

# Essential SAT Vocabulary

**F-L**

# FALLOW

This field should lie fallow for a year so that the soil does not become completely depleted.

# FALLOW

- uncultivated
- dormant and inactive

# FASTIDIOUS

Brett was normally so fastidious that Rachel was astonished to find his desk littered with clutter.

# FASTIDIOUS

- careful with details
- meticulous and demanding

# FATUOUS

Ted's fatuous comments  
always embarrassed his  
keen-witted wife at parties.

# FATUOUS

- stupid
- foolishly self-satisfied

# FECUND

The fecund woman gave birth to a total of twenty children.



# FECUND

- fertile
- fruitful and productive

# FELICITOUS

The father of the bride made a felicitous speech at the wedding, contributing to the success of the event.

# FELICITOUS

- suitable and appropriate
- pleasant and delightful

# FERVID

The fans of Maria Callas were particularly fervid, doing anything to catch a glimpse of the great singer.

# FERVID

- passionate
- intense
- zealous

# FETID

The fetid stench from the outhouse caused Laura to wrinkle her nose in disgust.

# FETID

- foul-smelling
- putrid

# FETTER

The chain gang, fettered together in a long line, trudged slowly through the mud.



# FETTER

- to bind, chain, or confine

# FLACCID

The woman jiggled her flaccid arms in disgust, resolving to begin lifting weights as soon as possible.

# FLACCID

- limp and flabby
- weak

# FLORID

The palace had been decorated in an excessively florid style; every surface had been carved and gilded.

# FLORID

- gaudy and extremely ornate
- ruddy and flushed

# FOIBLE

Her habit of licking out the centers of Oreo cookies is just a foible, although it is somewhat annoying.

# FOIBLE

- minor weakness
- character flaw

# FOMENT

The protesters tried to foment feeling against the war through their speeches and demonstrations.



# FOMENT

- to arouse or incite

# FORBEARANCE

In light of the fact that he was new on the job, Collette decided to exercise forbearance with her assistant's numerous errors.

# FORBEARANCE

- patience
- restraint and leniency

# FORSWEAR

I was forced to forswear French fries after the doctor told me that my cholesterol was too high.

# **FORSWEAR**

- to repudiate or disclaim
- to renounce and reject

# FORTE

Since math was Dan's forte, his friends always asked him to calculate the tip whenever they went out to dinner together.

# FORTE

- strong point
- something a person does well

# FOUNDER

After colliding with the jagged rock, the ship foundered, forcing the crew to abandon it.



# FOUNDER

- to fall helplessly
- to sink

# FRACAS

When the bandits discovered that the gambler was cheating them at cards, a violent fracas ensued.

# FRACAS

- noisy dispute
- brawl

# FRACTIOUS

The general had a hard time maintaining a discipline among his fractious troops.

# FRACTIOUS

- unruly and rebellious
- tending to be troublesome

# FULSOME

Diana felt nauseous at the sight of the rich, fulsome dishes weighing down the table at the banquet.

# FULSOME

- sickeningly excessive
- repulsive

# GAMBOL

The parents gathered to watch the children gambol joyfully about the yard.



# GAMBOL

- to dance or skip around playfully

# GARNER

The director managed to garner financial backing from several different sources for her next project.

# GARNER

- to gather and store
- to accumulate and collect

# GARRULOUS

The garrulous parakeet  
distracted its owner with its  
continuous talking.

# GARRULOUS

- extremely talkative
- rambling and loquacious to the point of annoyance

# GIBE

Tina gibed at her brothers mercilessly as they clumsily attempted to pitch the tent.

# GIBE

- to utter taunting words
- to make heckling remarks

# GLIB

The slimy politician managed to continue gaining supporters because he was a glib speaker.



# GLIB

- fluent in an insincere and deceitful manner
- smooth but lacking substance

# GNOSTIC

The gnostics were distrusted by the Catholic Church because of their preference for knowledge rather than faith.

# GNOSTIC

- one whose primary interest is pursuing knowledge

# GOAD

Denise goaded her sister Leigh into running the marathon with her.

# GOAD

- to prod or urge

# GRATIS

The college students swarmed around the gratis buffet in the lobby.

# GRATIS

- free
- costing nothing

# GUILE

Greg used considerable guile to acquire his rent-controlled apartment, even claiming to be a Vietnam Vet.



# GUILE

- trickery
- deception

# GUSTATORY

Murdock claimed that he loved cooking because he enjoyed the gustatory pleasures in life.

# GUSTATORY

- relating to sense of taste
- associated with eating

# HACKNEYED

We always mock my father for his hackneyed expressions and dated hairstyle.

# HACKNEYED

- worn out by overuse
- trite

# HAPLESS

I wish someone would give that poor, hapless soul some food and shelter.

