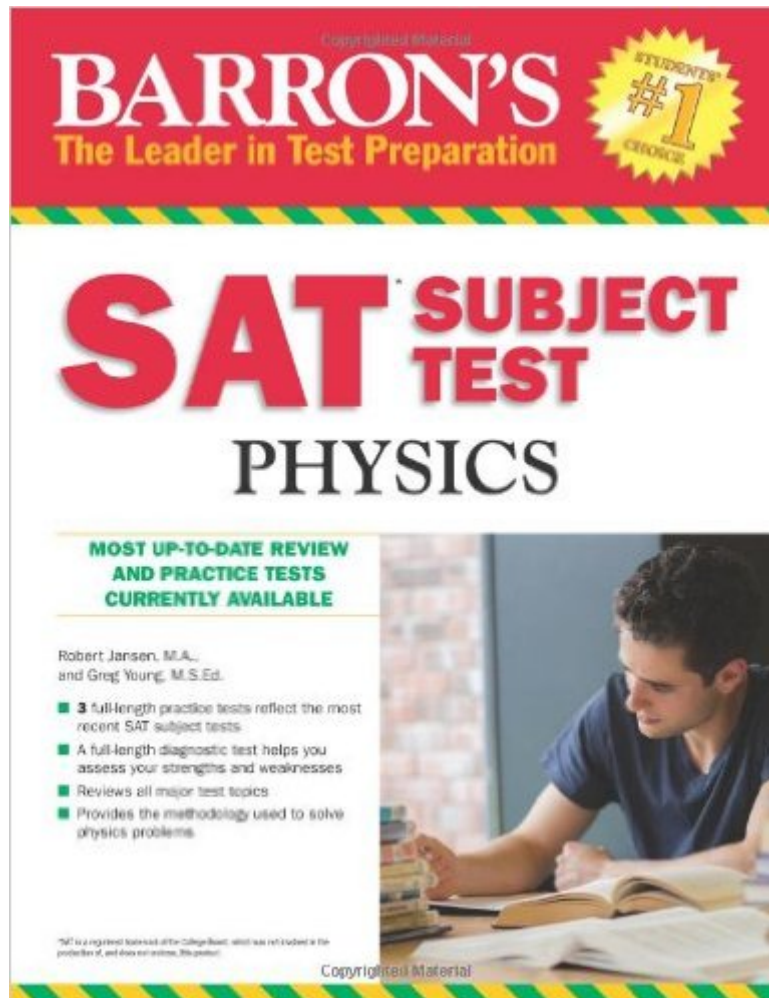


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Barron's SAT Subject Test Physics



Synopsis

One diagnostic test and three complete SAT Subject Tests in Physics reflect the most recent actual tests in length, subject matter, and degree of difficulty. All questions are answered and explained. Self-assessment guides after each test can help improve the test-taker's score. An extensive subject review covers all topics on the SAT Subject Test, including mechanics, electricity and magnetism, waves and optics, thermodynamics, and more. Unique new features include a "What's the Trick?" approach to solving problems quickly and effectively. Added tips, called out with "If You SeeÃ¢â¬â" are included within the chapters to give test takers critical insight into difficult concepts. Each chapter is followed by several review questions with answers and explanations. The authors also provide general examination strategies and a detailed appendix with equations, physical constants, and a basic math review.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

When I began reviewing for the Physics SAT II, I was two years removed from my high school's Honors Physics class, and much of the information was foggy at best. I chose this book mainly because Barron's helped me do well on AP Calc and AP Spanish Language (longest and hardest exam of my life!). So I chose this book rather blindly, on 'general principles,' knowing Barron's had worked for me in the past. My Experience: A quick summation - I began studying with this book after AP exams in May 2013, for the June 1, 2013 Subject Test. I had taken honors physics

(geometry-based) freshman year, or in other words, two years prior. This book (with my parents' nudging) pretty much occupied a lot of my time for those two weeks in May. In the end, I got an 800, largely thanks to this book.

Point #1: It works (see my testimonial :) There are a ton of practice tests and problems, and in keeping with Barrons, they are harder than the actual test (Disclaimer: I like that, some people don't). About the test: There are something like 50-60 (I think it is sixty) questions in an hour. As you can guess, it's about remembering concepts more than solving multi-step problems. Any math is pretty much plug-and-chug. So, if you are worried that this book will be an encyclopedia, I have bad news. But so is the test. On the test, there are questions on every topic you will have covered in a comprehensive course, from Galileo to relativity, and **NO EQUATIONS ARE GIVEN**. Therefore, the fact that every topic is covered in this book (and the handy equations index is present at the back) is an enormous boon.

