

# The Rules for SAT Math

The rules for SAT Math Problems are pretty much the same, whether you're looking at Multiple Choice Questions or Student-Produced Response Questions. You must know the rules if you want to succeed!

## SAT Math Rule 1: You Have to Know the Words

In the Verbal section, you can usually fake your way past a few unfamiliar words in a particular question by using context and hidden patterns—the Strategy Guides for those question types explain how to do this. But if an SAT Math question asks you about the number of prime factors in a set, there's no way to answer the question without knowing what prime factors are. The questions don't really have any context. You have to know the terminology.

## SAT Math Rule 2: You Don't Have to Know Formulas

You DON'T have to know any formulas, but you DO have to know when to USE particular formulas. For example, the SAT may want you to realize that you need to find the area of a triangle, but it won't ask you to know the formula. The test provides EVERY SINGLE FORMULA that you need to answer every question.

## SAT Math Rule 3: All SAT Math is Easy

All the math on the SAT Math section is relatively easy.

In advanced high school math problems, the solution to one problem might involve complex graphs, trigonometric expressions, fraction bars, and pi; they're very complex problems, and they have very complex answers.

On the SAT, the solution is much more likely to be a plain old number like 12. The math is relatively simple, so the solution is relatively simple.

## SAT Math Rule 4: The Drawings are Usually Accurate

You can assume that every drawing is done to scale EXCEPT when the test specifically says otherwise. This is a very useful fact, because it sometimes lets you answer questions just by measuring things—you don't need any math at all.

## SAT Math Rule 5: Limited Subject-Matter

In a few moments, we'll go over every single mathematical concept the SAT might throw at you. You'll find that you're familiar with most of them, if not all of them, and the rest are relatively straightforward. Once you know these concepts, you can rest assured that they will be enough to answer *every single real SAT question*.

## **SAT Math Rule 6: 30 Seconds or Less**

The most important rule of all, from a strategic perspective, is that EVERY SINGLE MATH QUESTION can be answered in less than 30 seconds!

This doesn't mean that you're stupid if it takes you longer—it just means you aren't going about answering a question in the easiest way. When you're looking for a way to solve the problem, just remember that every single question is simple, no matter how complicated it may seem at first.

## **SAT Math Rule 7: All Necessary Information**

One of the most important things to remember is that each question has all the information you need in order to solve it—no matter how much it might seem like that isn't true.