

# Essential SAT Vocabulary

C

# CADENCE

Pierre spoke with a lovely cadence, charming all those who heard him.

# CADENCE

- rhythmic flow of poetry
- marching beat

# CAJOLE

The spoiled girl could cajole her father into buying her anything.



# CAJOLE

- to flatter
- to coax and persuade

# CALLOW

The young and callow fans flocked to the front of the stage and sung along to the vapid boy band's every word.

# CALLOW

- immature
- lacking sophistication

# CAPACIOUS

We wondered how many  
hundreds of stores occupied the  
capacious mall.

# CAPACIOUS

- large and roomy
- extensive

# CAPITULATE

After atom bombs devastated Hiroshima and Nagasaki, the Japanese had little choice but to capitulate.

# CAPITULATE

- to submit completely
- to surrender

# CAPRICIOUS

Queen Elizabeth I was quite capricious; her courtiers could never be sure who would catch her fancy or inspire her displeasure.



# CAPRICIOUS

- impulsive and unpredictable
- whimsical and without much thought

# CASTIGATE

Authorities in Singapore harshly castigate perpetrators of what would be considered minor crimes in the United States.

# CASTIGATE

- to punish
- to chastise and criticize severely

# CATHARSIS

Plays can be more satisfying if they end if some sort of emotional catharsis for the characters involved.

# CATHARSIS

- purification and purging of feelings
- cleansing of emotion

# CATHOLIC

Hot tea with honey is a catholic remedy for a sore throat.

# CATHOLIC

- universal
- broad and comprehensive

# CAVALIER

The nobleman's cavalier attitude towards the suffering of the peasants made them hate him even more than his cruel treatment of them.



# CAVALIER

- possessing lordly disdain and feeling of superiority

# CENTRIPETAL

It is centripetal force that keeps trains from derailing as they round curves.

# CENTRIPETAL

- directed or moving towards the center

# CHAGRIN

No doubt, the president felt a good deal of chagrin after vomiting on his host at the prime minister's state banquet.

# CHAGRIN

- shame and embarrassment
- humiliation

# CHARLATAN

“The charlatan of a doctor prescribed the wrong medicine for me!” complained the patient.

# CHARLATAN

- fraud and fake
- one claiming false knowledge or abilities

# CHICANERY

Dishonest used car salesmen often use chicanery to sell lemons to their customers.



# CHICANERY

- trickery
- fraud and deception

# CHOLERIC

The choleric principal raged at the students who had come late to school.

# CHOLERIC

- easily angered
- short-tempered

# CIRCUMLOCUTION

He avoided discussing the real issues with endless circumlocutions.

# CIRCUMLOCUTION

- roundabout way of expressing an idea
- evasion in speech

# CIRCUMSCRIBE

Diego Buena Ventura's country estate is circumscribed by rolling hills so that the view from every window is impressive.

# CIRCUMSCRIBE

- to encircle
- to set limits on; to confine

# CIRCUMSPECT

His failures have made Jack far more circumspect in his exploits than he used to be.



# CIRCUMSPECT

- cautious and wary
- careful to consider all consequences

# CLANDESTINE

The double agent paid many clandestine visits to the president's office in the dead of night.

# CLANDESTINE

- secretive
- concealed for a darker purpose

# CLEMENCY

Kyle begged for clemency, explaining that he had been under the influence of hallucinogens when he robbed the bank.

# CLEMENCY

- merciful leniency

# COALESCE

The different factions of the organization coalesced to form one united front against their opponents.

# COALESCE

- to grow together
- to cause to unite as one

# COLLATERAL

“Let’s try to stick to the main issue here and not get into all the collateral questions,” urged the CEO.



# COLLATERAL

- accompanying as secondary or subordinate

# COLLOQUY

The congressmen held a colloquy to determine how to proceed with the environmental legislation.

# COLLOQUY

- serious dialogue or conversation
- conference

# COLLUSION

It came to light that the police chief and the mafia were in collusion in running the numbers racket.

# COLLUSION

- collaboration
- complicity and conspiracy

# COMELINESS

Ann's comeliness made her perfect for the role of Sleeping Beauty.

# COMELINESS

- physical grace and beauty

# COMMENSURATE

Steve was given a salary commensurate with his knowledge and experience.



# COMMENSURATE

- proportional
- equal in measure, amount, or degree

# COMMODIOUS

Rachel was able to stretch out fully in the commodious bathtub.

# COMMODIOUS

- roomy
- comfortably spacious

# COMPUNCTION

It is often said that psychopaths have no consciences, suffering little compunction for the pain that they cause.

# COMPUNCTION

- feeling of uneasiness  
caused by guilt or regret

# CONCILIATORY

Fred made the conciliatory gesture of buying Abby flowers after their big fight.

