



Student Guide **Computerized Placement Tests (CPTs)**

Windows Version

The Purpose of the Tests

The Computerized Placement Tests (CPTs) were developed by the College Board, with the help of committees of college professors, to provide information about your level of skill accomplishment in reading, English, and mathematics that is required for success in college. By assessing your ability levels in these areas, the CPTs help to determine the English, mathematics, and reading courses most appropriate for you at this time.

The Types of Tests

Eight tests are available in The Computerized Placement Tests program. Your college will determine which of these tests you should take. The tests include reading, sentence skills, arithmetic, elementary algebra and college-level mathematics.

Test Administration

The Computerized Placement Tests are administered on a computer. You will read the instructions and questions on the computer monitor and will select your answers using the keyboard or the computer mouse.

Score Reporting

When you have completed all the tests, you may see a report of your scores on the screen and you may receive a printed report of your scores. The type of reporting depends on how your college has set up the testing. When you have completed the testing, follow the instructions of the Test Administrator.

If you are given a copy of your Individual Score Report it will include your Total Right Score, Range, and Percentile Rank.

The *Total Right Score* shows how many of the questions you could expect to answer correctly if

you took a test made up of 120 questions. Any test score is an estimate, not an exact measure of your skills (see Range, below).

The *Range* tells you how accurate your score is. If you took the test a second time you could expect your new score to fall somewhere within the same Range that is shown.

The *Percentile Rank* compares your score with the scores of typical students entering college who completed tests composed of similar questions. For example, a Percentile Rank of 70 means that your score is higher than those of 70 percent of the students who completed the test.

Who Must Take the Test

Your college will let you know if you need to take one or more of the Computerized Placement Tests.

When and Where Tests are Given

Your college will let you know when and where the tests will be given.

Fees for the Tests

Your college will notify you if there is a fee for taking this test.

Special Arrangements for Students with Disabilities

If you have a disability or temporarily disabling condition that will prevent you from taking the tests under standard conditions, inform the Test Administrator before taking the test. These requests should be made directly to the Test Administrator at your college. No additional charge should be made for these special arrangements.

What to Take with You to the Test

On the day of the test, you should be sure to take your student ID number (this is usually your social security number) and any other special





materials or information your college may ask you to bring to the test.

Testing Regulations

Textbooks, notebooks, dictionaries, calculators, or other papers of any kind (except scratch paper provided by the Test Administrator for use with the mathematics tests) are not allowed in the testing room. Further, anyone who gives or receives help during the test, or uses notes or books of any kind, will not be allowed to continue the test. Following the test period, no test materials or notes may be removed from the room. Your college may cancel any test score if there is reason to question its validity. Before canceling a score, the college may offer you the opportunity to take the test again.

Confidentiality

Your test scores and the information you provide when taking the tests will be used by your college for counseling and placement purposes. It may also be used by your college and The College Board or Educational Testing Service for research purposes. Your test information will not be used for any other reason without your permission. If the data is used for research purposes, special precautions will be taken to ensure that your identity is kept confidential. Any data received by ETS will be held for no more than three years. If you have any questions about the confidentiality of the data you have provided, or about your test scores, you should see your college's Test Administrator.

About the Tests

Computer Delivered Testing

You will take the tests using a computer. You will communicate with the computer by using either the keyboard or the mouse to enter your answers to the tests and to supply other information. The test instructions are easy to understand. Entering information also is very easy. A Test Administrator will always be present should you have any questions or problems. The Test Administrator has the ability to resolve any difficulties that may occur.

Answering the Questions

Because you take the CPTs on a computer, you don't have to answer as many questions as on traditional paper and pencil tests. The number of questions on the eight tests range from 12-20. The questions will appear one at a time on the computer screen. Most questions are multiple-choice and all you will need to do is use the space bar or mouse to select the desired answer. When you have completed the question and verified your answer, a new screen will appear with your next question.

Adaptive Testing

Each test is designed using adaptive techniques. This means that the computer automatically determines which questions are presented to you based on your responses to prior questions. This technique "zeroes-in" on just the right questions to ask you without being too easy or too difficult. The greater your demonstrated skill level, the more challenging will be the questions presented to you.

Each test is untimed so that you can give each question as much thought as you wish. However, once you have verified your answer, you cannot return to that question.

