

SAT Summer 7-Week Workout Plan: Summary

Version as of August 17, 2023 | Dan Blocksom, KIU Academy Guidance Counselor

Introduction

This workout plan is based on one very simple idea: ***Train the way you fight***. This workout plan is very simple: **3-6-7**. Study in test-like conditions for **three hours straight, six days a week, for seven weeks**, and take a **full-length practice test every Saturday**. During these three hours, **no phones, no music, and no laptop or tablet** (except for practice test days). During your study time, prioritize study areas based on your strengths and weaknesses.

This video walks through this workout plan: <https://youtu.be/wm01dUxzipA>.



What you need

- **SAT study books:** See detailed section below for suggested books, but you can buy whatever you think is best. The important thing is to work on something in a consistent and disciplined way.
- **Timer:** a stopwatch or an old-fashioned timer. Do not use your phone.
- **Blank note cards:** to make your own vocab cards with.
- A **printer** OR access to a printer.
- **Notebook paper:** Divide the notebook paper / notebook / looseleaf into three sections: math, reading, and writing.
- **Scratch paper** to use for the practice tests' math sections.

What to do

Week 0: Take your first practice test on your laptop or tablet using the BlueBook app. Take under timed conditions.¹

Weeks 1-7: Five days of studying three hours straight each day. Start each day with your worst / least favorite subject, which you spend most time on, then work to your second worst, then end with your favorite. Make about 15 minutes of time to learn 6-10 new words each day. Then on Saturday at 8:30am, take a practice test in timed conditions.



Details on how to make the most of your study time, where to get vocabulary lists, and what tests to take are all in the longer document below.

Get out there and reap the results of your labor!

SAT Summer 7-Week Workout Plan Checklist

Cross off each day that you put in at least 3 hours of no phone, no music, no laptop, no TV SAT prep time!

Week 1	Day 1	Day 2	Day 3	Day 4	Day 5	Day 6 – Test!	Rest day
Week 2	Day 7	Day 8	Day 9	Day 10	Day 11	Day 12 – Test!	Rest day
Week 3	Day 13	Day 14	Day 15	Day 16	Day 17	Day 18 – Test!	Rest day
Week 4	Day 19	Day 20	Day 21	Day 22	Day 23	Day 24 – Test!	Rest day
Week 5	Day 25	Day 26	Day 27	Day 28	Day 29	Day 30 – Test!	Rest day
Week 6	Day 31	Day 32	Day 33	Day 34	Day 35	Day 36 – Test!	Rest day
Week 7	Day 37	Day 38	Day 39	Day 40	Day 41	Day 42 – Test!	Rest day

Test score progress chart

	Practice #1	Practice #2	Practice #3	Practice #4	Practice #5	Practice #6	Practice #7
<i>Date</i>							
<i>Verbal</i>							
<i>Math</i>							
Total							

¹ <https://satsuite.collegeboard.org/digital/digital-practice-preparation/practice-tests/bluebook>.

SAT Summer 7-Week Workout Plan: Details

Introduction

This workout plan is based on one very simple idea: ***Train the way you fight***. This military adage is applicable for many areas of life, including preparation for standardized testing. The SAT is now about two hours long. This 7-week workout plan will teach you the test material well, but also train your ability to focus for three straight hours with no distractions.

This workout plan is very simple: **3-6-7**. Study in test-like conditions for three hours straight, six days a week, for seven weeks, and take a full-length practice test every Saturday. During your study time, prioritize study areas based on your strengths and weaknesses.

This workout plan also makes no fancy promises and doesn't care too much what books or materials you use. Just like in life, you will get out of this program what you put into it. If you don't follow the rules and don't give three hours of your best effort every day, you won't get great results. I put in my best effort, and raised my SAT score by about 300 points.

Have fun, study hard, and reap the results of your labor!

Necessary supplies

- Timer (can be a stopwatch or an old-fashioned timer). As explained later, you may not use your phone. Examples below:
- SAT vocabulary cards (examples below) OR blank note cards to make your own vocab cards (available at 100yen stores).
- A printer OR access to a printer.
- Notebook paper. Divide the notebook paper / notebook / looseleaf into three sections: math, reading, and writing.
- Scratch paper to use for the practice tests.²

Materials

The following books are merely suggestions based on my research online.³ You are free to pick whatever materials you feel are the best match for you. The important thing is to get materials that enable you to (1) practice the areas that you are weakest in, and (2) practice taking timed tests.

