



**PSAT™ 8/9**

**2023-24**

**PSAT™ 8/9**

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# Understanding Scores

**FOR STUDENTS AND FAMILIES**



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# PSAT 8/9

## Score Resources

Congratulations to your student for taking the 2023-24 PSAT 8/9 at their school. Included is information about scores that may be helpful for students and their families.

### What's Included

This document delves deeper into the meaning of your student's scores, including what the assessment measures, how it is scored, and how students and their families can use the data to monitor their progress.

The document also provides:

- Information about estimating how much a score may change from the PSAT™ 8/9 to the PSAT™ 10 and PSAT/NMSQT®.
- A sample PDF score report walk-through so you can interpret your student's score reports.

### Related Resources

Visit our **PSAT 8/9 Score Information** page at [satsuite.collegeboard.org/psat-8-9/scores](https://satsuite.collegeboard.org/psat-8-9/scores) to find information about:

- Score release dates
- Managing access to online scores
- Resources for online score reports
- Downloadable Understanding Scores for Students and Families documents in English and Spanish

### CONTACTS FOR STUDENTS AND PARENTS

 [psathelp@info.collegeboard.org](mailto:psathelp@info.collegeboard.org)

 **U.S.:** 866-433-7728

**INTERNATIONAL:** +1-212-713-8105  
Monday–Friday, 8 a.m.–9 p.m. ET

# The PSAT 8/9 and the SAT Suite of Assessments

## The SAT Suite of Assessments

The SAT® Suite of Assessments is an integrated system of tests that includes the SAT (for students in grades 11 and 12), the PSAT/NMSQT and the PSAT 10 (for grades 10 and 11), and the PSAT 8/9 (for grades 8 and 9).

The tests measure the same skills and knowledge in grade-appropriate ways. They work together to show college readiness over time so educators, students, and parents can monitor student progress. Their content reflects the kind of meaningful, engaging, and challenging work that students find in middle school and high school courses taught today.

## Going Digital

While the transition to digital brings a number of student- and educator-friendly changes, many important features of the SAT Suite have stayed the same. The SAT Suite continues to measure the knowledge and skills that students are learning in school and that matter most for college and career readiness. The digital SAT Suite is easier to take, easier to give, more secure, and more relevant. We haven't simply created a digital version of the current paper and pencil tests—we're taking full advantage of what digital testing makes possible.

This Understanding Scores brochure includes information about how to interpret and use scores on the PSAT 8/9 that will be administered starting in fall 2023.

The PSAT 8/9 that students take in 2023–24 will be delivered digitally. It includes the following sections:

### READING AND WRITING

The Reading and Writing section measures comprehension and reasoning skills and focuses on close reading of passages in a wide array of subject areas. It also measures a range of skills, including command of evidence, expression of ideas, and the use of standard English conventions in grammar and punctuation.

### MATH

This section includes multiple-choice and student-produced response questions, and students are permitted to use a calculator on all math questions. The Math section assesses skills in algebra, problem solving and data analysis, manipulation of complex equations, geometry, and trigonometry.

## How the PSAT 8/9 Is Scored

All test questions are first scored as correct or incorrect. There is no penalty for guessing. The difficulty level and other qualities of each question (such as how well it differentiates skill level or how easy it is to guess on a question) as well as whether the student got the question right or wrong are taken into account when calculating a student's score. This score is then converted to the reported scaled score of 120–720 on each section. Every test conforms to a standardized specification of question types and qualities, so all students have equitable opportunity to demonstrate their strengths.

## What the PSAT 8/9 Measures

The PSAT 8/9 measures the skills and knowledge that research shows are the most important for success in college and career. The Reading and Writing section measures comprehension and reasoning skills and focuses on close reading of passages in a wide array of subject areas. It also measures a range of skills, including command of evidence, expression of ideas, and the use of standard English conventions in grammar and punctuation. The Math section includes multiple-choice and student-produced response questions, and students are permitted to use a calculator on all math questions. It also assesses skills in algebra, problem solving and data analysis, manipulation of complex equations, geometry, and trigonometry.

