestions from your content in ACT Online Prep. Pay attention to how your statistics for practice questions evolve over time, as you become more confident in certain subjects and mindful of others you still need help with.

The Tests Tab

After you've accessed and practiced with the various content offered in ACT Online Prep, it's time to apply what you've learned to a simulation of the ACT test environment. The Tests tab provides this experience through the following items:

- Short tests for English, mathematics, reading, and science
- A full practice ACT test
- Two tests based on ACT writing prompts

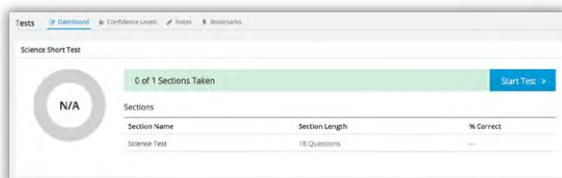
You'll see these options on the Tests dashboard:



Notice that this screen has the same general setup as the dashboard in the Practice tab, with overall test statistics on the left and information and statistics about particular test content in the middle and on the right.

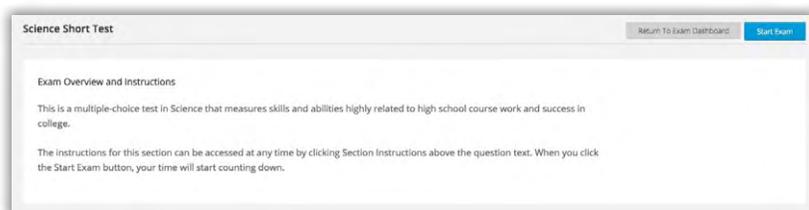
As with the main Practice tab dashboard, don't be discouraged by a lack of test statistics to start with. You'll see this information updated continually as you become more confident interacting with the content in the Tests tab.

When you start a test from the dashboard, you'll see a screen providing statistics for that particular test. In this example, the student hasn't taken the "Science Short Test" yet:



After the student takes and submits this test, this screen will show updated figures for the percentage of correct answers and a predicted score for the subject tests. If you hover over the **i** icon in the Predicted Score column, you'll see a reminder about predicted scores *not* being a guarantee of scores on the ACT.

To start a test, select the blue **Start Test** icon from the dashboard screen. Once you do this, you'll see the following screen providing an overview of the test and general instructions:



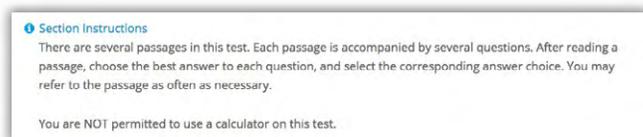
Read the general instructions and then, when you are ready to test, select the **Start Exam** button.

The screen setup for all test items is similar to what we saw in the Practice tab. You'll see:

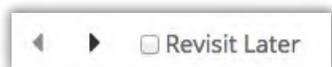
- The text of the question
- A scroll bar if there is text that continues past the bottom of the screen
- The answer choices presented according to letters
- The marking of your answer in the upper right
- The **Confirm** button when you want to submit your answer

However, there are also important differences or additions to item screens:

- The Section Instructions option [Section Instructions](#) near the top of the screen. If you select this title on any item screen, it provides text about answering questions on the test. In this example, the screen shows section instructions for the Science Short Test:

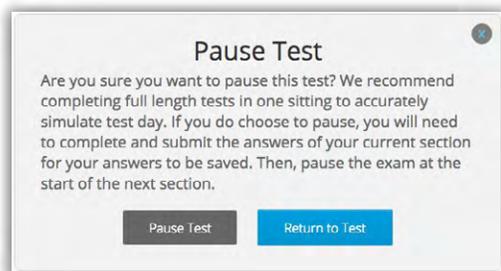


- Different controls that allow you to skip ahead in the test to other questions, and also mark questions that you may have trouble with and want to come back to later:



- Use the arrow controls to move ahead or return to previous questions in the test, and check the box next to "Revisit Later" to be able to return to a question more easily.

- Finally, you'll see a **Pause** button. Even though there is no test timer (like there was in the Practice tab), you're able to "stop" and save the test if you need to. However, after selecting this button, you'll see the following popup warning:



As you use the content in the Tests tab, keep this warning in mind in terms of also practicing the conditions you'll face on test day. Time yourself on this test content according to the guidelines in the *Preparing for the ACT® Test* document, and try not to rely on the Pause function even though it's available to you if needed.

As you test and are mindful of the allotted test time that you'll encounter on the ACT, pay attention to this option in the top right of item screens:

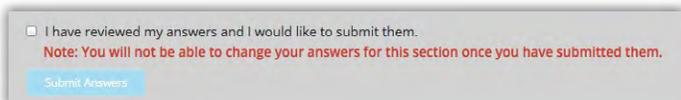
[Review & Finalize Section](#)

When you are close to the allotted test time, select this title to view a screen listing all questions according to their number, whether you've flagged them to revisit, and whether you've answered them. The example below shows the Review & Finalize Section screen for the first few questions of the Science Short Test:

Review & Finalize Section			
Questions (Click to jump to a question)			
#	Revisit	Answered	Preview
1			Passage I
2			Passage I
3			Passage I
4			Passage I
5			Passage I

If you've used the Revisit option for a question, you can identify which questions to return to. Then select the title under the Preview column to return instantly to the question.

