

GMAT™ Official Guide 2022

1.0 What Is the GMAT™ Exam?

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The Graduate Management Admission Test™ (GMAT™) exam is a standardized exam used in admissions decisions by more than 7,000 graduate management programs, at approximately 2,300 graduate business schools worldwide. It helps you gauge, and demonstrate to schools, your academic potential for success in graduate-level management studies.

The four-part exam measures your Analytical Writing, Integrated Reasoning, Verbal Reasoning, and Quantitative Reasoning skills—higher-order reasoning skills that management faculty, admissions professionals, and employers worldwide have identified as important for incoming students to have. “Higher-order” reasoning skills involve complex judgments, and include critical thinking, analysis, and problem solving. Unlike undergraduate grades and curricula, which vary in their meaning across regions and institutions, your GMAT scores provide a standardized, statistically valid, and reliable measure of how you are likely to perform academically in the core curriculum of a graduate management program. The GMAT exam’s validity, fairness, and value in admissions have been well established through numerous academic studies.

The GMAT exam is delivered online or at a test center, entirely in English, and solely on a computer. It is not a test of business knowledge, subject-matter mastery, English vocabulary, or advanced computational skills. The GMAT exam also does not measure other factors related to success in graduate management study, such as job experience, leadership ability, motivation, and interpersonal skills. Your GMAT score is intended to be used as one admissions criterion among other, more subjective, criteria, such as admissions essays and interviews.

1.1 Why Take the GMAT™ Exam?

Taking the GMAT exam helps you stand out in the admissions process and demonstrate your readiness and commitment to pursuing graduate management education. Schools use GMAT scores to help them select the most qualified applicants—because they know that candidates who take the GMAT exam are serious about earning a graduate business degree, and it’s a proven predictor of a student’s ability to succeed in his or her chosen program. When you consider which programs to apply to, you can look at a school’s use of the GMAT exam as one indicator of quality. Schools that use the GMAT exam typically list score ranges or average scores in their class profiles, so you may also find these profiles helpful in gauging the academic competitiveness of a program you are considering and how well your performance on the exam compares with that of the students enrolled in the program.

No matter how you perform on the GMAT exam, you should contact the schools that interest you to learn more and to ask how they use GMAT scores and other criteria (such as your undergraduate grades, essays, and letters of recommendation) in their admissions processes. School admissions offices, websites, and materials published by schools are the key sources of information when you are doing research about where you might want to go to business school.

Myth -vs- **FACT**

M – If I don’t achieve a high score on the GMAT exam, I won’t get into my top choice schools.

F – There are great schools available for candidates at any GMAT score range.

Fewer than 50 of the ~200,000 people taking the GMAT exam each year get a perfect score of 800; and many more get into top business school programs around the world each year. Admissions Officers use GMAT scores as one component in their admissions decisions, in conjunction with undergraduate records, application essays, interviews, letters of recommendation, and other information when deciding whom to accept into their programs. Visit School Finder on mba.com to learn about schools that are the best fit for you.

For more information on the GMAT exam, test preparation materials, registration, how to use and send your GMAT scores to schools, and applying to business school, please visit mba.com/gmat.

1.2 GMAT™ Exam Format

The GMAT exam consists of four separately timed sections (see the table on the next page). The Analytical Writing Assessment (AWA) section consists of one essay. The Integrated Reasoning section consists of graphical and data analysis questions in multiple response formats. The Quantitative and Verbal Reasoning sections consist of multiple-choice questions.

The Quantitative and Verbal Reasoning sections of the GMAT exam are computer adaptive, which means that the test draws from a large bank of questions to tailor itself to your ability level, and you won't get many questions that are too hard or too easy for you. The first question will be of medium difficulty. As you answer each question, the computer scores your answer and uses it—as well as your responses to all preceding questions—to select the next question.

Computer-adaptive tests become more difficult the more questions you answer correctly, but if you get a question that seems easier than the last one, it does not necessarily mean you answered the last question incorrectly. The test must cover a range of content, both in the type of question asked and the subject matter presented.

Because the computer uses your answers to select your next questions, you may not skip questions or go back and change your answer to a previous question. If you don't know the answer to a question, try to eliminate as many choices as possible, then select the answer you think is best.

Though the individual questions are different, the mix of question types is the same for every GMAT exam. Your score is determined by the difficulty and statistical characteristics of the questions you answer as well as the number of questions you answer correctly. By adapting to each test-taker, the GMAT exam is able to accurately and efficiently gauge skill levels over a full range of abilities, from very high to very low.

The test includes the types of questions found in this book and in the online question bank found at gmat.wiley.com, but the format and presentation of the GMAT exam questions are different.

Five things to know about GMAT exam questions:

- Only one question or question prompt at a time is presented on the computer screen.
- The answer choices for the multiple-choice questions will be preceded by radio buttons, rather than by letters.
- Different question types appear in random order in the multiple-choice and Integrated Reasoning sections.
- You must choose an answer and confirm your choice before moving on to the next question.
- You may not go back to previous screens to change answers to previous questions.

Myth -vs- FACT

M – Getting an easier question means I answered the last one wrong.

F – You should not become distracted by the difficulty level of a question.

Many different factors contribute to the difficulty of a question, so don't worry when taking the test or waste valuable time trying to determine the difficulty of the question you are answering.

To ensure that everyone receives the same content, the test selects a specific number of questions of each type. The test may call for your next problem to be a relatively hard data sufficiency question involving arithmetic operations. But, if there are no more relatively difficult data sufficiency questions involving arithmetic, you might be given an easier question.

