Using your ACT WorkKeys® scores

act.org/workkeys
Whether you’re thinking about the next phase of your education, launching a new career, or making a transition in your current job, the ACT WorkKeys assessment system can help.

Taking ACT WorkKeys tests is an important first step to prepare for education, training, a career, or career advancement. Your test scores help you compare your skills to the skills real jobs require.

ACT WorkKeys test questions are based on situations in the everyday work world. That’s why employers nationwide require these tests or ask applicants for the ACT National Career Readiness Certificate™ to help them hire, train, and promote the most qualified candidates. The ACT NCRC® is awarded on the basis of individuals’ ACT WorkKeys test scores and is the most widely used employability credential in the country.
ACT WorkKeys assessments include both cognitive ("hard") and noncognitive ("soft") skills tests that enable you to:

- Determine the skill levels you’ve achieved
- Identify skills you could improve
- Match your skill levels to specific job requirements
- Show employers that you have the skills needed for workplace success

ACT’s extensive research—based on data from nearly 20,000 occupations—has identified three foundational skills that are essential to success in most jobs. These three core skill assessments also form the basis for earning the ACT NCRC:

- Applied Mathematics
- Locating Information
- Reading for Information

Additional ACT WorkKeys "hard" skills assessments are:

- Applied Technology
- Business Writing
- Listening for Understanding
- Teamwork
- Workplace Observation

ACT WorkKeys "soft" skills assessments are:

- Fit
- Personality
- Talent

“I learned that I’m smarter than I gave myself credit for. It made me a better person and gave me confidence.”

— Tina Smith, machine operator, Green Mountain Coffee Roasters
Understanding your ACT WorkKeys scores

Your score is determined by the number of questions answered correctly. There is no penalty for guessing. The Level Scores describe the skills you have achieved and can apply on the job or in training. After taking the assessments, you will receive a score report.

If you take the ACT WorkKeys assessments on a computer, you will receive an Individual Score Report. If you take paper-and-pencil versions, you will receive a Memo to Examinee. Both reports document your skill level for each assessment taken, describe the tasks associated with each skill level, and suggest general strategies for improvement.

ACT WorkKeys score reports

Common terms used

Test is the name of the ACT WorkKeys test you took; Sam Sample took Applied Mathematics.

Level Score is the score you earned on this test; Sam Sample earned a Level 6.

Possible Range shows the lowest and highest possible Level Score and Scale Score for an assessment, so you can see how well you did compared to the minimum and maximum possible scores on this test. In this example, the range is from Level 3 through Level 7 and 65 through 90.

Scale Score is used primarily for training purposes; Sam Sample earned an 82.

What Your Scores Mean gives you information about the skills you demonstrated on this test. For example, Sam Sample can likely solve problems that may require multiple steps and have unrelated information.

To Improve Your Skills suggests how you can work to increase your Level Score. Sam Sample should practice converting decimals to fractions; work on taking measurements in a variety of formats, such as inches, feet, and meters, and use them to calculate formulas requiring more than one step; and verify his answers.
Making the most of your ACT WorkKeys scores

If you already have a job in mind

Compare your Level Scores to those needed for your target job. For instance, look at Sam Sample’s report and compare it to the scores needed for the occupation below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Job title</th>
<th>Applied Mathematics</th>
<th>Locating Information</th>
<th>Reading for Information</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Accountant/Auditor</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Sam earned a Level 6 in Applied Mathematics. This job requires a score of Level 5. So, Sam has the foundational math skills to qualify for this job.

If Sam had taken Locating Information and Reading for Information, reports would also indicate Level Scores for those skills, and he could compare them to the levels required for this job.

If you’re still exploring your career choices

ACT WorkKeys soft skills assessments—Fit, Personality, and Talent—focus on your personal characteristics and help you match your interests and values with workplace demands.

These assessments are described at act.org/workkeys/assess.

