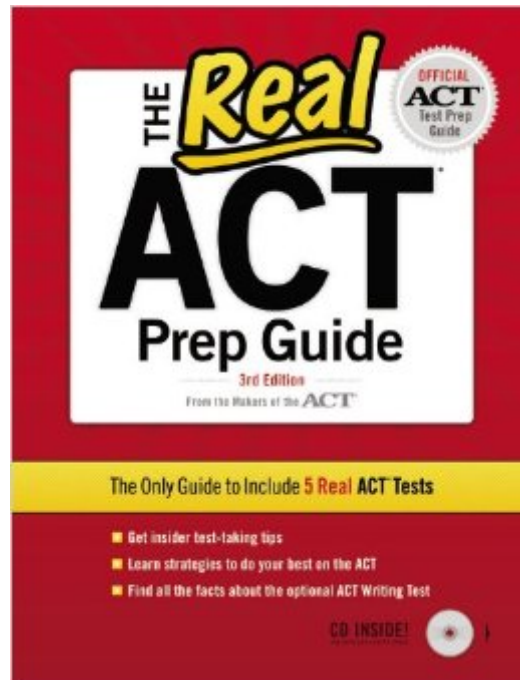


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# The Real ACT (CD) 3rd Edition (Official Act Prep Guide)



## Synopsis

The Real ACT Prep Guide with CD is the only book with insider test-taking tips and strategy, practice, and insight from the makers of the ACT. This is the only guide that includes 5 previously administered, full-length ACT tests written by the actual test maker (including 2 NEW practice tests). Also included is ACT content and procedures you'll follow when actually taking the test, along with in-depth review of the optional Writing Test and how it is scored; examples of all the question types; and suggestions on how you might approach the questions. The supplemental CD features a complete electronic copy of Peterson's Cool Colleges 101 and additional online college planning resources from Peterson's. The only guide that includes 5 previously administered, full-length ACT tests written by the actual test maker (including 2 NEW practice tests) ACT content and procedures you'll follow when actually taking the test Valuable information about tuition payment plans All the question types you can expect to find on the ACT Suggestions on how you might approach the questions and Peterson's tried-and-true test-taking strategies and tips

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

I am a private math tutor and author of the Ultimate Guide to the Math ACT. I gave this book five stars because it has the best practice tests. However the content is identical to previous editions, even the page numbers have not changed! The only difference is that there are two additional practice tests included here (one I recognize as the test from December 2008). The bottom line is

that you get a better value by spending \$21.50 for five practice tests in this third edition versus spending \$20 for the first three practice tests in the earlier editions ( prices as of 8/25/11).An even better deal is to scroll up this page to the box called "Formats" in orange letters. Click on the Paperback link and get the book without the CD. The material on the CD is not very helpful and getting just the paperback will save you a few dollars.UPDATE AS OF MAY 4, 2013: has made it slightly more difficult to find the book without the CD. Scroll up the page to where it says "Formats" in orange letters. Then click on the plus sign to the left of the "Paperback" link to expand it. Then click on the link that says "Paperback, September 6, 2011."UPDATE AS OF JANUARY 2014: is pricing the book with the CD to be 42 cents less than the book without the CD. No idea why that would happen.UPDATE AS OF APRIL 2014: no longer sells the book without the CD, so the instructions above regarding formats no longer applies. The book without the CD can be purchased on the web site but only through third parties.

First off, if you could only buy one test prep book for the ACT, I would wholeheartedly recommend The Real ACT prep guide. This is saying a lot coming from none other than an author of another ACT prep/analysis guide! The main advantage of this book is that it has tests which contain REAL questions made by the ACT organization. While other books may tout having "(Insert High Number Here) ACT practice Tests", the one serious shortcoming of all these books is that the questions in these tests are not real ACT questions made scientifically and validated statistically by the ACT corporation, which has adequate funds to employ such methods. Another huge advantage of this book is that it gives detailed explanations for every question in the five tests that it offers. While many other unofficial test prep books give explanations for their answers, the questions themselves are not scientifically validated like the questions from the test makers. The explanations to the questions explain the concepts behind each question, as well as why the wrong answers are wrong. This book certainly provides an enormous amount of useful material for your hard earned money!The book's main downside, however, lies in the introductory content sections before the practice tests are introduced. In the math section, for example, the guide tells you that you need to have a clear understanding of basic trigonometric relationships to be successful on the test. On page 55, the book gives you an example problem and simply tells you that you must use the sin relationship to answer the question. However, it does not state the definition of the different trigonometric relationships needed for the test, such as sin, cos, and tan(and in some cases: cot, sec, and csc). While looking at real ACT tests, I have seen many questions in the math section where the test asks one to evaluate a specific trigonometric expression, such as "What is the tan of