## How the Digital PSAT 8/9 is Organized

The digital SAT Suite uses multistage adaptive testing (MST). Relying on MST means we can fairly and accurately measure the same things with a shorter, more secure test while preserving test reliability. Both the Reading and Writing and the Math sections are divided into two equal length and separately timed stages, each composed of a module of questions. The first module contains a mix of easy, medium, and hard questions. Based on how a student performs on the first module, the second module of questions will either be more difficult or less difficult.

By adapting to a student's performance level, the responsive test will provide students with a more efficient assessment of their academic strengths.

# PSAT 8/9 Scores

## Total Scores

The total score is the sum of the two section scores; its range is 240–1440.

## Section Scores

Students receive scores in the range of 120–720 for each of two sections.

- The Reading and Writing section
- The Math section

## Accessing Official Student Scores

Your student's school has access to a downloadable PDF called "Your Score Report" for every PSAT 8/9 test taker. Students can get this score report from their school and review it with their families and with educators at their school. As always, students age 13 and older may use a personal College Board student account to view their scores and additional insights online.

## Information About Scores

In the official score report PDF, the student can view the three scores available in a digital PSAT 8/9—total score, Reading and Writing section score, and Math section score. For each score, the official score report PDF includes:

- The range of possible scores: 240–1440 for total score, and 120–720 for section scores.
- The All Tester Percentile (formally called the "User Percentile") of each score. For example, if a student's score is in the 70th percentile, 70% of a comparison group achieved scores at or below that student's score.

**All Tester Percentiles** are based on the actual scores of the past 3 cohorts of students in their grade who took the PSAT 8/9. The All Tester Percentiles for the first digital administrations in 2023–24 are reported on tests completed anywhere in the world.

## Score Ranges

A student's ability is better represented by score ranges than points. Score ranges are derived from the standard error of measurement and show how much a student's scores would likely vary if they took a different administration of the test under identical conditions.

From recent administrations of the PSAT 8/9, these ranges are approximately:

- Total:  $\pm 40$  points
- Reading and Writing:  $\pm 20$  points
- Math:  $\pm 30$  points

## Information About Knowledge and Skills

Students can view a graphic showing their performance on each of the 8 content areas measured on the PSAT 8/9.

- There are 4 content areas in Reading and Writing, and 4 in Math.
- In each content area, students can view:
  - ♦ The approximate number of questions in the content area and what percentage of the section that represents (e.g., 12–14 questions would be about 26% of the Reading and Writing section).
  - ♦ A visual indication of how the student performed in each content area.
- Students can use this section to identify content areas they may want to focus on to practice and improve.

## Additional Support

The last section of the score report PDF focuses on next steps the student can take after reviewing their scores. A QR code or link will provide them more information on tools and services related to these next steps, which include reviewing the additional insights on their scores, Official Digital SAT Prep on Khan Academy®, and college and career exploration. For the first time, the score report includes a new feature for students, Career Insights, that can inspire career exploration conversations. See the score report on page 8 for more information.

# Score Scales and Score Changes

## Using PSAT 8/9 Scores to Project PSAT/NMSQT or PSAT 10 Scores

The SAT Suite—from the PSAT 8/9 through the SAT—uses a common score scale for the total and section scores. The ranges reported for each assessment reflect grade-level appropriateness within the common score scale. Thus, while the total range for the SAT is 400–1600, the total range for the PSAT 8/9 is 240–1440.

This common score scale means that a student who took the PSAT 8/9 and received a Math section score of 500 would be expected to also get a 500 on the SAT, the PSAT/NMSQT, or the PSAT 10 if they had taken any of those tests on that same day; a score of 500 represents the same level of academic achievement on all four assessments.

This also means that student growth across the SAT Suite is easy to determine. If a student takes the PSAT 8/9 this year and receives a 500 Math section score, then takes the PSAT/NMSQT or the PSAT 10 next year and earns a 550 Math section score, that student has shown a growth of 50 points, which likely resulted from hard work both in and out of school.