Once you’ve identified your areas of interest, you can search jobs by skill at act.org/workkeys.
Give yourself the ACT NCRC advantage

The ACT NCRC indicates that you have the foundational workplace skills needed to succeed. You can earn the ACT NCRC at the Platinum, Gold, Silver, or Bronze level, based on your scores on the three core tests: Applied Mathematics, Locating Information, and Reading for Information.

Although it is only one of the criteria employers use when hiring and promoting, and it is not a substitute for meeting other job requirements, documenting your skills with the ACT NCRC gives you an advantage in launching or advancing your career.

Learn more about the ACT NCRC at act.org/workkeys.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>To earn the ACT NCRC at this level...</th>
<th>...and qualify for this percentage of jobs in the ACT database...</th>
<th>...on each core test, you need to score at least:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Platinum 99% 6</td>
<td>Gold 93% 5</td>
<td>Silver 67% 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bronze 16% 3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Use your scores to stand out

- Set up an online account at myworkkeys.com so employers can verify your ACT WorkKeys scores and ACT NCRC quickly and conveniently.
- Add scores and information about your ACT NCRC to your resume and job applications. Examples of how to include the ACT NCRC on your resume and directions for sharing the ACT NCRC online can be found at act.org/certificate/use.html.
- Take your ACT WorkKeys score report or ACT NCRC to job interviews to show that you have the skills needed for the job.
- Include your ACT WorkKeys scores in your application to a community or technical college.

Visit act.org/workkeys for more information.

“I took my ACT WorkKeys tests before I even got hired on. I was Gold certified. I think it made employers notice me. It’s a good test that shows your capability in certain areas, and I think it really helps a company determine which employees have a skill set needed to hire for the optimal position.”

— Evan Shockey, training coordinator, Berner Food & Beverage
Aiming higher: Resources to improve your scores

If you would like to improve your ACT WorkKeys scores to match a job requirement or earn a higher-level ACT NCRC, online practice tests and training options are easily accessible.

Practice tests that seem like real tests

Online practice tests are full length and look and feel like a real test. At act.org/workkeys/practice, you can purchase practice tests for:

- Applied Mathematics
- Applied Technology
- Locating Information
- Reading for Information

Training that targets your needs

Strengthen your skills and help increase your ACT WorkKeys scores with the ACT Career Curriculum. The curriculum is a comprehensive learning system focused on the foundational knowledge and skills important for success in the workplace. It has three components:

- ACT KeyTrain® courses, linked to the ACT WorkKeys job skill assessment system
- ACT Soft Skills Suite, focused on the most prevalent soft skills and “21st century skills” found in workforce research
- ACT Career Ready 101 ™, including all abovementioned courses and others on job searching and personal financial awareness, with tools for career exploration

ACT Career Curriculum courseware is accessible 24/7 on computers and mobile devices, and learners can use the curriculum at their own pace. Ask your counselor, career advisor, or ACT WorkKeys test site administrator for more information.

Explore your resources for career guidance

Taking the ACT WorkKeys assessments and earning the ACT NCRC empowers you when making crucial decisions about your education and your career. It also helps you stand out from other applicants and prove your workplace skills.

Do you have questions about how your scores relate to your career options? Depending on whether you’re a student, job seeker, or a current employee seeking a career change, you can get advice from:

- Counselors
- Career advisors
- Your employer’s human resources staff
- Your state training and employment office, or “one-stop”

For more information, call 800.967.5539 or visit act.org/workkeys.

Good luck in your future career!
“Once I started, it felt like the ACT WorkKeys test was made for me. It told me my ups and how to improve on my downs. By far, this is one of the best tests I have ever taken.”
— Shaylunn Lee, student

“The ACT WorkKeys assessments were a real eye-opener. I believe they helped me demonstrate my capabilities in a way that employers understand.”
— Kevin Reaves, cab assembly technician, Able Manufacturing & Assembly

About ACT
Founded in 1959, ACT is a nonprofit organization headquartered in Iowa City, Iowa, and dedicated to helping people achieve education and workplace success. ACT provides a broad array of assessment, research, information, and program management solutions in the areas of education and workforce development.

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For more information, visit act.org.