

Placement Guidance Webpage Information

San Diego State University is using the ALEKS Mathematics Placement Assessment to give students an opportunity to prepare for Math 150. The ALEKS Placement Assessment covers material from Basic Math through Precalculus and will take approximately 90 minutes to complete. After the assessment, a targeted Prep and Learning Module is available for you to review and learn material, and to improve placement and eventual course outcomes.

All students are strongly encouraged to spend several hours using the ALEKS Prep and Learning Module. Even if you have achieved placement in your desired course, time spent in ALEKS will better prepare you for your upcoming course and ultimately lead to better grades.

First of all, RELAX. This is an “assessment,” NOT A TEST. The difference is that an assessment is designed to determine what you know. At the end of the ALEKS Placement Assessment, you will have a much better sense of your strengths and weaknesses in math. You will then have a chance to work on those weaknesses. There is really no penalty for incorrectly answering a question on the assessment. The most important thing is that you take the assessment seriously and give it an honest effort so that the assessment truly reflects your level of knowledge and math preparedness.

Be honest about your skill level. There is no benefit to cheating on the placement assessment – your only reward will be that you are forced to take a class that is too difficult for your current level of mathematical knowledge. Therefore, while you are taking the assessment, do not consult any other source for help (friends, family, internet searches, calculator etc.). The purpose of the placement assessment is to give an accurate measure of your current mathematical skills so that you will be successful in your mathematics courses.

Who has to take the ALEKS Placement Assessment?

All students who wish to take Math 150 (Calculus 1). The ALEKS Placement Assessment is also recommended for students planning to take Math 141 (Precalculus), Math 120 (Calculus for Business Analysis), Math 124 (Calculus for the Life Sciences) and Math 151 (Calculus 2).

Is there a fee for using ALEKS?

You will pay \$25 for ALEKS with a credit card before you begin. This gives you access to the placement assessments and the learning modules.

Can I retake the ALEKS Placement Assessment?

Yes, you may take up to 4 placement assessments. However, to make each attempt worthwhile, it is important that you spend time working in your ALEKS Prep and Learning Module in between placement assessments so that you can improve your skills.

You must wait 48 hours, and you must spend at least 5 hours working in the ALEKS Learning Module between placement assessments. There is generally no benefit to re-taking the assessment immediately after completing a prior attempt.

Are ALEKS Placement Assessments proctored?

The 4 placement assessments are not proctored. All students that pass the ALEKS assessment and enroll in Math 150 will take a final proctored assessment in their first Math 150 activity sessions. Details will be sent to students enrolled in Math 150 via Blackboard.

Are placement assessments timed?

Yes, you have 24 hours to complete a placement assessment once it has begun.

How long will a placement assessment take to complete?

Placement assessments require approximately 90 minutes to complete, but the amount of time will vary by student. There will be a maximum of 30 questions.

What happens if I do not complete a placement assessment in the allotted time?

You will have to restart the assessment. An unfinished assessment does not count as one of the 4 allowed placement assessments.

May I use any other resources during a placement assessment?

You may only use a pen or pencil, paper, and the resources provided by ALEKS. ALEKS will provide an on-screen calculator if you need one to complete a particular problem. Otherwise, you may not use a calculator. You may not receive assistance from friends, family, other websites, textbooks, or any other resource not provided by ALEKS. Using outside resources may lead to improper placement and ultimately course failure.

What is my placement result?

Your placement result is your percentage mastery on the best assessment. You may register for Math 150 if you score 78 or higher.

How long is my placement result valid?

Your placement result is valid for 6 months.

Can I practice using ALEKS before I begin placement?

ALEKS will begin with a brief tutorial before your placement begins.

How long do I have access to my Prep and Learning Module?

You will have six months of access from the time that you start using your Prep and Learning module.

Is there an additional fee for my Prep and Learning Module?

Access to a Prep and Learning Module is included along with up to 4 placement assessments.

What are ALEKS Progress Assessments?

While working in a Prep and Learning Module, you will periodically complete progress assessments to solidify your gains in knowledge. These do not count toward your 4 placement assessments and will allow you to enroll in Math 150.

Does progress in an ALEKS Prep and Learning Module count toward placement?

No, you must complete a new placement assessment to change your placement result. Click on the placement tab on the upper right of the page from within ALEKS. Only your placement assessment results will be used for course placement.

What if I do not place into the course I wanted?

You can use a Prep and Learning Module to review and learn, and you may take another placement assessment to improve your placement result.

I did not place into the class I wanted. Can I take it anyway?

No, you must achieve the minimum placement result to take each corresponding class.

What if I placed into the class I wanted?

Congratulations! Continue to use your Prep and Learning Module to improve your chances for success. The placement result above is the minimum preparation required for your course! Take advantage of the targeted review and learning features in ALEKS to get a better grade in your class.

Where can I get help with ALEKS?

<http://www.aleks.com/faqs/technical>
http://support.aleks.com/assess_placement