(specific angle in triangle) in triangle ABC". A clear understanding of these identities is indeed needed to solve these problems, but the ACT prep guide fails to define these, assuming that the reader already has a firm understanding of them. A prep guide does not have to go into the detail of a text book, but it should at least define the core concepts that will be tested. The prep guide also tells you to think about the question extensively before writing anything down- not a very good idea. When approaching a problem, you should always write expressions or representations of the problems, as it is much easier to see relationships on paper than in your head. Using your pencil frees up storage in your short term memory, so you can focus on the approach to the problem. Strategies that are not often beneficial with regards to the time constraints of the test are also present in the science reasoning introductory content section. For example, on page 115, the guide states that it is important to read the text thoroughly and make notes in the margins before you approach the questions. Because of the extreme time constraints of the science section, it is very hard if not impossible to completely understand the introduction to the experiments in each passage and still have time to answer all of the questions. The English section fails to mention a few concepts such as parallel structure and other smaller concepts that I have seen on multiple real ACTs in the past. Despite these shortcomings in the introductory concept sections of the Real ACT Prep Guide, it is still an invaluable resource for ACT test prep. No other company can make ACT questions like the ACT. Even my book, *Dissecting The ACT 2.0: ACT TEST PREPARATION ADVICE OF A PERFECT SCORER* or *ACT TEST PREP WITH REAL ACT QUESTIONS*, is dependent on real test materials that the ACT provides free of charge. Using and analyzing real test materials is the single best way to prep for the ACT, and this book has five of them. This book is an improvement over the previous edition because it contains an additional TWO tests on top of the three that were present in that edition (these three tests have not been changed). Aside from these additions, nothing has changed with regards to the content or layout of the book. It is absolutely worth your while to purchase this version if only for the two additional and extremely valuable real practice tests. However, you should save your money and get the non CD edition of the new book, because the CD does not have any information pertaining to test prep, but rather general information about college, planning your major, etc. Bottom Line: A must have book, but use only the practice tests and explanations to the questions on those tests. Ignore the rest of the book since it contains quite a bit of bad advice. This is based on my experience of taking the real ACT and getting a perfect score of 36. For ACT content and strategy there are other better books, but no other book gives you five real ACT tests.

Five official tests instead of just 3! I have been waiting for this book's release with bated breath. (Yes, this is the exciting life of an ACT prep instructor). However, I wish I could write separate reviews for the book with CD and without the CD. Once again, I paid the extra money for the CD, which promises to include "supplemental test preparation and skills based exercises." And once again, there are no test prep resources on this CD. It is a college planning CD from Peterson's with college planning advice, lists of undergraduate majors, etc. (The back inside cover of the book lets you know the CD is for college 'planing' -- a typo that does not inspire confidence!) I am really disappointed in what I feel is incorrect advertising here. However, I do want to note that The Real ACT Prep Guide itself is absolutely essential for prep. This is my tenth year of test prep tutoring and I always find that students who prepare with real ACTs have more confidence and get higher scores than those who don't. The more tests, the better, so it is wonderful to have five to work with. I should probably mention, however, that the skills review and strategies in this book are sub-par. The ACT company just isn't going to give all that much away. For the past few years, I have used The Real ACT Prep Guide along with *Boost Your Score! The Unofficial Software Guide to the Real ACT* with great success. It gives diagnostic feedback for the tests in The Real ACT Prep Guide and provides strategies and resources. Together with The Real ACT Prep Guide, it's kind of a "course in a box" and students love the reports so they can track their progress as they complete the official ACTs.

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