

The GMAT

WHAT?

The Graduate Management Admission Test (GMAT) is a standardized exam required for admission to many business schools' MBA programs. The test is comprised of three different sections:

1. **Verbal Section:** This section measures your ability to read and comprehend written material and to reason and evaluate arguments. You will have 45 minutes to answer 23 questions.

There are two types of questions on the Verbal Section:

- **Reading Comprehension:** This section measures your ability to understand words and statements, understand logical relationships between significant points, draw inferences, and follow the development of quantitative concepts. Specifically, this section tests reading skills including: main idea, supporting idea, inference, application, logical structure, and style.
- **Critical Reasoning:** This section measures your ability to make arguments, evaluate arguments, and formulate or evaluate a plan of action. Critical Reasoning questions are based on a short reading passage, usually fewer than 100 words. Typically, the short text comes with a question that asks you which of the five answer options strengthens or weakens an argument, tells why the argument is flawed, or strongly supports or damages the argument. You will not need specialized knowledge of the subject matter to answer the questions.

2. **Quantitative Section:** The Quantitative section measures your algebraic and arithmetic foundational knowledge and how you apply this knowledge to solve problems. You will have 45 minutes to answer 21 problem solving questions. These types of questions require some knowledge of arithmetic and elementary algebra. Answering these questions correctly relies on logic and analytical skills, not the underlying math skills. You cannot use a calculator while working on this section.

3. **Data Insights Section:** The Data Insights questions assess your ability to analyze and interpret data and apply it to real-world business scenarios. It also measures digital and data literacy. It is composed of 20 questions that ask you to assess how multiple sources and types of information - including graphic, numeric, and verbal - relate to one another and can be leveraged to make informed decisions. Questions may require math, data analysis, verbal reasoning, or all three. You can use an on-screen calculator for this 45 minute section.

There are 5 different question types on this section:

- **Data Sufficiency:** Measures your ability to analyze a quantitative problem, recognize which data is relevant, and determine at which point there is enough data to solve the problem.
- **Multi-Source Reasoning:** Measures your ability to examine data from multiple sources including text passages, graphics, or some combination of the three - and to analyze each source of data carefully to answer multiple questions. Some questions will require you to recognize discrepancies among different sources of data, while others will ask you to draw inferences, or require you to determine whether data is relevant.
- **Table Analysis:** Measures your ability to sort and analyze a table of data, similar to a spreadsheet, in order to determine what information is relevant or meets certain conditions.
- **Graphics Interpretation:** Measures your ability to interpret the information presented in a graph or other graphical image (scatter plot, x/y graph, bar chart, pie chart, or statistical curve distribution) to discern relationships, and make inferences.
- **Two-Part Analysis:** Measures your ability to solve complex problems. They could be quantitative, verbal, or some combination of both. The format is intentionally versatile to cover a wide range of content. Your ability to evaluate trade-offs, solve simultaneous equations, and discern relationships between two entities is measured.

WHEN?

- The GMAT is a computer-based adaptive test and may be taken at GMAT testing centers found around the world, upon appointment. Go to www.mba.com to register for a test date.
- GMAT scores are good for five years. Thus, it may make sense to take the GMAT when your test taking skills are still sharp (usually shortly after completing undergraduate graduation).

HOW TO STUDY?

- The GMAT is weighted heavily in the application review process, so it is important that you prepare seriously. Most students plan to study for about 4-6 months, 10-15 hours per week, and take a GMAT preparation class.

RE-TAKING THE GMAT

- Repeat test-takers often score slightly higher. Schools will have access to your complete record and will see every test score and cancelled test. While you may take the GMAT up to five times in twelve months, most schools frown upon an applicant taking it multiple times without improvement.

CANCELLING SCORES

- Students who do not wish to have their score recorded may have their score cancelled. Generally, business schools do not penalize a cancelled GMAT score. Multiple cancellations may require an explanation.

SCORES

- The Quantitative and Verbal Reasoning sections of the GMAT are computer adaptive, meaning the difficulty of the test tailors itself in real-time to your ability level. This means that unlike a paper-and-pencil test, the next question is determined on the spot, pulled from a large bank of questions. Based on your previous answers, you will receive either more or less difficult questions, which will have an impact on your score.
- The published GMAT scores range between 205 and 805. This score is accompanied by a percentile rank. Your GMAT Total Score is composed of the Quantitative Reasoning, Verbal Reasoning, and Data Insights sections of the exam. The contribution of each section score to Total Score is equally weighted across sections.