- Practice tests (for new digital format) (pick one)
 - o Princeton Review Digital SAT Premium Prep, 2024 (available from July 25): https://www.amazon.co.jp/Princeton-Review-Digital-Premium-Prep/dp/0593516877/ref=sr_1_2?keywords=practice+test+for+the+digital+sat&qid=1684721862&sprefix=digital+sat+test%2Caps%2C262&sr=8-2 (contains 4 practice tests)
 - o Kaplan Digital SAT Total Prep 2024 (available from December 5, 2023): https://www.amazon.co.jp/Digital-Total-Prep-2024-Kaplan/dp/150628728X/ref=sr_1_1?_mk_ja_JP=%E3%82%AB%E3%82%BF%E3%82%AB%E3%83%8A&crd=GHHSD4ISi8HX&keywords=kaplan+2024+sat&qid=1685336492&sprefix=kaplan+2024+sa%2Caps%2C320&sr=8-1.
- All-in-one average prep book

² Scratch paper will be provided at the testing center for the actual test.

<https://satsuite.collegeboard.org/help-center/will-students-still-be-able-use-scratch-paper>.

³ Here are some websites that review various SAT prep books:

<https://blog.prepscholar.com/10-best-sat-books-for-sat-prep>;

<https://www.bestcolleges.com/blog/best-sat-prep-books/>;

- o Princeton Review (available from July 18, 2023):
https://www.amazon.co.jp/Princeton-Review-Digital-Prep-2024/dp/0593516893/ref=sr_1_1?__mk_ja_JP=%E3%82%AB%E3%82%BF%E3%82%AB%E3%83%8A&crd=176ZU6Y1J03Z6&keywords=princeton+review+digital+SAT+prep&qid=1687830014&sprefix=princeton+rev+digital+sat+prep%2Caps%2C182&sr=8-1.
- Math
 - o For people with average or so-so math skills:
 - Barron's SAT Math Workbook:
https://www.amazon.co.jp/Barrons-Math-Workbook-Lawrence-Leff-dp-1438011768/dp/1438011768/ref=dp_ob_title_bk
 - o For people with great math skills and aiming for a perfect score (pick one):
 - PWN the SAT:
https://www.amazon.co.jp/PWN-SAT-Guide-Mike-McClenathan/dp/0692984364/ref=sr_1_1?__mk_ja_JP=%E3%82%AB%E3%82%BF%E3%82%AB%E3%83%8A&crd=3AWRLHVUYVKYV&keywords=pwn+the+sat&qid=1685413789&sprefix=pwn+the+sat%2Caps%2C475&sr=8-1
 - College Panda SAT Math:
https://www.amazon.co.jp/College-Pandas-SAT-Math-Advanced/dp/0989496422/ref=sr_1_3?__mk_ja_JP=%E3%82%AB%E3%82%BF%E3%82%AB%E3%83%8A&crd=3AWRLHVUYVKYV&keywords=pwn+the+sat&qid=1685413789&sprefix=pwn+the+sat%2Caps%2C475&sr=8-3
- Reading
 - o The Critical Reader: SAT Reading:
https://www.amazon.co.jp/Critical-Reader-Fifth-Complete-Reading/dp/B0BT9PB5DS/ref=sr_1_2?__mk_ja_JP=%E3%82%AB%E3%82%BF%E3%82%AB%E3%83%8A&crd=36A36V2HT4OC1&keywords=%22The+Critical+Reader%3A+The+Complete+Guide+to+SAT+Reading%2C+4th+Edition%22&qid=1685446299&sprefix=%2Caps%2C1282&sr=8-2.⁴
 - o (Barron's, Kaplan, and Princeton Review also typically offer decent options as well).
- Writing
 - o The Critical Reader: SAT Grammar:
https://www.amazon.co.jp/Sixth-Ultimate-Guide-SAT%2CAE-Grammar/dp/1733589597/ref=d_zg-te-pba_sccl_2_3/357-6585722-9475026?pd_rd_w=FGW0X&content-id=amzn1.sym.46270640-5101-4065-bf32-09e335aceee7&pf_rd_p=46270640-5101-4065-bf32-09e335aceee7&pf_rd_r=VGH9WT0E14Z617B6TR38&pd_rd_wg=sDukC&pd_rd_r=4b845b2c-289c-4a83-87fb-4a0a182a5d8b&pd_rd_i=1733589597&pssc=1
- Vocabulary
 - o Free lists:
 - 200 words printable flashcards:
<https://www.prepscholar.com/sat/s/resources/vocab>.
 - 550 words for digital SAT list:
<https://tp4s.com/wp-content/uploads/2022/11/digital-SAT-word-list.pdf>
 - List of other SAT word lists:
<https://blog.prepscholar.com/the-best-sat-vocabulary-lists-on-the-web>