# HAPLESS

- unfortunate
- having bad luck

# HARBINGER

The groundhog's appearance on February 2 is a harbinger of spring.



# HARBINGER

- precursor
- sign of something to come

# HARROWING

We stayed up all night listening to Dave and Will talk about their harrowing adventures at sea.

# HARROWING

- extremely distressing
- terrifying

# HERMETIC

The hermetic seal of the jar proved impossible to break.

# HERMETIC

- tightly sealed

# HIDEBOUND

The hidebound old patriarch would not tolerate any opposition to his orders.

# HIDEBOUND

- excessively rigid
- dry and stiff

# HINTERLAND

The anthropologists noticed that the people had moved out of the cities and into the hinterland.



# HINTERLAND

- wilderness
- region remote from urban areas

# HOARY

The old man's hoary beard contrasted starkly to the new stubble on his teenage grandson.

# HOARY

- extremely old
- whitish or gray from age

# HYPERBOLE

When the mayor claimed his town was one of the seven wonders of the world, outsiders classified his statement as hyperbole.

# **HYPERBOLE**

- purposeful exaggeration  
for effect

# ICONOCLAST

His lack of regard for traditional beliefs soon established him as an iconoclast.

# ICONOCLAST

- one who attacks traditional beliefs

# IDIOSYNCRASY

His numerous idiosyncrasies included a fondness for wearing bright green shoes with mauve socks.



# IDIOSYNCRASY

- peculiarity of temperament
- eccentricity

# IGNOMINIOUS

He was humiliated by his ignominious dismissal.

# IGNOMINIOUS

- disgraceful
- dishonorable

# ILK

“I try not to associate with men of his ilk,” sniffed the respectable old lady.

# ILK

- type or kind

# IMBUE

Marcia struggled to imbue her children with decent values, a difficult task in this day and age.

# IMBUE

- to infuse
- to permeate

# IMMUTABLE

Poverty was an immutable fact of life for the unfortunate Wood family; every moneymaking scheme they tried failed.



# IMMUTABLE

- unchangeable
- invariable

# IMPECUNIOUS

After the crash of thousands of tech startups, many Internet millionaires found themselves impecunious.

# IMPECUNIOUS

- poor
- having no money

# IMPERVIOUS

A good raincoat should be impervious to moisture.

# IMPERVIOUS

- impossible to penetrate
- incapable of being affected

# IMPETUOUS

The impetuous day trader rushed to sell his stocks at the first hint of trouble and lost \$300,000.

# IMPETUOUS

- quick to act without thinking

# IMPURTUNE

The assistant importuned her boss with constant requests for a raise and promotion.



# IMPURTUNE

- to ask repeatedly
- to beg and plead

# IMPROVIDENT

The improvident woman spent all the money she received in her court settlement within two weeks.

# IMPROVIDENT

- without planning or foresight
- negligent of the future

# IMPUGN

“How dare you impugn my honorable motives?” protested the lawyer on being accused of ambulance chasing.

# IMPUGN

- to call into question
- to attack verbally

# INCENDIARY

Gasoline is so incendiary that cigarette smoking is forbidden at gas stations.

# INCENDIARY

- combustible
- flammable
- burning easily

# INCHOATE

As her thoughts on the subject were still in inchoate form, Amy could not explain what she meant.



# INCHOATE

- imperfectly formed or formulated

# INCIPIENT

At that point, her cancer was only incipient and she could still work full time.

# INCIPIENT

- beginning to exist or appear
- in an initial stage

# INCULCATE

Most parents blithely inculcate their children with their religious beliefs instead of allowing their children to select their own faith.

# INCULCATE

- to subtly teach by repetition
- to impress with admonitions

# INCULPATE

His suspicious behavior after the break-in led authorities to inculpate him.

# INCULPATE

- to blame
- to charge with a crime

# INCURSION

The army was unable to resist the incursion of the rebel forces into their territory.



# INCURSION

- sudden invasion

# INDEFATIGABLE

Theresa seemed indefatigable, barely sweating after a ten-mile run.

# INDEFATIGABLE

- never tired
- incapable of fatigue

# INDIGENT

Because the homeless suspect was indigent, the state paid for his legal representation.

# INDIGENT

- extremely poor

# INDIGNANT

The innocent passerby was indignant when the police treated him as a suspect in the crime.

# INDIGNANT

- angry and incensed
- offended by injustice

# INDOLENT

She rarely reported to work on time and did little while she was there; her indolent ways got her fired from many jobs.



# INDOLENT

- habitually lazy
- idle

# INDUBITABLE

His indubitable cooking skills made it all the more astonishing when the Thanksgiving dinner he prepare tasted awful.