## Differences Between Scores on Digital and Paper and Pencil PSAT 8/9

The digital PSAT 8/9 and paper and pencil PSAT 8/9 measure similar, but not identical, content, so a score on the paper and pencil test is not a perfect predictor of how a student would perform on the digital test (and vice versa).

College Board is conducting a psychometric analysis, including testing methodologies and statistics, to determine the relationship between scores on the paper-based and digital versions of the PSAT 8/9 to enable students to compare their scores more directly in the future.

The total scores and section scores have been vertically scaled to allow the accurate measurement of growth from test to test. Students should focus on the section scores if they are curious about the growth they can expect to see in their scores over the next year. Each score report PDF provides a set of projected score ranges for students that reflect typical growth. Of course, a student's individual growth will be shaped by the courses taken and by the practice the student undertakes between assessments.

Students who wish to improve their performance on the SAT Suite should follow these guidelines:

- Develop academic skills through challenging coursework.
- Read extensively and develop strong writing skills.
- Engage in deliberate practice in the 3 math areas that are emphasized the most in the assessments.
- Take full-length practice tests in the digital testing app, Bluebook™, review results in MyPractice, and use Official digital SAT Prep on Khan Academy for free, personalized practice of the skills they need to improve. To learn more, go to [satsuite.collegeboard.org/psat-8-9/preparing](https://satsuite.collegeboard.org/psat-8-9/preparing).

# Benchmarks

## PSAT 8/9 Grade-Level Benchmarks

The SAT Suite offers grade-level benchmarks that can be used to gauge whether students are on track for becoming college ready each year in grades 8–12. Grade-level benchmarks represent the section scores on each assessment that students should meet or exceed to be considered on track to be college ready.

### RECOMMENDED USES

Families can compare their students’ scores to the grade-level benchmarks above to help them:

- Understand their unique path to success in college and career readiness.
- Identify areas where they may need extra support while there is still time for improvement.
- Consider their readiness for more challenging coursework.

Educators know that grade-level benchmarks shouldn’t be used to assign academic tracks, to discourage students from pursuing college, or to keep students from participating in challenging courses. Rather, the benchmarks are intended to help **all** students better prepare for life after high school.

Students and families can review the student’s scores together to develop an understanding of what those scores mean. Here’s how:

### TALK ABOUT COLLEGE AND CAREER READINESS

For each section, the online score report, available via the K–12 score reporting and student portals, includes an indicator that shows whether the student’s score meets the grade-level benchmark. These benchmarks allow students and their teachers to understand how students are progressing toward college and career readiness.

- If your student is meeting the benchmark for a section, remind them to continue to take rigorous courses and work hard to stay on track for college success.
- If your student is not meeting the benchmark for a section, work with their teacher to connect them to classroom work that is focused on areas that need improvement.
- Help your student think of ways to develop each of the skills they have identified for focus and improvement. Khan Academy can help supplement this work.
- Talk about your student’s Career Insights, a new feature on their score report that can inspire career exploration conversations. See page 8 for more information.

For further guidance on interpreting score reports, visit [satsuite.collegeboard.org/psat-8-9/scores](https://satsuite.collegeboard.org/psat-8-9/scores).

## What the Benchmarks Mean

The College and Career Readiness Benchmarks for the current SAT predict a 75% likelihood of achieving a C or higher in related first semester, credit-bearing college courses. The benchmarks are set at the section level, so there is a benchmark for Reading and Writing and a benchmark for Math.

PSAT 8/9 Grade-Level Benchmarks		
	Reading and Writing	Math
8th Grade PSAT 8/9	390	430
9th Grade PSAT 8/9	410	450

Score reports on the K–12 score reporting portal for the PSAT/NMSQT, PSAT 10, and PSAT 8/9 include grade-level benchmarks based on how students grow from year to year toward the SAT benchmarks. Below are the PSAT 8/9 benchmarks for 8th and 9th grade:

Through the online K–12 score reporting portal accessed by the school, the PSAT 8/9 score reports separate benchmarks for eighth and ninth graders to help their teachers understand students’ level of readiness for college and career training programs. Equipped with this information, teachers can address challenge areas for their students while there is still time for improvement. Teachers can also accelerate the progress of students who meet or exceed the benchmarks.