⁴ Note that this is the newest edition of the very well-reviewed "The Critical Reader, Fourth Edition."
https://www.amazon.co.jp/Critical-Reader-Fourth-Complete-Reading/dp/173358952X/ref=sr_1_1?__mk_ja_JP=%E3%82%AB%E3%82%BF%E3%82%AB%E3%83%8A&crd=36A36V2HT4OC1&keywords=%22The+Critical+Reader%3A+The+Complete+Guide+to+SAT+Reading%2C+4th+Edition%22&qid=1685446299&sprefix=%2Caps%2C1282&sr=8-1.

Rules

- Set aside three consecutive hours for six days a week for all seven weeks. Take one day off each week and do something fun. This helps avoid burnout.
- During your daily three consecutive study hours for the SAT, do NOT use your smartphone, computer, tablet, or any other device that has the potential to distract you.
 - o This is to train your mind's ability to focus for three consecutive hours, as well as to make the most of the time you spend
- During these seven weeks, take a practice SAT test every Saturday at 8:30am under strictly timed conditions (including water breaks, bathroom breaks, everything). The digital SAT's schedule is as follows:⁵
 - o Reading and writing: 64-minutes with 54 questions
 - o 10-minute break
 - o Math: 70-minutes with 44 questions
- Sleep at least eight hours for the two nights before the SAT. Sleep is critical. Based on some studies that I did of my own test performance, the sleep two nights before actually had a larger effect on my score than the sleep the night before.
- If you are going to watch a lecture (e.g., from Khan Academy, YouTube) on a topic you are struggling with on the SAT, then watch it outside your sacred three-hour daily prep schedule. This is to make sure that your three-hours are as effective and focused as possible, without browsing around. Make a list of the topics that you want to watch lectures on, and then watch it at some time later in the day.
- Take regular breaks, but don't count those breaks towards your study time.
- Don't waste too much time on vocabulary – don't spend more than 15 minutes of your sacred three hours each day memorizing new vocabulary words. Chances are that you will raise your score by focusing on other things rather than vocabulary.

Week 0 (before you start the workout plan)

- Get all of the supplies and books.
- Download the Bluebook Application⁶ onto the device which you plan to use for the test itself.
- Take a full-length practice test on the Bluebook Application under timed conditions.
 - o Take this test exactly like it will be administered on test day.
 - o Don't give yourself any additional breaks, don't look at the answers, don't give yourself access to any devices, and time yourself using an old-fashioned stopwatch. Ideally, go to a quiet room that you are unfamiliar with but will not be disturbed.
 - o As you do the test, put a star next to all of the questions that you are unsure about or just guessed the answer (we will use this next week).
 - o After you are done, score the results. This will be your baseline score!

⁵ <https://satsuite.collegeboard.org/digital/whats-on-the-test/structure>. The SAT should be digital from now on outside of the US, but here's the schedule for paper-and-pencil tests:

- Reading: 65-minute section with 52 questions (75 seconds per question)
- 10-minute break
- Writing and language: 35-minute section with 44 questions (approx. 48 seconds per question)
- Math (no calculator): 25-minute section with 20 questions (75 seconds per question)
- 5-minute break
- Math (calculator): 55-minute section with 38 questions (approx. 87 seconds per question)

<https://blog.collegeboard.org/how-long-does-the-sat-take>.