If you've revisited questions and have answered all that you can in the allotted test time, then look for this statement and Note at the bottom of the Review & Finalize Section screen:



If you agree with the statement and recognize the warning in the Note, then check the box next to the statement and select the blue **Submit Answers** button. You must check the box and use this button to have the system record your answers to the test questions.

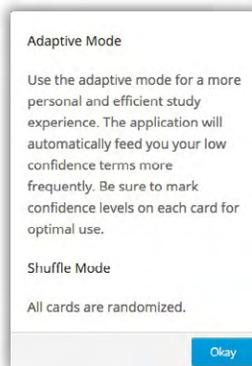
Note: While the Review & Finalize Section option is theoretically available on every item screen in a test, we recommend using this only as you get close to the end of test time that you'll experience on the ACT. Restricting your use of this option will help you simulate test day.

Whether you're using the structured or adaptive learning path, work up to the Tests tab content in ACT Online Prep, and then prepare to take this content multiple times. It may seem daunting, but it's to your benefit to engage this material on a repeated basis along with using the learning content available through the other tabs.

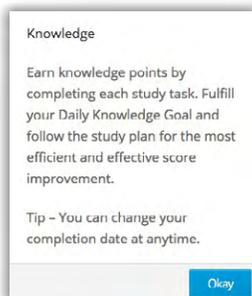
Overall Tips and Strategies

As you navigate through the tabs in the program, there are a few tips and strategies that will help you.

- Be on the lookout for occasional tips the system will provide through popup screens. An example about using the adaptive learning path is shown below:



- You'll also see popups about progress indicators such as Knowledge points. You can think of Knowledge points as another version of Achievements that you'll "unlock" as you work your way through ACT Online Prep content:

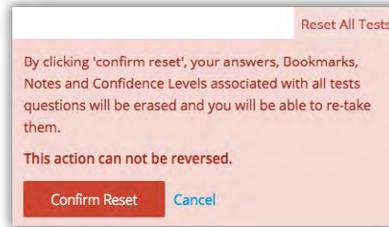
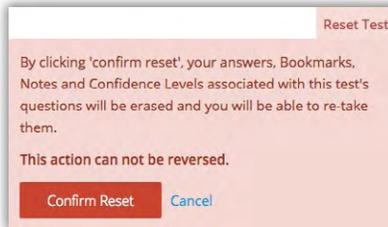


- In terms of taking practice questions and tests, there are two options to reset this content:

Reset All Questions

Reset All Tests

Maybe you think you've gone over and marked the content in the Practice and Test tabs enough and you want to "start over" with these test questions. However, when you choose either of these options, you'll see a warning:



The text in these warnings makes it clear that your interaction with test questions through answering them or marking Confidence Levels/Notes/Bookmarks will be erased from the system. Again, you might want to do this to start over with the questions, but balance this need with the advantages you get from marking content with your own contributions, which you've achieved through your ACT Online Prep learning.

- Finally, there are a few tips related to certain test questions or subjects. In English or reading questions, you may see the use of highlighted text in a passage:

When I hold it up to the light, I can imagine scenes from my past. I can see black-backed dolphins arching across the oceans surface, in the sunrise, just beyond my brother, who is fishing. The tide has retreated, beaching various sea creatures after a stormy night—an upturned horseshoe crab and a marooned jellyfish with its still dangerous tentacles. When I press the plastic packet of ocean, I feel the grit of sand and imagine it clasping my calves, making them look like a sand sculpture.

Pay attention to how this highlighted text is used in answering the question about the passage.

- The two writing tests in the Tests tab are each focused on one writing prompt that you'll be asked to respond to. The program gives you all the necessary content for taking the writing test. However, it does not provide space in the system for you to type your writing essay, and it does not score your essay for you. The Section Instructions for a writing practice test make this clear:

Section Instructions
 Directions: This is a test of your writing skills. You will have forty (40) minutes to read the prompt, plan your response, and write an essay in English in the actual English test. Before you begin working, read all material in the prompt below carefully to understand exactly what you are being asked to do.
 The essay prompt below is self-scored. Your essay should be completed on a separate sheet of paper.
 When your time is up, you can score your essay using the scoring rubric provided in the Review section of the test.

When you are ready to take a writing test, make sure you have the materials to write an essay. Then, use the same process for starting a test and submitting your answers that we've described earlier. After you've written your essay, you may use either the **Review & Finalize Section** link or the **Confirm** button to indicate that you are done writing.

After you've submitted a writing essay, you should see the following update to the Tests dashboard:



The “100 % (1/1)” reference only indicates that you've submitted an essay; it does not indicate a score estimate for the essay. After writing your essay, access the **Review** option on the dashboard for the writing test to self-score your writing according to the scoring guidelines presented.



What Happens After Taking the ACT

We hope this user guide allows you to get the best possible experience from the ACT Online Prep license that you have, whether as an individual student or as a student participating in your school's access. As long as you keep in mind that predicted scores in ACT Online Prep are not guarantees of how you will do on the ACT, this should be a great period of learning for you.

You can plan to use ACT Online Prep up until test day—just not on test day itself! After you take the ACT, however, you can still use the content in the program to make plans for using your scores for college.

To see content related to using your ACT scores, log in to your ACT Online Prep account and access the “What’s Next” section of the Lessons tab.

Remember, your access to ACT Online Prep is good for a year—so plan to make use of it before testing, in between tests, and after testing on the ACT. If you need to contact us with any questions, you can email us at customerservice@onlineprep.act.org or call us at 319.337.1429. You can also use the “Contact Support” link at the bottom of any page in ACT Online Prep to submit a contact form to us.

ACT[®]