Point #2: It asks the right (if unenjoyable) questions. There are questions on the test that are simply just variations on a theme of "Can you remember the right equation?" or "Can you remember which scientist did what?" The test is breadth over depth, and this book is similar (and there is a decent amount of depth to boot). I would recommend a study partner to go with this (I used my father), because there is bound to be a topic that will just stump you (my bane was capacitance :). Lo and behold, on my subject test there were two questions on capacitance (I didn't answer either of them, which bugged me because one of them I knew was a gimme, but I forgot the right equation :) In short, the test will cover everything, and it is understood that you will forget some things (there is a nine-question curve or so). This book prepares you to the point that only one or two will truly stump you, so that even if you miss several more in the heat of the moment, you can get an 800. That being said, if you are aiming a little lower, but still want to study, I will tell you that choosing books is simply choosing between the lesser of two evils. The test is your standard fact-regurgitation, so whatever you choose, it will probably be similar to this book if it's done right. You have to just memorize the equations, memorize the important people, and understand the basics of just about every topic in physics. Otherwise, I would point you to chemistry :) But, the fact of the matter is that this book works. Not much more one can ask than that.

Practically speaking, this one is not for the test. I found some topics unnecessarily in depth, some surprisingly shallow... I recommend Kaplan or Princeton Review for physics. (in other subjects, Barron's is usually great)

This book provides a lot of information and makes it easy to understand. There are a few chapters

that could use some more, such as the ones on waves and reflections. I had to watch videos on YouTube to gain a grasp of these. Anyhow, here's how it went. Before the test: I had been taking AP Physics C: Mechanics from September to December. I enrolled in this test for January. My teacher was mediocre at best, and I had no previous exposure on any of the other physics concepts like electricity and magnetism. And I was vaguely familiar with Newton's Laws and Kinematics from my class. Basically, I was self-studying for the test with some help from my physics teacher when I didn't understand something. I didn't realize that schools recommended a subject test relating to the field of your prospective major, so I didn't decide to take this until December. I took the diagnostic during Winter Break and scored 480. Yikes. I guessed on the vast majority of questions. This book became my bible for the next few weeks. I read it during my physics class (since we weren't learning anything anyway), during lunch, after school, etc. I was really learning a lot and this book made learning physics enjoyable. When I finished with the book, I took one of the practice tests. I scored 630. I needed to score in the 700s if I wanted to be competitive for the schools I was applying to, so I studied some more. I took the second test and scored 650. I only had a few days before the test, so I studied for hours straight (about 5pm until 2am). I took the last practice test in the book and finally scored a 730 with a few minutes left over. I no longer had to guess on the questions and felt confident. The next two days, I brushed up on the concepts I was still struggling with, like lenses and electromagnetism. Also, I had read that Barron's overprepared you for the test, so when Saturday came, I felt I was ready. During the test: The test questions were much different than those on Barron's. Not necessarily harder or easier, but different. I mean they tested completely different things and asked the questions in a completely different format. I guessed on most of them. After the test: I walked out of that test room feeling how I did when I first took the diagnostic. I wish I remembered some of the questions so I could give some examples, but unfortunately I don't. But trust me when I say to not rely on the practice tests from this book. They are useless. This doesn't cover a lot of the same material that was on the exam. This might be good if you have a solid background in various physics topics (AP Physics B), but don't rely on this as your only test prep material. I didn't end up sending my score. Good thing too because I got a 610. Not as bad as I expected after the real test but not as good as I had hoped after the Barron's'. If you want to learn physics just for fun, get this book. I also recommend Physics for Dummies II for some better explanations of lenses and waves and such. If you want to get a high score on the test, look elsewhere. I heard Princeton Review is good. Take practice tests from Collegeboard, if you can get a hold of some. Good luck.

The review material was well explained, but the practice tests were nothing like the ACTUAL SAT Subject Test...they were too easy, and there was a set order to the questions (i.e. kinematics --> electrostatics --> circuitry, etc.), but the questions of the actual subject test are randomized. Keep that in mind when developing a time strategy.

One of the main differences between the AP Physics test and the Subject test in Physics is the material on Optics. Unfortunately the Barron's book did NOT have the information on optics that was tested on the subject test. It had some optics topics, yes, but the information you needed on the test was not in this prep book.

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