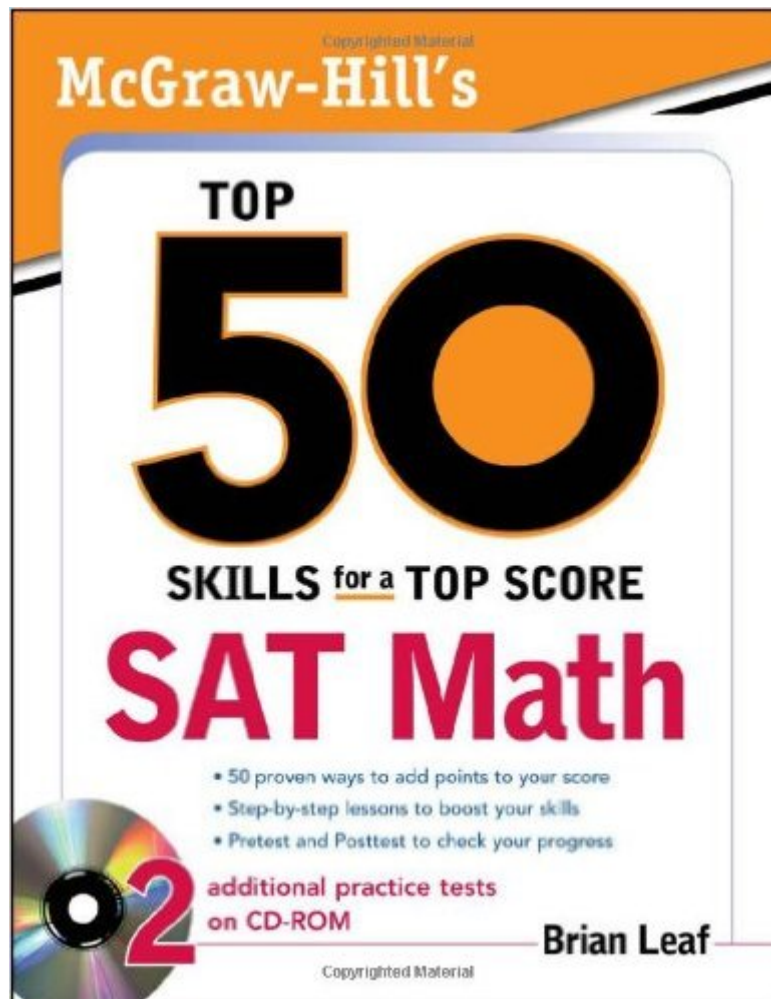


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# McGraw-Hill's Top 50 Skills For A Top Score: SAT Math



## Synopsis

We want to help you succeed on the math portion of the SAT\* "What a surprise, what a relief! An SAT guide that actually meets you where you are, talks to you with wit and compassion, and clears away the panic of test taking." -- Rebecca Pepper Sinkler, former Editor, The New York Times Book Review We've put all of our proven expertise into McGraw-Hill's Top 50 Skills for a Top Score. With this book, you'll master the essential skills identified by a prominent SAT instructor and add points to your score. You'll get focused instruction on these crucial skills, helpful exercises, pre- and posttests to check your weaknesses and progress, and two additional tests on the accompanying CD-ROM. With McGraw-Hill's Top Skills for a Top Score: SAT Math, we'll guide you step by step through your preparation and give you the tools you need to succeed. Inside you'll find: 50 essential skills with step-by-step sample exercises A pretest to identify your weaknesses and a posttest to track your progress Two additional tests on CD-ROM Strategies to help you answer every type of SAT math item

## Book Information

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SAT

## Customer Reviews

I disagree with Anuj -- I use this book (as a tutor) for students who are scoring in the 500-630 range in math and find it effective. There just aren't enough practice problems, though, to make it really comprehensive. Likewise, the book has a few types of problems that are very much missing. It

doesn't really test exponents or function problems comprehensively, and also misses out on a lot of the algebra problems. The "Springboard" section is good, but entirely too short. The problems aren't tough enough to help you get an 800-- but if you're starting lower, this could be a useful tool. It's a good length for crammers, but not enough for anyone with over two months to prep. I've been tutoring for 10 years, and have scored perfectly (twice) on the exam myself.