### HOW SCHOOLS MAY USE SCORES

Through our K–12 score reporting portal, educators can access the official downloadable score report PDF for printing and sharing with the student. Educators can also see additional interpretive insights about the student’s results. The PDF, titled “Your Score Report” (sample shown on page 6 clearly summarizes a student’s current achievement levels and encourages next steps to increase college and career readiness. Teachers can go over the official score report PDFs with students to help them understand what their scores mean. Reviewing their scores can also help students see their strengths, which can increase their confidence and show them content areas in which they can handle more advanced coursework.

## A Case Study: Sample PSAT 8/9 Score Report

### What are Nora's scores?

## What are Nora's score percentiles?

Since Nora is in the ninth grade, the percentiles compare her scores with those of all ninth graders around the world who took the PSAT 8/9. Nora scored as well or better in Reading and Writing than 60% of a globally representative group of ninth-grade students. In Math, she scored as well or better than 70% of a globally representative group of first-year students. Putting both scores together, Nora scored as well or better than 75% of students in her grade on the PSAT 8/9 as a whole.

## Score Report

Since she is based in the U.S., Nora's score report includes Career Insights—helpful information about growing careers in her state. Nora can review the median yearly income of each career, the expected growth rate for new job openings in her state over the next five years, and the most common education level for people in that career. The list might include a career Nora is curious about—or maybe none of the options feel like a great fit. It's okay! The goal is to just to start thinking about potential career paths. This snapshot is based on state-specific information and isn't tied to Nora's performance on the PSAT 8/9. However, if Nora is thinking about different paths to take after high school, she can explore tailored options that match her interests and skills at [satsuite.org/whatsnext](https://satsuite.org/whatsnext).

If she's under age 13, Nora can talk to her school counselor to see her full score report and learn how to prepare for the SAT. If Nora is age 13 or older, she can also choose to visit [psat.org/myscore](https://psat.org/myscore) to personally find out this information.

When she becomes a sophomore, Nora can take the PSAT/NMSQT or the PSAT 10 to measure the progress she's made since she took the PSAT 8/9. She can continue to take advantage of practice resources by visiting [sat.org/digital-practice](https://sat.org/digital-practice).

## Score Report

PSAT 8/9 Sample Score Report



Name: **Nora Notetaker**  
Grade: **9**  
Test administration: **PSAT 8/9 Fall 2023**  
Tested on: **Oct. 10, 2023**  
Record Locator: **4561264**

Your Score Report

**PSAT 8/9 Scores**

**TOTAL SCORE**

**1120** | 240–1440 | 75th\*

Score Range: 1090–1170  
Average Score (all testers): 1100

**SECTION SCORES**

**Reading and Writing**

**620** | 120–720 | 60th\*

Your Score Range: 590–650  
Average Score (all testers): 600

**Math**

**500** | 120–720 | 70th\*

Your Score Range: 520–540  
Average Score (all testers): 530

\* Percentiles represent the percent of 9th grade test takers from the past 3 years who scored the same as or below you.  
Score range: This is the range of scores you could possibly get if you took the PSAT 8/9 multiple times on different days.

**Knowledge and Skills**

View your performance across the 8 content domains measured on the PSAT 8/9.

**Reading and Writing**

**Information and Ideas**  
(26% of test section, 12–14 questions)

**Craft and Structure**  
(28% of test section, 13–15 questions)

**Expression of Ideas**  
(20% of test section, 8–12 questions)

**Standard English Conventions**  
(26% of test section, 11–15 questions)

**Math**

**Algebra**  
(42.5% of test section, 16–18 questions)

**Advanced Math**  
(20% of test section, 7–9 questions)

**Problem Solving & Data Analysis**  
(25% of test section, 9–11 questions)

**Geometry & Trigonometry**  
(12.5% of test section, 4–6 questions)

**Snapshot of Growing Careers in Michigan**

The PSAT 8/9 can help you think about different paths to take after high school. Exploring this [sample of growing careers in your state](#) is one way to start. For personalized career options that match your interests and skills, including what’s measured on the PSAT 8/9, go to [satsuite.org/whatsnext](#).

