



## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

### **What is the National Automotive Student Skills Standards Assessment?**

The National Automotive Student Skills Standards Assessment (NA3SA) is a series of tests designed to measure students' knowledge of course content and learning outcomes within an automotive training program. Students earn an industry recognized NA3SA certificate for each test passed.

The Automotive Youth Educational Systems (AYES), the National Automotive Technicians Education Foundation (NATEF), and SkillsUSA have partnered to offer a single National Automotive Assessment. These tests, developed by the National Institute for Automotive Service Excellence (ASE), are appropriate for evaluating students who are near the end of their studies in the areas of Automobile Service, Collision Repair & Refinishing, and M/H Truck.

The NA3SA tests are similar to, and constructed in much the same manner as, the ASE certification exams. However, the NA3SA tests are appropriately calibrated for students just completing an entry-level automotive program.

### **What tests are available?**

Tests are available for Automobile Service and Repair, Collision Repair & Refinishing, and M/H Truck Service and Repair. The tests in each series parallel the technical areas defined in the NATEF Standards for program certification.

<p><b>AUTOMOBILE TESTS</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Suspension and Steering</li> <li>• Brakes</li> <li>• Electrical/Electronic Systems</li> <li>• Engine Performance</li> <li>• Engine Repair</li> <li>• Automatic Transmission/Transaxle</li> <li>• Manual Drive Train and Axles</li> <li>• Heating and Air Conditioning</li> </ul>	<p><b>COLLISION REPAIR AND REFINISH TESTS</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Painting and Refinishing</li> <li>• Structural Analysis and Damage Repair</li> <li>• Non-structural Analysis and Damage Repair</li> <li>• Mechanical and Electrical</li> </ul> <p><b>M/H TRUCK</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Diesel Engines</li> <li>• Electrical/Electronic Systems</li> <li>• Brakes</li> <li>• Suspension and Steering</li> </ul>
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### **Do we need to be an ASE (NATEF) certified training program to participate with the NA3SA tests?**

No. All secondary and post-secondary entry-level automotive training programs may use the assessment, regardless of their program certification status.

**Does our program, or do our students, need to be associated with AYES or SkillsUSA?**

No. Neither membership in SkillsUSA, nor affiliations with AYES, is required for using the NA3SA program.

**When should students take the NA3SA tests?**

These tests are appropriate for students who have nearly completed an individual automotive training course or who are preparing to graduate from a technician-training program. Schools choose which tests in the series to administer to each student.

**When are the NA3SA tests available?**

The tests are available twice each year (fall and spring). For exact dates, please visit the published schedule on [www.NA3SA.com](http://www.NA3SA.com).

**How are the tests administered?**

All tests are administered through a secure computer based testing (CBT) platform delivered via the Internet. An instructor may schedule one or more tests anytime during the testing window. A proctor, who is a staff person other than an automotive instructor, enables the test for the student and monitors their test session.

**How much do the tests cost?**

The cost is \$15 per student per academic year. The fee allows for a single attempt at any or all tests in a series. For example, within a given year (fall and spring administrations) a student in an auto repair program may attempt all eight exams in that series, or any subset of these, for the single \$15 fee.

**What if a student fails one or more tests in the fall, can they retest in the spring?**

Yes; however, this will deduct another \$15 test credit from the school's account. For the spring, by rescheduling a test(s) that a student took in the fall, the student will once again have access to all tests in the series. Important – the student is not allowed to take the same test more than once within a given testing window.

**Can students retake a test(s) if they failed or they want to try for a better score?**

No, not during the same testing window. Students can however, retake the same test(s) in a future testing window. This will require an additional test credit deduction of \$15.

**Are the test forms used in the spring the same as the ones used in the fall?**

No. A different test form is used in the fall and spring testing windows. They are however, built to equivalent statistical targets for difficulty and content specifications.

**Are the tests proctored?**

Yes, all tests must be proctored. The proctor is normally a non-automotive instructor or school staff member who can verify the identity of the student and monitor their test session. The proctor is required to sign onto the CBT system and activate the student's scheduled test.

**What are the requirements for computer based testing (CBT)?**

- Internet access with Internet Explorer Version 6 (or higher)
- A minimum screen resolution of 1024x768 (higher is recommended – 1280x1024)
- Cookies enabled
- Pop-ups allowed
- Acrobat Reader Version 7 (or higher)
- All non-student users must have a valid email address to serve as their user name and to receive program communication
- The school's email server must allow non-student users (school staff) to receive email communications from [webmaster@natef.org](mailto:webmaster@natef.org).

- Due to the variation in proxy servers and networks used by many schools, additional local action may be required.

### **How many questions are on the tests?**

Each test contains 40 scored questions and up to 10 additional non-scored items that are included for statistical purposes. The non-scored questions are not identified as such and will not count for or against a student's results. New test titles offered for the first time will have 80 questions, 40 of which will ultimately be selected as the final scored set.

### **What does each test cover?**

For each test, questions relate to one or more of the tasks on the related NATEF task list. For more details, please review the *Test Specifications And Task List* documents on the NA3SA website ([www.NA3SA.com](http://www.NA3SA.com)).

