

TCAP Science Assessment

Calculator Guidance

Grades 3-5

The TCAP science assessment in grades 3-5 does not require the use of a calculator. TN Science standards for this grade band only require students to recognize patterns and count using number lines, and therefore, students are not permitted to use a calculator (see below for guidance).

Grades 6-8

The Tennessee Academic Standards for Science incorporate mathematical concepts in a grade-appropriate manner and vertical progression that aligns to the Tennessee Academic Standards in Mathematics. Recognizing that students at some grade levels may encounter science items that involve the use of mathematical skills, and because the test is designed to look for mastery of the science standards, not the mathematical ones, the department has developed calculator guidance for the TCAP science assessments (see below for guidance).

EOC Biology

The Tennessee Academic Standards for Science incorporate mathematical concepts in a grade-appropriate manner and vertical progression that aligns to the Tennessee Academic Standards in Mathematics. Recognizing that students at some grade levels may encounter science items that involve the use of mathematical skills, and because the test is designed to look for mastery of the science standards, not the mathematical ones, the department has developed calculator guidance for the TCAP science assessments (see below for guidance).

Science Calculator Guidance by Grade Band

Grade/Course	Calculator Policy	Rationale
3-5	No calculator permitted.	TN Science standards for this grade band only require students to recognize patterns and do simple addition and subtraction, and therefore, students are not permitted to use a calculator.
6-8	Calculators permitted. All students taking a paper-based test should be given access to a hand-held calculator from the <u>approved calculator list for grades 6-8</u> (under “math” tab). All students taking the online test will have access to both a TI-30 Scientific Calculator and a Desmos Scientific Calculator within the online platform.	TN Science standards for grades 6- 8 include the introduction of mathematical skills within the context of science. There may be items on the assessment that incorporate grade-level math computation, and therefore, all students are permitted to use a calculator on the assessment.
Biology	Calculators permitted. All students taking a paper-based test should be given access to a hand-held calculator from <u>the approved calculator list for Biology</u> (under “math” tab). All students taking the online test will have access to both a TI-84 CE Graphing Calculator and a Desmos Graphing Calculator within the online platform.	TN Science standards in Biology require students to analyze and interpret data at a level that may involve some mathematical calculations. Therefore, all students are permitted to use a calculator on the assessment.

Test Administration Guidelines

Desmos Calculators

- Note that the Desmos calculators appearing in the TestNav platform are different from standard Desmos calculators freely available in App Stores and on the Desmos homepage (desmos.com). [View a list of these differences.](#)
- [Instructional videos to learn more about Desmos](#)
- [Desmos Coaching Corner Webinars](#)
- [Desmos Scientific Calculator for Grade 6-8 assessments](#)
- [Desmos Graphing Calculator for EOC assessments](#)