My son actually sort of enjoyed using this book, due to the author's sense of humor and straightforward way of explaining SAT problems. This is really a book about scoring higher on the SAT, not about mastering math concepts. For example, the author suggests using real numbers (picking some numbers) to solve some of the variable problems by plugging into the multiple choice answers. Although as a teacher this makes me cringe, as a test taking skill it is excellent advice. He also explains solving permutation problems (you have 10 players and want to make groupings of 5 people, or how many ways can you arrange 7 books) without ever mentioning factorials. In fact, I found this method of presentation so much more intuitive that I plan to use it in my classes (and then move onto actually using factorials!). The author also gives advice about when to guess, how to approach the test and so on, all good test taking strategies. Having the answers EXPLAINED at the back will be very useful for those who do not have a teacher around to explain. His explanations are very straightforward. I found a few minor errors but none of them mathematical (things like saying the answer was A. 6 when really B was 6). Before taking the test I had my son take one sample math section to serve as a baseline. After working through this book I had my son take several math sections again using a timer. Overall his score increased by 150 points. I think this is an important addition, doing the problems under time pressure. If you (or whoever you are buying this for) will only do one book, choose this one. But if you have more time, then get another SAT book with practice tests and work those as well.

This SAT Math help book is for kids who are in the 500-600 score range and want to improve their scores by 50-100 points. Does that mean a student who studies with this book can't get a 700-800 in the Math section of the SAT? Absolutely not, but it's probably going to take more than just this book to do it. I like that this book has focused on 50 skills - in many cases 'tips' are probably more accurate - to help students remember what to do when faced with certain types of Math problems. The addition of flashcards in the back of the book (you cut them out yourself) and a Glossary that is written in a casual, conversational style really make it more likely that teens will read and absorb the material. Information like "... You only need to get to the very hardest questions if you are shooting

for 700+..." dangles a pretty enticing carrot to kids who scored in the 500-600 range, but frankly would probably inflame those looking for perfection. The six steps to breaking 700 according to the book boil down to the same thing we all know: "Study and practice." Nothing revolutionary or magical I'm afraid. I do think that if a student were to take a month to study this book - even as little as two skills per day - it would help. The skills are clearly defined and explained, without being preachy or too technical. Six example problems for each skill are given, and answers to these are explained in the back of the book. This book relates to the current SAT skills that are tested in the Math section; the one that's been used for years. The newest version which will be given in the Spring of 2016, may have more or less Math questions, but there are books out currently that relate to that test too. If your child is taking the SAT in the Spring of 2016 you may want to consider these books instead: A New SAT Math Problems arranged by Topic and Difficulty Level: For the Revised SAT March 2016 and Beyond, Barron's Math Workbook for the NEW SAT, 6th Edition (Barron's Sat Math Workbook) or this one 500+ Practice Questions for the New SAT: Created for the Redesigned 2016 Exam (College Test Preparation). Overall, this is a helpful study guide for the Math section, that isn't overly daunting to use. I bought it for my daughter who will be a senior this year, and has taken the SAT once (June 6th - where they threw out two sections of the Math and two of the Critical Reading due to a booklet error) and will retake it on October 3rd. Her scores in Critical Reading and the essay were just under 700, but her Math was only 510. I'm optimistic that if she studies this book, she will be able to get at least a 610 the next time she takes the test.-----UPDATE: 12/15/15 - Ultimately this book helped, but as with all things academic the student's effort related to studying will determine the outcome. My daughter did improve her SAT Math score using this book from 510 to 540. Her overall SAT score is a 1950 with a 1270 being her combined Math and Critical Reading. She did well and while I know we both would have loved to have seen a magical upswing in her score related to Math it's never been her best subject so any improvement was great. We both think this book was helpful in terms of honing the types of questions to expect on the old SAT test. Will this be helpful on the new one coming out in the spring of 2016? Hard to tell.-----

Well written, focus is on useful tips to improve SAT score for math. Concepts are explained in greater detail as well, which is useful for areas you may have forgotten. Flash cards in back of the book help to reinforce concepts quickly and easily. You can spend time reviewing only the needed concepts, skim others, and still get helpful pointers to up your score. The way the book is structured, and the light tone used by the author make this very accessible. My daughter finally read through

this (after I brought it up several times) and told me she found it very helpful. Said she would absolutely recommend it. Given the short amount of prep time, and the increase in her score (570 on SAT practice test, 700 on the March SAT) I would definitely buy it again. Time needed: 2 months ideally, 1 month very workable, 2 weeks if that's what you have left!

A very nice book with good practice problems. Humorous at times. It is very easy to understand. My score increased only by 40 points, not as much as I wanted. I am looking to get upwards of 720. This book doesn't cover everything you need for a near perfect score, but I would def recommend as it covers its material very well. Just don't rely on this information alone.

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