# INDUBITABLE

- unquestionable
- too evident to be doubted

# INERT

In the heat of the desert afternoon, lizards lie inert and avoid activity.

# INERT

- unable to move
- tending to inactivity

# INEXORABLE

The inexorable force of the twister swept away their house.

# INEXORABLE

- inflexible
- unyielding

# INGENIOUS

Luther found an ingenious way to solve the complex math problem.



# INGENIOUS

- original and unique
- clever and inventive

# INGENUOUS

She was so ingenuous that her friends feared that her innocence would be exploited when she visited the big city.

# INGENUOUS

- straightforward and open
- naïve and unsophisticated

# INGRESS

Ed hoped that the mailroom job would provide him with an ingress into the company.

# INGRESS

- entrance

# INIMICAL

Even though a cease-fire had been in place for months, the two sides were still inimical to each other.

# INIMICAL

- hostile
- unfriendly

# INIQUITY

“I promise to close every den of iniquity in this town!” thundered the conservative new mayor.



# INIQUITY

- sin
- evil action

# INSIDIOUS

Iago's insidious comments about Desdemona fuelled Othello's feelings of jealousy regarding his wife.

# INSIDIOUS

- sly
- treacherous and devious

# INTERDICT

The matron interdicted male visits to the girls' dorm rooms after midnight.

# INTERDICT

- to forbid
- to prohibit

# INTERLOPER

The wolf pack rejected the lone pup as an interloper.

# INTERLOPER

- trespasser
- meddler in others' affairs

# INTERPOLATE

The editor interpolated a few new sentences into the manuscript, and the new edition was ready to print.



# INTERPOLATE

- to insert
- to change by adding new words or material

# INTERPOSE

The policeman interposed himself between the two men who were about to start fighting.

# INTERPOSE

- to insert
- to intervene

# INTRANSIGENT

The professor was intransigent on the deadline, insisting that everyone turn the assignment in on Friday despite their pleas.

# INTRANSIGENT

- uncompromising
- refusal to change one's opinion

# INURE

Eventually, Hassad became inured to the sirens that went off every night and could sleep through them.

# INURE

- to harden
- to accustom or become used to

# INVECTIVE

A stream of invective poured from Mrs. Pratt's mouth as she watched the vandals smash her ceramic frog.



# INVECTIVE

- verbal abuse

# INVIDIOUS

It is a cruel and invidious for parents to play favorites with their children.

# INVIDIOUS

- causing discontent, envy, and animosity

# JINGOISM

The president's jingoism made him declare war on other countries at the slightest provocation.

# JINGOISM

- belligerent support for one's country
- extreme nationalism

# JUGGERNAUT

The juggernaut of Napoleon's army surged ahead until it was halted in its tracks by the brutal winter.

# JUGGERNAUT

- huge force destroying everything in its path

# JURISPRUDENCE

An expert in jurisprudence, the esteemed lawyer was often consulted by his colleagues.



# JURISPRUDENCE

- science or philosophy of law

# JUXTAPOSITION

The porcelain dog was placed in juxtaposition with the straw doghouse on the mantelpiece.

# JUXTAPOSITION

- side-by-side placement
- two elements placed together for contrasting effect

# KNELL

When the townspeople heard the knelling from the church belfry, they knew that their mayor had died.

# KNELL

- sound of a funeral bell
- omen of death or failure

# LACHRYMOSE

Heather always became lachrymose when it was time to bid her daughter good-bye.

# LACHRYMOSE

- tearful
- mournful and weepy

# LACONIC

She was a laconic poet who built her reputation on using words as sparingly as possible.



# LACONIC

- using few words
- concise to the point of appearing mysterious or rude

# LAGGARD

The manager hesitated to fire Biff, his incompetent laggard of an assistant, because Biff was the CEO's son.

# LAGGARD

- dawdler
- loafer
- lazy person

# LASSITUDE

The defeated French army plunged into a state of depressed lassitude as they trudged home from Russia.

# LASSITUDE

- lethargy
- sluggishness

# LEGERDEMAIN

The magician was skilled in the arts of legerdemain.

# LEGERDEMAIN

- trickery
- sleight of hand
- display of adroitness

# LIMPID

Shelley could see all the way to the bottom through the pond's limpid water.



# LIMPID

- clear
- transparent

# LIONIZE

After the success of his novel, the author was lionized by the press.

# LIONIZE

- to treat as a celebrity

# LISSOME

The lissome yoga instructor twisted herself into shapes that her students could only dream of.

# LISSOME

- easily flexible
- limber and agile

# LUGUBRIOUS

Irish wakes are a rousing departure from the lugubrious funeral services to which most people are accustomed.

# LUGUBRIOUS

- sorrowful and mournful
- dismal