### **Why does the number required to pass an NA3SA test typically fall in the range of 20-23 out of 40?**

For this type of pass/fail test, the cut score is intentionally set in this range to maximize the accuracy of the pass/fail determination. The required score at the pass point is affected by the average difficulty of all questions on the test. When building the test form, questions are carefully selected with difficulty levels that create a normal distribution of difficulty around the cut score. In this way, the pass/fail accuracy is greatly improved. For more details about test form construction, please see the document "Interpreting Results and Technical Data" on the NA3SA.com website.

### **How do I assign letter grades to a student based on their score in an NA3SA test?**

These tests are not designed to award a letter grade that separates those who pass into distinct levels of success. Although the percentile rank tables provided in the document *Interpreting Results and Technical Data* can be helpful in comparing student performance against other test takers nation-wide, there is no practical method to assign a meaningful letter grade based on performance.

### **What accommodations are available for students with special needs?**

Students with special needs (i.e. students with Individual Education Plans) may receive reasonable accommodations, as defined by the school, for their special needs provided that those accommodations do not compromise test integrity.

ASE considers each school participating in the NA3SA tests to be an active partner in the test delivery process. As such, ASE expects all school staff involved in the testing program to exercise a good and reasonable effort to maintain the integrity of the testing program.

### **How much time do students have to take each test?**

NATEF recommends that 60 minutes be scheduled for each test; however, the CBT system will allow an individual test to stay open for up to 120 minutes. This extra hour may be used to accommodate students who have special needs. For tests being offered for the first time, 90 minutes should be scheduled due to the extra length of the test.

### **How are the tests scheduled?**

Instructors are responsible for assigning which tests a student should take. Once a test is assigned, the test can be taken anytime during the testing window (i.e. the test is not locked to a specific date). The instructor can then coordinate with the student and test proctor when the test should be taken. The test can only be unlocked for the student by a test proctor.

### **Are sample test questions available?**

Sample questions can be found on the [www.NA3SA.com](http://www.NA3SA.com) website.

### **What do the students receive for taking the tests?**

**Score Report** – All students will receive a detailed score report with a pass/fail determination for each assessment taken. This report is provided through the NA3SA test delivery system. Students and their instructor may view and print the student score report.

**NA3SA Certificate** – Students are awarded an NA3SA Achievement Certificate for each test passed. These certificates provide third-party documentation of the student's accomplishment against the National NATEF Standards for automotive training programs.

### **What reports are available?**

The following reports are available on the NA3SA system:

**Individual student score report** – This report is generated for each test taken and details how many questions were answered correctly in each content area, the total number of correct responses, and a pass/fail determination. This report can be accessed by the student, their instructor and the school's primary site administrator.

**Instructor Report** – This report summarizes all tests for all students within a given test window by an instructor. The summary includes the total score for each test by student, the average score of all students for each test, and the pass rate for each test, grouped by instructor. The instructor and the school's primary site administrator may view and print these reports.

**Composite Instructor Report** – The school's site administrator can download a composite report that combines all instructor reports into one comma separated value (CSV) file.

**State Level Reports** – This report summarizes all participating schools by state. For each school, the summary includes the school name, the total number of students taking each test, the average score per test, and the passing rate for each test. The designated contact from the State Department of Education will receive read-only access to this report.

### **Are national percentile rank tables available for each test?**

Yes. Each year at the conclusion of the spring test session, percentile rank tables are calculated for each test based on all results from that particular administration. The table is then incorporated into the *Guide for Interpreting Results and Technical Data* and is available for download from the NA3SA website ([www.NA3SA.com](http://www.NA3SA.com)). Since these tables cannot be generated until all students have tested, the Guide will not be available until after the test window closes.

### **How were the passing standards set?**

Passing standards were individually set for each test using a contrasted-groups method. This method is based on actual performance of real students, not judgments of how students are likely to perform. Criterion groups of “should-pass” and “should-not pass” students were selected in advance of testing. These selections were made by instructors with detailed knowledge of the level of preparedness of the students. After testing, a passing score was selected that minimized the false-positive and false-negative classifications in the obtained score distributions of these groups.

**What if one of my students transfers out of the program before taking any tests. Can we recover that test credit?**

Yes. To recover a test credit that is assigned to a student who will not be taking any tests, simply un-assign all tests for that student and the test fee associated with that student will be credited back to the school's account. This action must be taken from the instructor's roster where the tests were originally assigned, and must be accomplished before any tests are started by the student.

**Who do I contact if I have additional questions about the NA3SA tests?**

For additional questions, you may contact any of the NA3SA partner organizations:

- NA3SA Toll Free Line – 800-362-0544
- NATEF – 703-669-6650
- SkillsUSA – 703-737-0638
- AYES – 888-339-2937

**Who do I contact if I need assistance with the computer based testing system?**

- For all technical assistance on CBT, contact:
  - NA3SA Test Administration Help Line  
800-362-0544  
8:30 am - 5:00 pm eastern time
- Most problems with forgotten passwords can be resolved through the password recovery feature on the NA3SA.com website.
- To log onto the CBT system, go to [www.NA3SA.com](http://www.NA3SA.com)