After you answer each question, the computer calculates a score based on all of the answers you have given and uses this score to select the next question to display. Because the test works this way, you must answer every question when it is first given. You cannot omit any questions or come back later to change an answer.

If you do not know the answer to a question, try to eliminate one or more of the choices. Then pick one of the remaining choices.

The Order of the Tests

The Computerized Placement Tests include Reading Comprehension, Sentence Skills, Arithmetic, Elementary Algebra, College-Level mathematics, Reading Skills, Sentence Meaning, and Language Use. The order in which the tests are given is determined in a number of different ways.

Your institution's Test Administrator may set the order before testing. Or perhaps you will be able to decide which test will be first in your test sequence. In another case, the first test administered will be based on the answers you





supply to a series of background questions presented before the actual tests begin.

Taking the Test

The first screen you will see on the computer is shown:

Test Login

Please type your last name, first name, and middle initial in the spaces below. Press ENTER after each part of your name.
 Press ENTER after middle initial to continue to the next screen.
 Press TAB after middle initial to go back to last name for correction.
 The TAB key is located on the upper left portion of the keyboard.

Last Name

First Name

Middle Initial (Press ENTER to continue or press TAB to go back to last name.)

You will enter your name on this screen. Use the ENTER Key to move from **Last Name** to **First Name** and then to **Middle Initial**. Pressing the ENTER Key again will take you to the next computer screen.

The next screen asks for your Student ID and your Date of Birth

Test Login

Please enter your ID. It may be up to 11 characters and should include only numbers and dashes.

ID

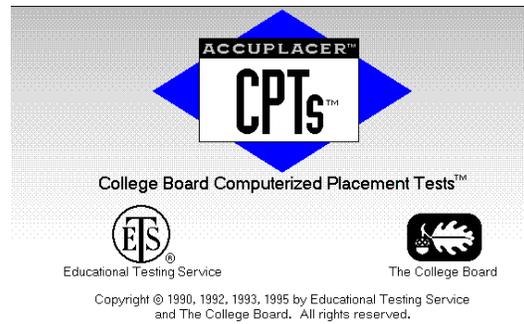
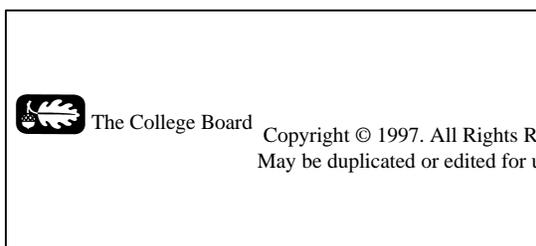
Please enter your date of birth. It should be entered month first, followed by day, and then year.

Examples: Type 10/23/70 for October 23, 1970.
 Type 01/01/70 for January 1, 1970.

Date of Birth (Press ENTER to continue or press TAB to go back to ID.)

Enter your **Student Identification Number** (although this is usually your social security number, your Test Administrator will specifically tell you which number to enter). Press ENTER to move to the **Date of Birth** and type your birth date using a dash (-) or slash (/) to separate the month, day, and year. It is especially important that this information be entered correctly. If you make an error while typing you may utilize the BACKSPACE Key to erase the error.

A series of introductory screens follow.



If your institution requires it, you may be presented with a series of screens asking background questions.

Some typical background questions are:

What is the total number of years you studied English in high school (grades 9-12)? Count less than a full year of English as a full year, but do not count a repeated year of the same course as an additional year of study.

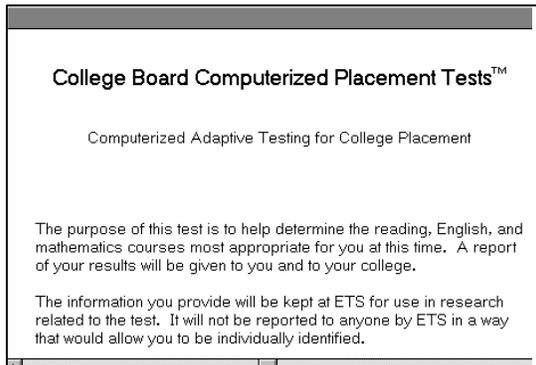
- One year or the equivalent
- Two years or the equivalent
- Three years or the equivalent
- Four years or the equivalent
- More than four years or the equivalent
- I did not take any courses in English
- Omit

What is the total number of years you studied mathematics in high school (grades 9-12)? Count less than a full year of mathematics as a full year, but do not count a repeated year of the same course as an additional year of study.

