

FAQs

Preparation

Why must I take the ALEKS PPL Assessment? The Placement Assessment is used to determine the mathematics course in which you will have the greatest success. Upon completion of the Placement Assessments, your scores are updated in our internal computer system. This will allow you to enroll in appropriate Math courses for your academic program.

Who has to take the ALEKS PPL Assessment? ACT or SAT scores must be within 2 years from the time a student is accepted and confirmed to Shippensburg University to determine if placement testing is required. If you do not have SAT scores, you must take the ALEKS placement test.

A math placement test is required for first-year students whose ACT-M is 22 or less or whose SAT-M is 550 or less. Students with Math SAT scores greater than 550 are not required to take a placement test; however, these students may participate in ALEKS PPL Assessment to try to increase their level.

When do I take the ALEKS PPL Assessment? To receive the most accurate schedule, you must take the ALEKS assessment prior to attending your first-year student orientation. You will receive an email when your placement testing information is available, and you should complete your ALEKS test as soon as possible.

Where can I take my Placement Assessment?

You may take your placement assessment online. All instructions for completing the test can be found in your [MyShip Portal](#).

We reserve the right to require a student to take a Placement Assessment in a proctored environment.

Is there a fee for using ALEKS PPL? Use of ALEKS is included in your student fees.

Do I need to install any software or plug-ins prior to taking the ALEKS Placement Assessment? Yes. Prior to taking ALEKS, you will be prompted to download the Respondus Lockdown Browser. For a list of preferred browsers, please review the ALEKS system requirements on their support site: http://www.aleks.com/support/lockdown_system_requirements

What topics are covered during the ALEKS PPL Assessment? ALEKS PPL is an online, adaptive system that covers a broad spectrum of mathematics topics. The length of the Placement Assessment will vary, but can be up to 30 questions. You will see some, but not all, of the math you have learned in high school. It is a Placement Assessment, not a preview of math courses at Shippensburg University. It is designed to identify

if you are prepared for a particular course. After you take your first Placement Assessment, you will have the opportunity to review and master additional topics to reassess and improve your placement.

Topics covered:

- Real numbers (including fractions, integers, and percentages)
- Equations and inequalities (including linear equations, linear inequalities, systems of linear equations, and quadratic equations),
- Linear and quadratic functions (including graphs and functions, linear functions, and parabolas), exponents and polynomials (including integer exponents, polynomial arithmetic, factoring, and polynomial equations), rational expressions (including rational equations and rational functions)
- Radical expressions (including higher roots and rational exponents)
- Exponentials and logarithms (including function compositions and inverse functions, properties of logarithms, and logarithmic equations)
- Geometry and trigonometry (including perimeter, area, and volume, coordinate geometry, trigonometric functions, and identities and equations).

Can I practice using the ALEKS input tools before I begin the Placement Assessment? ALEKS will begin with a brief tutorial to make sure you are comfortable with the math palette tools before your Placement Assessment begins. The tutorial shows you how to enter different types of answers, how to use the ALEKS calculator, and how to graph. If you aren't sure how to input an answer, or need help while you are taking the ALEKS Placement Assessment, select the **Help** button below the answer pallet tools. Going to the tutorial during your Placement Assessment will NOT impact your Placement Assessment results.

Taking the Placement Assessment

What is the format of the questions on ALEKS? ALEKS is not a multiple-choice Placement Assessment. It is open-response and requires you to work out solutions with a paper and pencil, then enter them into ALEKS. Be sure to have scratch paper with you.

May I use a calculator while using ALEKS? ALEKS will provide an on-screen calculator if you need one to complete a particular problem. Otherwise, you may not use a calculator.

May I use any other resources during a Placement Assessment? You may only use a pen or pencil, paper, and the resources provided within ALEKS. You should not receive assistance from friends, family, other websites, textbooks, or any other resource not provided by ALEKS. Using outside resources will lead to improper placement and potentially course failure.

Can I review a question after I've answered it? Because ALEKS is adaptive, once you submit an answer, you cannot change it. Be sure to carefully check your answer before submitting your response.

What if I see questions I don't know? It is likely that you will be asked questions on material you have not yet learned. On such questions it is appropriate to answer, **I don't know**. On any question that you have

familiarity with, however, it is important to do your best. **I don't know** is interpreted by ALEKS to mean that you do not know how to solve the topic, and this will be reflected in the Placement Assessment results. There is no penalty for incorrectly answering a question on the Placement Assessment, it only helps ALEKS understand what you know and don't know.

Are Placement Assessments timed? Yes, you have 2 hours and 30 minutes to complete a Placement Assessment once it has begun.

What happens if I do not complete a Placement Assessment in the allotted time? If the Placement Assessment is unproctored, you will have to restart the Placement Assessment. If the incomplete Placement Assessment is proctored and timed, you will be given a placement result, but it will not be a true reflection of your abilities.

I am ready to start my ALEKS PPL Assessment. How do I begin? To access the ALEKS placement test and all instructions, log in to you [MyShip Portal](#).

Placement Result

What is my placement result? Your placement result (overall score) is a number between 0 and 100. It represents the percentage of topics ALEKS has identified you have mastered.