INTEREST AREA*	CAREER EXAMPLES	MEDIAN YEARLY INCOME IN MI	NUMBER OF JOBS IN MI**	JOB GROWTH IN MI**	MOST COMMON EDUCATION LEVEL
Doers	Industrial Machinery Mechanics	\$59,000	25,600	+10%	Certificate
Persuaders	Wind Energy Operations Managers	\$63,000	24,300	+10%	Associate degree
Creators	Graphic Designers	\$46,000	8,900	+9%	Bachelor’s degree
Helpers	Critical Care Nurses	\$77,000	107,000	+3%	Bachelor’s degree
Thinkers	Mechanical Engineers	\$92,000	33,900	+3%	Bachelor’s degree
Organizers	Treasurers and Financial Controllers	\$124,000	21,100	+12%	Bachelor’s degree

\* For more information about career insights, including interest areas, visit [satsuite.org/whatsnext](#).  
\*\*Number of reflects the expected number of new job openings in 2027. Percentage reflects the expected growth in new job openings between 2022 and 2027.

Data source: Lightcast.io

**Build your future, your way with free personalized tools**

- Career quiz, 1,000 career profiles, and career recommendations based on your interests
- Profiles of 3,000+ colleges in the U.S. and worldwide
- \$4 billion in scholarship opportunities
- Key SAT skills practice on Khan Academy

[satsuite.org/whatsnext](#)

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Khan Academy is a registered trademark in the United States and other jurisdictions.

# Additional PSAT 8/9 Insights

Students age 13 or older who already have a personal College Board student account can get additional insights into their performance on the PSAT 8/9 in the online student score reporting portal at [studentscores.collegeboard.org](https://studentscores.collegeboard.org).

## Putting Scores in Context

### SCORE COMPARISONS

Students can gain additional insights into their scores by meeting with their school counselor to review their score report. They can also see more contextual comparisons of their scores in the student score reporting portal. Students can compare their total and section scores to the average scores of all testers in their:

- School (as applicable)
- District (public schools, as applicable)
- State (U.S.-based and territories)
- All Testers (domestic and international)

### PERCENTILES

The additional insights provided online include percentiles not provided in the downloadable score report PDF.

- The percentile ranks include:
  - ♦ Country (all testers in the student's country)
  - ♦ State (all testers in the student's state, available for U.S. and U.S. territories only)
  - ♦ All Testers (domestic and international)
- For the percentiles above, the student's score is ranked among testers from the last 3 years, i.e., students in the graduating cohort from each year.

### Score Comparisons

Learn how you scored compared to other test takers. [Some comparisons may not be available.](#)

Total

Reading and Writing

Math

#### Total Score Comparisons

Compare your score to the average score of other 9th grade testers who also took this test.

Your Score

1120

Your School (Avg.)

1000

Your District (Avg.)

1050

Your State (Avg.)

1190

Your Country (Avg.)

1200

All Testers (Avg.)

1000

#### Total Score Percentile Comparisons

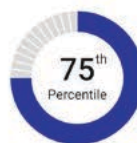
Compare your score percentile among the following groups of 9th-grade test takers from the past three years. [Find practice options to help you improve.](#)