- One year or the equivalent
- Two years or the equivalent
- Three years or the equivalent
- Four years or the equivalent
- More than four years or the equivalent
- I did not take any courses in mathematics
- Omit

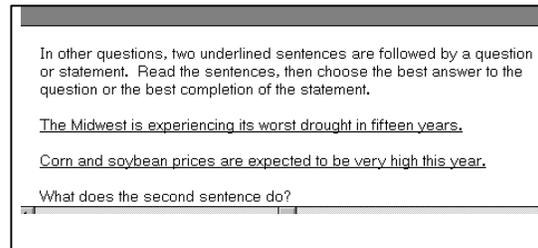


Finally, a series of screens will introduce you to the tests themselves.



A message will display when the tests are about to start.

Every test will be preceded by several sample questions that will familiarize you with the types of questions in that particular test. These sample questions are not scored. When you have completed these, you will continue with the actual test questions.



Choosing An Answer

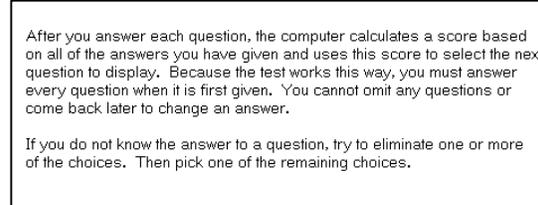
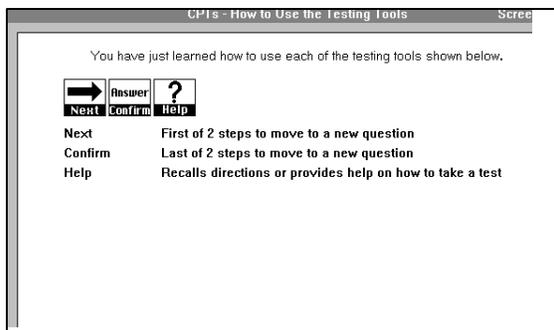
You will use either the keyboard or the mouse to enter your answers.

Using the Mouse:

If you are using the mouse to enter your answers, you will click on your choice and then click on the NEXT button on the bottom of your screen. To confirm your answer, click on the CONFIRM button, this will also move you to the next screen.

Guessing

You should understand that this is an adaptive test. Questions are chosen for you on the basis of your answers to previous questions. Because the test works this way, you must answer every question when it is first given. You cannot omit any question or come back later to change an answer.



Using the Keyboard:

If you are using the keyboard to enter your answers, you will use the space bar to move to your choice of answer. You will press the ENTER Key to select the desired answer. You will then press ENTER again to confirm your choice and move to the next question on the next screen.

You may change your answer on a particular question, but you must do so before continuing on to the next question. Once you go on to the next question, the answer is accepted and you **can not** return to the question.

If you do not know an answer to a question, try to eliminate one or more of the choices. Then pick one of the remaining choices.

Descriptions of the Tests

Reading Comprehension

This test is designed to measure how well you understand what you read. It contains 20 questions. Some ask you to decide how two sentences are related. Other questions ask you questions about reading passages of various





lengths. You will be asked to interpret and draw conclusions from what you have read..

Sample Questions for Reading Comprehension

Narrative Question:

Read the statement or passage and then choose the best answer to the question. Answer the question on the basis of what is stated or implied in the statement or passage.

There are two types of pottery that I do. There is production pottery—mugs, tableware, the kinds of things that sell easily. These pay for my time to do the other work, which is more creative and satisfies my needs as an artist.

The author of this passage implies that:

- (A) artists have a tendency to waste valuable time
- (B) creativity and mass-production are incompatible
- (C) most people do not appreciate good art
- (D) pottery is not produced by creative artists

Sentence Relationships Question:

Two underlined sentences are followed by a question or statement about them. Read each pair of sentences and then choose the best answer to the question or the best completion of the statement.

The Midwest is experiencing its worst drought in fifteen years.

Corn and soybean prices are expected to be very high this year.

What does the second sentence do?

- (A) It restates the idea found in the first.
- (B) It states an effect.
- (C) It gives an example.
- (D) It analyzes the statement made in the first.

