

Choosing a PCAT Test Date

Many students are unsure of when to take their test or how to select a test date. Since the PCAT only has a few testing windows and seats oftentimes fill up quickly, it is important that students plan in advance so that they are ready to submit their PCAT scores with their applications.

Complete the Pre-Requisites

Students are more likely to get higher scores on their PCAT if they have completed the suggested pre-pharmacy coursework. This means they should complete one year each of general biology, general chemistry, organic chemistry, and calculus before taking the exam. While the PCAT has recently introduced more biochemistry questions to the exam, all of the biochemistry content is covered in traditional introductory biology and chemistry classes, and students do not need to take biochemistry before taking the PCAT. Additional requirements may be necessary for pharmacy school admissions, but nothing else is needed for the PCAT specifically. Students applying to a 2+4 program (2 years of undergrad, 4 years of pharmacy school) may need to take their PCAT before they have taken organic chemistry. For this reason, 2+4 programs typically accept slightly lower PCAT scores, particularly in the Chemistry section of the exam, where organic chemistry content is tested.

Select the Testing Window

The PCAT is offered through [Pearson Vue](#) during three major testing windows and one additional testing window. [Test dates](#) have been announced and registration is already open for the major testing windows for this cycle: July, September, and January. The September test date has become increasingly popular. In 2012, so many students registered for the September testing window that additional overflow dates were added in October and November. This year, the AACP has already announced that additional testing dates will be offered in late October and early November. It is important to note, however, that these test dates will only be available in select locations, which will not be announced until September. Students should not count on the October/November test dates being available in their preferred location.

Register for the Test

Once a student knows when he/she wants to take the exam, he/she should [register](#). Because seats fill up quickly, the earlier a student registers, the more likely he/she is to receive her preferred testing date, time, and location. Registration is a two-step process. First, students will need to enter their demographic information, select the schools to which they want their scores sent, request accommodations (if applicable), choose their preferred testing city, and verify that they are abiding by the AACP Code of Conduct. They will be able to pay for the PCAT Registration Fee after completing this information. The second step is to schedule the exam. Only after their registration has been processed will students be able to select their test date and time.