

ACT Online Prep: An Effective Way to Raise ACT Scores

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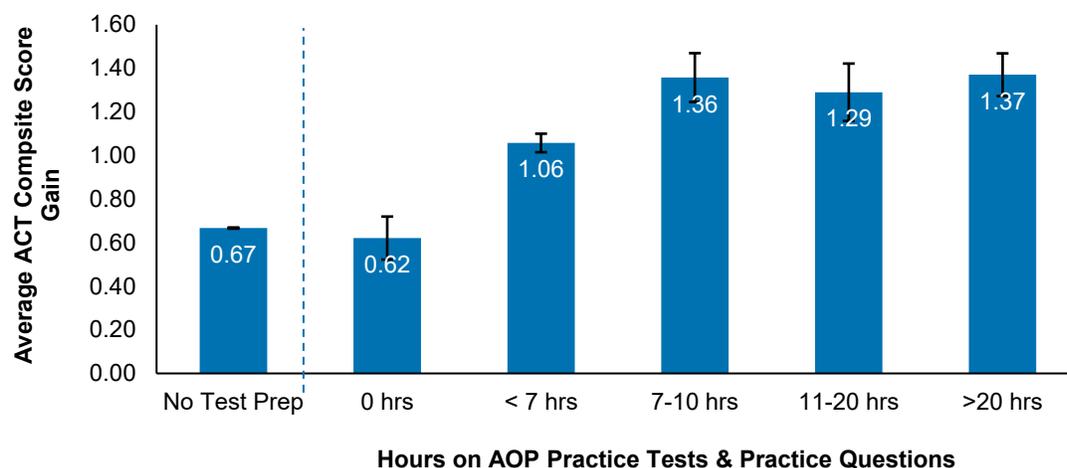
The more students used the ACT® Online Prep web-based test prep program, the higher their ACT scores, according to a recent ACT study which explored the relationship between time spent on AOP activities (practice tests/questions) and ACT score gains.

ACT Online Prep (AOP) provides students with an interactive test preparation experience that can be accessed anytime online and includes both structured and adaptive paths. The program includes four full-length ACT practice tests and a short test for each subject, two sample writing test prompts, lessons, practice questions, flashcards, and games.

Key Findings

- The more students used AOP, the greater their ACT score gains—up to a point.
- Students who used AOP for less than seven hours saw greater score gains than students who didn't use test preparation. Students who used AOP for seven or more hours saw an average gain score over double that of students who did not use test preparation.
- Using AOP for more than seven hours resulted in a similar ACT Composite score gain, suggesting a plateau effect.

Figure 1. Effects of ACT Online Prep Practice Test and Practice Question Use on ACT Composite Score



Note: The bars show the estimated mean gain, plus or minus one standard error.

To isolate the effect of AOP usage, students who used other forms of test preparation prior to their second ACT test were not included in the analysis. ACT score gains were compared for six groups of students: students who did not use test prep prior to retaking the ACT, students who had an AOP account but did not use AOP, those with less than seven hours of usage, those with 7-10 hours of usage, those with 11-20 hours of usage, and those with more than 20 hours of usage.

The analysis accounted for baseline differences across groups in the following student characteristics: prior ACT Composite score, high school GPA, gender, race/ethnicity, family income, grade level, number of months elapsed from prior to post test, mathematics and science coursework taken, advanced coursework taken (e.g. honors and AP courses), having a parent that completed at least a Bachelor's degree, expected educational attainment, declaring a need for educational support, and the number of prior ACT tests.



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