Sentence Skills

Two kinds of questions are given in this test. You will be asked to correct a sentence by choosing a word or phrase to substitute for an underlined portion of a sentence. In the other type of question, you will be asked to rewrite a sentence in a specific way without changing the meaning. You will be presented a total of 20 questions.

Sample Questions for Sentence Skills

Sentence Correction Question:

Select the best version of the underlined part of the sentence. The first choice is the same as the original sentence. If you think the original sentence is best, choose the first answer.

Ms. Rose planning to teach a course in biology next summer.

- (A) planning
- (B) are planning
- (C) with a plan
- (D) plans

Construction Shift Question:

Rewrite the sentence in your head, following the directions given below. Keep in mind that your new sentence should be well written and should have essentially the same meaning as the sentence given you.

Being a female jockey, she was often interviewed.

Rewrite, beginning with
She was often interviewed...

The next words will be

- (A) on account of she was
- (B) by her being
- (C) because she was
- (D) being as she was

Arithmetic

The Arithmetic test measures your skills in three primary categories:

- 1) Operations with whole numbers and fractions. This includes:
 - addition, subtraction, multiplication, division
 - recognizing equivalent fractions and mixed numbers.
- 2) Operations with decimals and percents includes:
 - addition, subtraction, multiplication, and division
 - percent problems, decimal recognition, fraction
 - percent equivalencies, and estimation problems
- 3) Applications and problem solving include:
 - rate, percent, and measurement problems
 - geometry problems





- distribution of a quantity into its fractional parts.
- A total of 16 questions is asked.

Sample Questions for Arithmetic

Solve the following problems and choose your answer from the alternatives given. You may use the paper you have been given for scratch work.

All of the following are ways to write 20 percent of N EXCEPT

- (A) $0.20N$
- (B) $\frac{20N}{100}$
- (C) $\frac{1N}{5}$
- (D) $20N$

Which of the following is closest to $\sqrt{105}$

- (A) 3
- (B) 4
- (C) 5
- (D) 8

Three people who work full time are to work together on a project, but their total time on the project is to be equivalent to that of only one person working full time. If one of the people is budgeted for $\frac{1}{2}$ of his time to the project and a second person for $\frac{1}{3}$ of her time, what part of the third worker's time should be budgeted to this project?

- (A) $\frac{1}{3}$
- (B) $\frac{1}{4}$
- (C) $\frac{1}{6}$
- (D) $\frac{1}{8}$

Elementary Algebra

There are also three categories in the Elementary Algebra Test:

- 1) Operations with integers and rational numbers, includes:
 - computation with integers and negative rationals,
 - the use of absolute values, and ordering.
- 2) Operations with algebraic expressions:
 - evaluation of simple formulas
 - expressions, and adding

- subtracting monomials and polynomials,
 - the evaluation of positive rational roots and exponents,
 - simplifying algebraic fractions, and factoring.
- 3) equation solving, inequalities, and word problems including
 - solving verbal problems presented in algebraic context
 - geometric reasoning
 - the translation of written phrases into algebraic expressions
 - graphing.

A total of 12 questions are presented.

Sample Questions for Elementary Algebra

If a number is divided by 4, and then 3 is subtracted, the result is 0. What is the number?

- (A) 12
- (B) 4
- (C) 3
- (D) 2

$16X - 8$

- (A) $8x$
- (B) $8(2x-x)$
- (C) $8(2x-1)$
- (D) $8(2x-8)$

If $X^2 - X - 6 = 0$ then X is:

- (A) -1 or 3
- (B) -1 or 6
- (C) 1 or -6
- (D) 2 or -3

College-Level mathematics

The College-Level mathematics test assesses proficiency from intermediate algebra through precalculus. The categories covered include:

- 1) Algebraic operations includes:
 - simplifying rational algebraic expressions
 - factoring and expanding polynomials
 - manipulating roots and exponents
- 2) Solutions of equations and inequalities includes:
 - the solution of linear and quadratic equations by factoring
 - expanding polynomials,
 - manipulating roots and exponents





- 3) Coordinate geometry asks questions about:
- plane geometry
 - the coordinate plane, straight lines, conics, sets of points in a plane
 - graphs of algebraic functions
- 5) Application and other algebra topics asks about:
- complex numbers
 - series and sequences
 - determinants, permutations
 - combinations, fractions
 - word problems
- 6) functions and trigonometry presents questions about:
- polynomial, algebraic, exponential, logarithmic
 - trigonometric functions.

