



ACS Orange County CA

Chemistry Olympiad Exam - FAQs

Where and when will the exam be held?

Please see the current website information on the Chemistry Olympiad exam.

Can I register myself for this exam?

No, the 4 participating students must be selected by the AP chemistry teachers at their schools and pre-registered online. No substitutions are allowed, and no one not registered will be permitted to participate.

Do I need a photo ID on the day of the exam?

Yes, IDs will be checked.

Do I need a calculator?

Yes, but only scientific calculators may be used. No programmable or graphing calculators are allowed.

How long is the exam?

The exam is multiple choice, and will last 2 hours maximum.

What is the policy on cell phones?

While we realize that students may need a phone to call for a ride at the end of the exam, ALL CELL PHONES MUST BE TURNED OFF AND PUT AWAY during the exam. If a student is found to have a cell phone that is on, s/he will be disqualified.

Can I leave to go to the restroom during the exam?

No, there are no bathroom breaks!

Can this exam be taken more than one time?

You may take this exam only once unless you have qualified for the national exam in the previous year. If so, you may compete individually, but not as a member of your school's team.

Do I have to be a US citizen to take the exam?

To take the first qualifying exam, this is not a requirement. However, a student must have U.S. citizenship OR have legal, permanent resident status (possess a green card) to continue on and participate in the National Chemistry Olympiad should s/he score among the top 11 students in Orange County.

Can I take this exam if I am only a first year student?

No, this exam is meant for advanced students – those in their 2nd year of chemistry in high school.

If I qualify among the top 11 students in Orange County, what is the next step?

If you are a citizen or permanent resident, then you will take the next level exam, which will be given on a Saturday in April from 8:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. This second exam will contain both written and laboratory portions.

What happens if there is a tie between 2 or more students from my school, or a tie for 11th place?

The first tiebreaker is based on success in answering the organic chemistry questions, the second tiebreaker consists of sets of 5 questions selected by the education committee – best 3 of 5 answers wins. If the first set of 5 questions does not break the tie, we move to a second set of 5 questions.