# CONCILIATORY

- overcoming distrust or hostility
- gaining goodwill by pleasant actions

# CONGENITAL

The infant's congenital deformity was corrected through surgery.



# CONGENITAL

- existing since birth
- constituting an essential characteristic

# CONGRUITY

There was an obvious congruity between Mark's pleasant personality and his kind actions towards others.

# CONGRUITY

- correspondence
- harmony and agreement

# CONJECTURE

The actor refused to comment, forcing gossip columnists to make conjectures on his love life.

# CONJECTURE

- speculation
- prediction

# CONJURE

The cotton candy conjured up the image of the fairgrounds he used to visit as a child in Arthur's mind.

# CONJURE

- to evoke a spirit
- to cast a spell

# CONSONANT

The pitiful raise Ingrid received was consonant with the low opinion her manager had of her performance.



# CONSONANT

- consistent with
- in agreement with

# CONSTRUE

“I wasn’t sure how to construe that last remark he made,” said Delia, “but I suspect it was an insult.”

# CONSTRUE

- to explain the intention
- to interpret

# CONSUMMATE

- The skater delivered a consummate performance, perfect in every aspect.
- Since the marriage was never consummated, the couple was able to legally annul it.

# CONSUMMATE

- accomplished, complete, and perfect
- to complete; to fulfill

# CONTINENCE

Lucy exhibited impressive continence in steering clear of fattening foods, and she lost 50 pounds as a result.

# CONTINENCE

- self-control
- self-restraint

# CONTRAVENE

The watchman contravened his official instructions by leaving his post for an hour.



# CONTRAVENE

- to contradict or deny
- to act in violation of rule or obligation

# CONVIVIAL

The restaurant's convivial atmosphere contrasted starkly with the gloom of Maureen's empty apartment.

# CONVIVIAL

- sociable
- fond of eating, drinking, and socializing with people

# CONVOKE

The president convoked a group of experts to advise him on how to deal with the crisis.

# CONVOKE

- to call together
- to summon for a purpose

# CONVOLUTED

Although many people bought *A Brief History of Time*, few could follow its convoluted ideas and theories.

# CONVOLUTED

- twisted
- complicated
- involved

# COPIOUS

The hostess had prepared copious amounts of food for the banquet because she had invited 100 guests.



# COPIOUS

- abundant
- plentiful

# CORPOREAL

Makiko realized that the supposed ghost was corporeal in nature when it bumped into a chair.

# CORPOREAL

- tangible and material
- having to do with the body

# CORPULENCE

Egbert's corpulence increased as he ate one meal a day at a fast-food restaurant.

# CORPULENCE

- obesity
- fatness
- bulkiness

# CORROBORATE

Fingerprints corroborated the witness's testimony that he saw the defendant in the victim's apartment.

# CORROBORATE

- to confirm
- to verify

# COSSET

Mimi cosseted her toy poodle, feeding it gourmet meals and buying it a silk pillow to sleep on.



# COSSET

- to pamper
- to coddle and indulge

# COUNTENANCE

- Jeremy was afraid of the new Music Appreciation instructor because she had such an evil countenance.
- When the girls started a pillow fight, the baby-sitter warned them, “I will not countenance such behavior.”

# COUNTENANCE

- demeanor, composure, or facial expression
- to tolerate or approve

# COUNTERMAND

Protestants were relieved when the king countermanded his decree that they should be burned at the stake as heretics.

# COUNTERMAND

- to annul and cancel
- to make a contrary order

# CRAVEN

The craven lion cringed in the corner of his cage, terrified of the mouse.

# CRAVEN

- showing shameful lack of courage
- cowardly, fearful, timid

# CREDENCE

Mr. Biggles couldn't give any credence to the charge that his darling son had cheated on his test.



# CREDENCE

- acceptance of something as true or real
- faith or certainty

# CREDULOUS

Although some four-year-olds believe in the Easter Bunny, only the most credulous nine-year-olds do.

# CREDULOUS

- ready to believe based on little evidence
- gullible and trusting

# CRESCENDO

The crescendo of tension became unbearable as Evel Knievel prepared to jump his motorcycle over the school buses.

# CRESCENDO

- gradual increase, especially in volume of sound

# CULPABLE

The CEO is culpable for the bankruptcy of the company; he was, after all, in charge of it.

# CULPABLE

- guilty and meriting blame
- responsible for wrong-doing

# CUPIDITY

The poverty-stricken man stared at the shining jewels with cupidity in his gleaming eyes.



# CUPIDITY

- greed or avarice
- strong desire for wealth

# CURMUDGEON

The old man was a notorious curmudgeon who snapped at anyone who disturbed him for any reason.

# CURMUDGEON

- cranky person
- ill-tempered individual, usually an old man

# CURSORY

The copy editor gave the article a  cursory once-over, missing dozens of errors.

# CURSORY

- hastily done
- superficial