Twenty questions are asked.

Sample Questions for College-Level mathematics

If $f(x) = x^4 - x + 2$, then $f(-x) =$

- (A) $x^4 - x$
- (B) $x^4 + x$
- (C) $x^4 - x + 2$
- (D) $x^4 + x + 2$

The equation $x^2 + 2ix - 4 = 0$ has as its roots

- (A) $\sqrt{5} - 1, -\sqrt{5} - 1$
- (B) $\sqrt{5} - 1, \sqrt{5} + 1$
- (C) $\sqrt{3} - 1, -\sqrt{5} + 1$
- (D) $\sqrt{3} - 1, \sqrt{3} + 1$
- (E) $\sqrt{3} - 1, -\sqrt{3} - 1$

Reading Skills

You will read passages of 50 to 90 words and then answer questions about your reading. The reading passages will be about a variety of different topics. You may read about the arts, or science, or history. Half of the test questions ask about information that is stated in the passage. The other half will ask you to identify the main ideas, or fact vs. opinion, or the author's point of view.

Sample Question for Reading Skills

Read each passage below, then answer the question or questions that follow it. Some passages have one question and some have two.

My cousin lived in the city from 1984 to 1989.

When did my cousin live in the city?

- (A) after 1989
- (B) before 1984
- (C) between 1984 and 1989
- (D) neither in 1984 nor in 1989

Sentence Meaning

You will be asked to fill-in a blank with a word or phrase, or combine two sentences. The skills covered are writing skills including the proper use of nouns and verbs.

Sample Question for Sentence Meaning

Each sentence below has a blank space. Choose the word or phrase that makes the sentence meaningful and correct.

Mr. Swoboda grows roses, tomatoes, and carrots. That is why his friends say that he is a good _____?

- (A) gardener
- (B) builder
- (C) painter
- (D) florist

Each problem below contains one or two sentences followed by a question. Choose the correct answer to the question.

The teacher called on Joe in class.

What did the teacher do?

- (A) shouted to Joe
- (B) asked Joe a question
- (C) telephoned Joe
- (D) visited Joe

Language Use

This test measures your understanding of English vocabulary. The sentences come from a variety of different subject areas. You will be asked questions about basic and important idioms, particularly terms of beauty, age, greatness, and size, adverbs such as before, after, during, and prepositions of direction and place (from, to, at, etc).





Sample Question for Language Use

Each problem consists of two sentences followed by four possible sentences for answers. Choose the sentence that best combines the first two sentences. The combined sentence must be grammatically correct. It must also express the same thought as the first two sentences do.

- I sang in the choir. I enjoyed it.
- (A) In the choir singing, I enjoyed.
 - (B) In the choir to sing, I enjoyed.
 - (C) I enjoyed to sing in the choir.
 - (D) I enjoyed singing in the choir.

Each sentence below has a blank space. There are four words or phrases under each sentence. Choose the word or phrase that makes a grammatically correct sentence.

- They _____ the newspaper everyday.
- (A) reads
 - (B) is reading
 - (C) read
 - (D) does read

Questions About Individual Items on the Tests

If you have any questions about an individual question on any of the Computerized Placement Tests, you may write to:

**College Board Test Development
P.O. Box 6800
Princeton, NJ 08541-6800**

You will receive a written response to any question you submit. Or you can present the question to your Test Administrator who will forward the question for you to the same address.

Additional Questions and Information

If you have additional questions or concerns about the test, or the testing environment, or need any additional information or assistance concerning the Computerized Placement Tests, please notify your Test Administrator.

Questions about Test Scores

If you have questions about your test score or feel that there was some irregularity during your testing session, you should notify your Test Center Administrator. Your Test Administrator can answer any question you may have about the test.

Answers to the Sample Questions

Reading Comprehension

- 1. B
- 2. B

Sentence Skills

- 1. D
- 2. B

Arithmetic

- 1. D
- 2. A
- 3. C

Elementary Algebra

- 1. A
- 2. C
- 3. A

College-Level mathematics

- 1. D
- 2. E

Reading Skills

- 1. C

Sentence Meaning

- 1. A
- 2. B

Language Use

- 1. D
- 2. C