YOUR SCORE **1120**

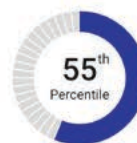
● Scored the same as or below you

▨ Scored above you

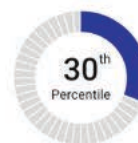
Your State  
10,000 Testers



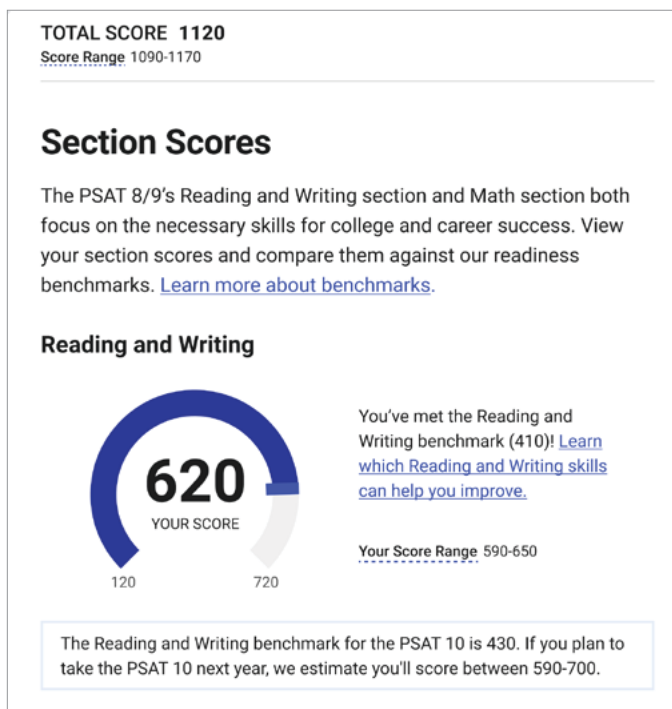
Your Country  
1M Testers



All Testers  
1.5M Testers



Online score insights



Online score insights

## More about Knowledge and Skills

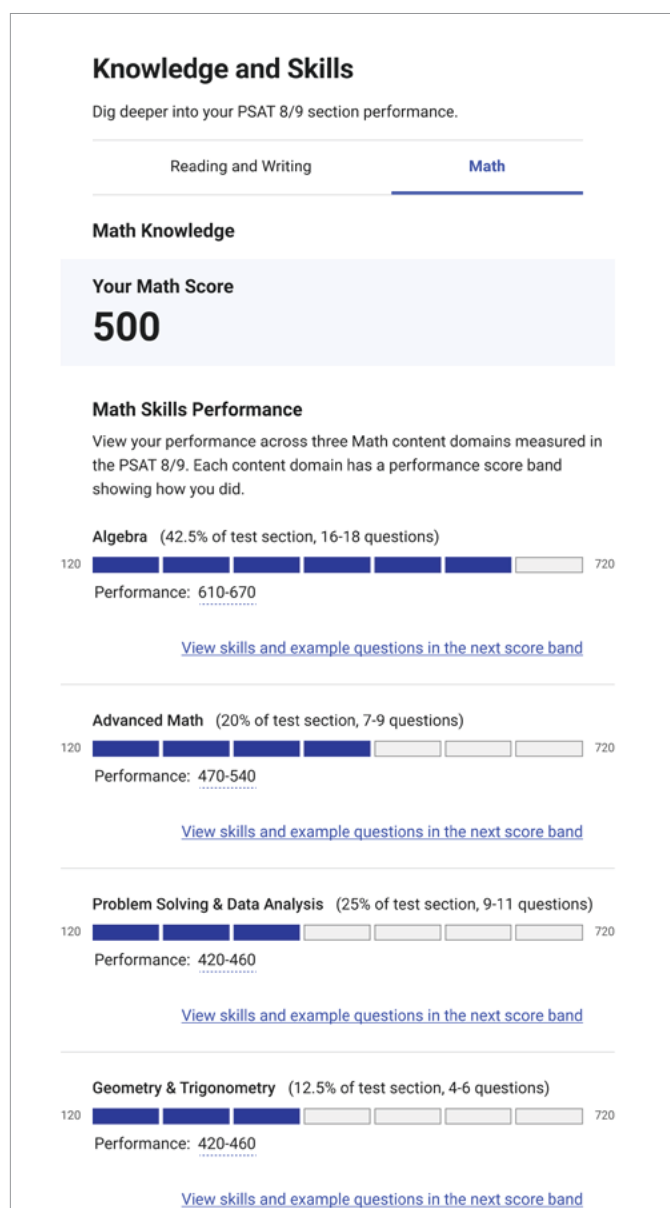
Based on our Skills Insight™ tool, we provide students with a deeper dive into the knowledge and skills measured by the PSAT 8/9. Students may view a breakdown of their knowledge and skills across 4 content areas in Reading and Writing and 4 content areas in Math.