Course placement is determined as follows:

ALEKS Score	Placement Level	Courses
0 to 29	1	Students at Level 1 can take either MAT105 – Math for Liberal Studies or MAT117A – Applied Statistics with Co-Requisite Support to satisfy their Quantitative General Education requirement. Students in majors that eventually require calculus should take MAT117A.
30 to 34	2	Students at Level 2 can take MAT 105 – Math for Liberal Studies , MAT 107 – Mathematical Models Applied to Money , MAT 110 – Fundamentals of Mathematics I , or MAT 117A – Applied Statistics with Co-Requisite Support . Students should consult their academic advisor to choose the right course for their program of study.
35 to 45	3	Students at Level 3 can take MAT 105 – Math for Liberal Studies , MAT 107 – Mathematical Models Applied to Money , MAT 110 – Fundamentals of Mathematics I , MAT 117B – Applied Statistics B , or MAT140A – College Algebra (4 credits) . Students should consult with their academic advisor to choose the right course for their program of study.

46 to 60	4	Students at Level 4 can take any of the Level 3 courses (except for MAT140A), or MAT140B – College Algebra (3 credits) . Students should consult with their academic advisor to choose the right course for their program of study.
61 to 75	5	Students at Level 5 can take any of the Level 3 courses (except for College Algebra). Students at this level can also take MAT175 – Precalculus, MAT181 – Applied Calculus, or MAT217 – Statistics I . Students should consult with their academic advisor to choose the right course for their program of study.
76 to 100	6	Students at Level 6 can take any of the Level 5 courses (except for Precalculus). Students at this level can also take MAT211 – Calculus I . Students should consult with their academic advisor to choose the right course for their program of study.

Where can I see my score?

- You will receive your score immediately upon completion of your Placement Assessment.
- Your ALEKS score can be viewed by re-entering ALEKS using the same access link for which you took the Placement Assessment.
- Your scores are automatically added to your student profile, which is accessible by your advisor.

How long is my placement result valid? Your placement result is valid for as long as you are enrolled at Shippensburg University. However, if it has been a long time since your placement testing or your last Math course, you may consider taking a lower-level Math course to refresh your basic skills.

What if I do not place into the course I wanted? This is a perfect opportunity to take advantage of the Prep and Learning Modules offered within ALEKS PPL. An individualized study plan will be created based on your performance on the Initial Placement Assessment. ALEKS will identify what you know and what you are ready to learn next so you can brush up on lost knowledge.

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.

Which math course is required for my program? Students majoring in Science, Mathematics, Engineering, or Business are encouraged to pursue a Math placement level of at least 5 before their first semester. Level 6 may be required to declare certain specialized Engineering majors.

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 required is the minimum preparation for your course. Take advantage of the individualized review and learning features in ALEKS to get a better grade in your class.

Can I retake the ALEKS PPL Assessment? Yes, you may take up to 5 Placement Assessments. However, to make each attempt worthwhile, it is important that you spend time working in your ALEKS Prep and Learning Module between Placement Assessments so that you can improve your skills. You are required to take a 24 hour “cool-off” period in between Placement Assessments. You must also complete a minimum of 3 Prep and Learning Module hours before the 2nd placement assessment, and 3 Prep and Learning Module hours before the 3rd placement assessment.

Can I retake the ALEKS Placement Assessment immediately?

You must wait 24 hours between Placement Assessments. There is generally no benefit to re-taking the Placement Assessment immediately after completing a prior attempt. You cannot improve your results by simply re-taking the Placement Assessment without spending time in the Prep and Learning Module to refresh material that you may have forgotten.

Prep and Learning Modules

How long do I have access to my Prep and Learning Module? You will have 12 months of access to your Prep and Learning module. Access to the prep course will not begin until you select **start** on the top of your screen. DO NOT select into the Prep and Learning Module until you are ready to start working.

Is there an additional fee for my Prep and Learning Module? Access to a Prep and Learning Module is included along with the additional Placement Assessments.

Must I work in my ALEKS Prep and Learning Module between Placement Assessments?

You can retake the Placement assessment five additional times to improve your score. (The highest score will be used for math placement). Students are required to work in the Prep and Learning Modules for a specific amount of time prior to each Placement Assessment to increase success.

- 2nd attempt—required to complete 3 hours of work in the Prep and Learning Modules before attempting assessment.
- 3rd attempt—required to complete 3 additional hours of work in the Prep and Learning Modules before attempting assessment.

What are ALEKS Knowledge Checks? While working in a Prep and Learning Module, you will periodically complete a Knowledge Check to make sure you have mastered the topics you gained in Learning Mode. If you do not show mastery during the Knowledge Check, the topics will be added back into your Learning Pie so you can review them again.

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. Select the placement tab in the upper right corner of the ALEKS page to start a new Placement Assessment.

Can I change to a different Prep and Learning Module later? No. You may only use one Prep and Learning Module. If you are unsure which module to select, use the module recommended by ALEKS or consult with your advisor.

Technical Support

What do I do if my web browser gets stuck or my computer crashes while I'm taking the Placement Assessment? Simply close the browser, or log out and log back in. ALEKS will resume the Placement Assessment exactly where you left off, with no loss of your previous answers.

Where can I get help with ALEKS?

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

http://support.aleks.com/assess_placement