⁶ <https://satsuite.collegeboard.org/digital/digital-practice-preparation/practice-tests/bluebook>.

Week 1

Day 1:

- First hour:
 - o Review the solutions in detail of the ones that you put a star on for the test.
 - Even if you got the answer right, it might have just been a lucky guess, and you may not be so lucky next time. Make sure to go over all of the wrong ones plus the unsure ones as well.
 - Make summary notes of any takeaway points in your notes. Be sure to separate the takeaway points into the three categories of reading, writing, and math.
 - Identify the areas that you are the worst in for math, reading, and writing, and rank them in order of weakest to strongest (strongest on the bottom).
- New words: Teach yourself at least 6 new words (10-15 mins)
 - o Go through whatever list of words you have, and go until you have ten new words that you don't know.
 - o Write each word on a separate flashcard, and write the definition on the back.
 - o As you go through the stack of flashcards, put them into two piles: 1) know it, 2) struggled with it. Then leave the "know it" ones alone, and keep reviewing just the "struggled" ones. Keeping putting the new "know it" ones in the "know it" pile. Keep going until you have no more "struggled" cards.
 - o Feel free to walk around the room or outside while you quiz yourself on the words.
 - o Study something else for 15 minutes, then come back and go through the flashcards again.
 - o Study something else for 1 hour, then come back and go through the flashcards again.
 - o This is going to be the order in which you will study.
- The worst: Study the area that you are worst in (e.g., reading comprehension)
 - o Start with what you DON'T like to do: save the best for last as something to look forward to.
 - o This area is where you should place more time than the other areas because it has the most potential for increasing your score.
 - o Read the explanations and do practice problems (and then read the solutions carefully) that are similar to the types of problems you got wrong.
 - o Write a few things that you learned in your notes. Don't spend more than 5 minutes writing these notes.
- The so-so: Study the area that you are second worst in (e.g., math)
 - o Same – read through explanations, do practice problems, and then take a few notes.
- The best: Study the area that you are best in.
 - o Same – read through explanations, do practice problems, and then take a few notes.
- Hooray! You finished day 1! Go have fun.

Day 2:

- The worst (same as day 1, continue where you left off)
- New words (same as day 1, learn 6-10 new words for about 10-15min, then come back to them to review again in 15min, then come back again in 1hr)
- The so-so (same as day 1, continue where you left off)
- The best (same as day 1, continue where you left off)
- New word: Review words from day 1 at least once.
- Great job finishing day 2! Relax, go for a run, watch Netflix.

Day 3:

- The worst (same as day 1, continue where you left off)
- New words (same as day 1, learn 6-10 new words for about 10-15min, then come back to them to review again in 15min, then come back again in 1hr)
- The so-so (same as day 1, continue where you left off)
- The best (same as day 1, continue where you left off)
- New word: Review words from days 1 & 2 at least once.
- Day 3 is now in your rearview mirror. Take a nap, have good food.

Day 4:

- The worst (same as day 1, continue where you left off)
- New words (same as day 1, learn 6-10 new words for about 10-15min, then come back to them to review again in 15min, then come back again in 1hr)
- The so-so (same as day 1, continue where you left off)
- The best (same as day 1, continue where you left off)
- New word: Review words from days 2 & 3 at least once.
- First week almost done! Go workout, get the blood flowing.

Day 5:

- The worst (same as day 1, continue where you left off)
- New words (same as day 1, learn 6-10 new words for about 10-15min, then come back to them to review again in 15min, then come back again in 1hr)
- The so-so (same as day 1, continue where you left off)
- The best (same as day 1, continue where you left off)
- New word: Review words from days 3 & 4 at least once.
- Hooray! You finished day 5! Workout. Do some cardio or lift weights.

Saturday:

- Take your first practice test under timed conditions. Use a practice test from one of the books you bought so that you can save the BlueBook app tests for the last weeks of the workout plan.
- Score your test
- Review all vocab words from the week.
- You are now finished with week 1! Do something fun.

Weeks 2-4

Repeat the menu on Week 1 for the next three weeks (days 7 through 21)

Weeks 5-7

Repeat menu on Week 1 for the last three weeks, but now use the BlueBook app tests on each Saturday, because you have three more left.

Tell me your results!