- The online insights go further by helping students view their performance across 7 defined performance score bands to get a sense of how they did in each area.
- Students can:
  - ♦ Click **View Skills and Example Questions in Next Score Band** to see skills and example questions that students in this performance score band are typically able to demonstrate, as well as examples of the kinds of questions that these students are likely able to answer correctly.
  - ♦ From the next performance score band, they can navigate to any other performance score band in the Skills Insight tool, including their current performance score band.

## Section Benchmarks

Another set of insights students can view in the online score reporting portal are the section level readiness benchmarks. We will indicate if the student has met the section benchmark or not, providing links to resources to help them analyze what skills to focus on for improvement.

Additionally, we show students their score range and provide a link to information about how a score range more accurately reflects their level of knowledge and skills than a single score.




Online score insights

# Career Exploration

To expand on the information in their downloadable score report PDF, students can:

- View even more potential careers online at [bigfuture.org](https://bigfuture.org).
- Explore careers tailored to their interests with [Career Quiz](#).
- Find free resources to help them take the next steps down their career path.

### Your Future, Your Way



Need help with planning your life after high school? Our free, personalized tools can help.

- Discover 3,000+ colleges in the U.S. and worldwide
- Search over \$4 billion in scholarship opportunities
- Explore up to 1,000 careers, and more

Explore BigFuture ↗

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#### Knowledge and Skills

Dig deeper into your PSAT 8/9 section performance.

See Reading and Writing Skills →

See Math Skills →

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#### Practice and Improve

Create a free practice plan to take your skills to the next level.

Check Out Free Practice →

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AP

AP Potential

Get Your **Personalized** AP Course Recommendations

➔

Online score insights

### Snapshot of Growing Career in Michigan

The PSAT 8/9 can help you think about different paths to take after high school. Exploring this *sample of growing careers in your state* is one way to start. For personalized career options that match your interests and skills, including what's measured on the PSAT 8/9, go to [bigfuture.org](https://bigfuture.org).

#### CAREER EXAMPLES

##### Industrial Machinery Mechanics

Median Yearly Income in MI	\$59,000
Interest Area*	Doers
Number of Jobs/Job Growth in MI**	25,600 /+10%
Most Common Education Level	Certificate

See Career Details ↗

##### Wind Energy Operations Managers

Median Yearly Income in MI	\$63,000
Interest Area*	Persuaders
Number of Jobs/Job Growth in MI**	24,300 /+10%
Most Common Education Level	Associate degree

See Career Details ↗

Data source: Lightcast.io

\* For more information about career insights, including interest areas, visit [bigfuture.org](https://bigfuture.org).

\*\* Number reflects the expected number of new job openings in 2027. Percentage reflects the expected growth in new job openings between 2022 and 2027.

Explore Careers ↗

Online score insights

# Further Guidance

Students can view next steps with linked resources to do more with their score, including:

- Getting practice help to improve their score.
- Learning more about the SAT Suite of Assessments.
- Planning for their college and career future using their PSAT 8/9 score on BigFuture®.

## Next Steps for Students and Parents

View a video walk-through of the score report: [satsuite.collegeboard.org/psat-8-9/scores/understanding-scores/your-score-report-explained](https://satsuite.collegeboard.org/psat-8-9/scores/understanding-scores/your-score-report-explained)

Learn more about understanding and using scores: [satsuite.collegeboard.org/psat-8-9/scores](https://satsuite.collegeboard.org/psat-8-9/scores)

Connect to scholarships: [collegeboard.org/sat-suite-scholarships](https://collegeboard.org/sat-suite-scholarships)

Practice for the SAT: [sat.org/digital-practice](https://sat.org/digital-practice)

## About College Board

College Board reaches more than 7 million students a year, helping them navigate the path from high school to college and career. Our not-for-profit membership organization was founded more than 120 years ago. We pioneered programs like the SAT® and AP® to expand opportunities for students and help them develop the skills they need. Our BigFuture® program helps students plan for college, pay for college, and explore careers. Learn more at [cb.org](https://cb.org).

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