Format of the GMAT™ Exam		
	Questions	Timing
Analytical Writing Assessment	1	30 min.
Integrated Reasoning Multi-Source Reasoning Table Analysis Graphics Interpretation Two-Part Analysis	12	30 min.
Quantitative Reasoning Problem Solving Data Sufficiency	31	62 min.
Verbal Reasoning Reading Comprehension Critical Reasoning Sentence Correction	36	65 min.
Total Time:		187 min.

On exam day, immediately prior to the start of the first exam section, you will have the flexibility to select your section order for the GMAT exam from three order combinations.

Order #1	Order #2	Order #3
Analytical Writing Assessment	Verbal Reasoning	Quantitative Reasoning
Integrated Reasoning		
Optional 8-minute break		
Quantitative Reasoning	Quantitative Reasoning	Verbal Reasoning
Optional 8-minute break		
Verbal Reasoning	Integrated Reasoning	Integrated Reasoning
	Analytical Writing Assessment	Analytical Writing Assessment

1.3 What Will the Test Experience Be Like?

The GMAT exam offers the flexibility to take the exam either online or at a test center—wherever you feel most comfortable. You may feel more comfortable at home with the online delivery format or prefer the structure and environment of a test center. The choice and flexibility are yours. Both delivery options include the exact same content, structure, two optional 8-minute breaks, scores, and score scales, and scores are uniformly accepted by schools worldwide, so you can choose the option that works best for you.

At the Test Center: The GMAT exam is administered under standardized conditions at over 700 test centers worldwide. Each test center has a proctored testing room with individual computer workstations that allow you to take the exam under quiet conditions and with some privacy. You may not take notes or scratch paper with you into the testing room, but an erasable notepad and marker will be provided for you to use during the test. For more information about exam day, visit mba.com/gmat.

Online: The GMAT Online exam is a remote proctored experience in the comfort of your home or office. You will need a quiet workspace with a desktop or laptop computer that meets minimum system requirements, a webcam, and a reliable internet connection. During your exam you will be able to use a physical whiteboard with up to two dry-erase markers and an eraser and/or an online whiteboard to work through the exam questions (no scratch paper is allowed). For more information about exam day, visit mba.com/gmatonline.

To learn more about accommodations options for the GMAT exam, visit mba.com/accommodations.

1.4 What Is the Content of the GMAT™ Exam Like?

The GMAT exam measures higher-order analytical skills encompassing several types of reasoning. The Analytical Writing Assessment asks you to analyze the reasoning behind an argument and respond in writing; the Integrated Reasoning section asks you to interpret and synthesize information from multiple sources and in different formats to make reasoned conclusions; the Quantitative Reasoning section includes basic arithmetic, algebra, and geometry; and the Verbal Reasoning section asks you to read and comprehend written material and to reason and evaluate arguments.

Test questions may address a variety of subjects, but all the information you need to answer the questions will be included on the exam, with no outside knowledge of the subject matter necessary. The GMAT exam is not a test of business knowledge, English vocabulary, or advanced computational skills. You will need to read and write in English and have basic math and English skills to perform well on the test, but its difficulty comes from analytical and critical thinking abilities.

The questions in this book are organized by question type and from easiest to most difficult, but keep in mind that when you take the test, you may see different types of questions in any order within each section.

Myth -vs- FACT

M – My success in business school is not predicted by the GMAT exam.

F – False. The GMAT exam measures your critical thinking and reasoning skills, the ones used in business school and beyond in your career.

The exam measures your ability to make inferences, problem-solve, and analyze data. In fact, some employers even use the GMAT exam to determine your skill sets in these areas. If your program does not require the GMAT exam, you can stand out from the crowd with your performance on the exam and show that you have skills that it takes to succeed in business school.

1.5 Analytical Writing Assessment Section

The GMAT Analytical Writing Assessment (AWA) section consists of one 30-minute writing task: Analysis of an Argument. The AWA measures your ability to think critically, communicate your ideas, and formulate an appropriate and constructive critique. You will type your essay on a computer keyboard.

For test-taking tips and sample essay responses, see chapter 11.

1.6 Integrated Reasoning Section

The GMAT Integrated Reasoning section highlights the relevant skills that business managers in today's data-driven world need in order to analyze sophisticated streams of data and solve complex problems. It measures your ability to understand and evaluate multiple sources and types of information—graphic, numeric, and verbal—as they relate to one another. This section will require you to use both quantitative and verbal reasoning to solve complex problems and solve multiple problems in relation to one another.

Four types of questions are used in the Integrated Reasoning section:

- Multi-Source Reasoning
- Table Analysis
- Graphics Interpretation
- Two-Part Analysis

Integrated Reasoning questions may require quantitative or verbal reasoning skills, or a combination of both. You will have to interpret graphics and sort tables to extract meaning from data, but advanced statistical knowledge and spreadsheet manipulation skills are not necessary. For both online and test center exams you will have access to an on-screen calculator with basic functions for the Integrated Reasoning section but note that the calculator is *not* available on the Quantitative Reasoning section.

To review the Integrated Reasoning question types and test-taking tips, see chapter 10.

For practice questions of each format, with full answer explanations, visit gmata.wiley.com using your unique access code found in the inside front cover of the book.

1.7 Quantitative Reasoning Section

The GMAT Quantitative Reasoning section measures your ability to solve quantitative problems and interpret graphic data.

Two types of multiple-choice questions are used in the Quantitative Reasoning section:

- Problem Solving
- Data Sufficiency

Both are intermingled throughout the Quantitative Reasoning section, and require basic knowledge of arithmetic, elementary algebra, and commonly known concepts of geometry.

To review the basic mathematical concepts that you will need to answer Quantitative Reasoning questions, see the math review in chapter 3. For test-taking tips specific to the question types in the Quantitative Reasoning section, practice questions, and answer explanations, see chapters 4 and 5.

1.8 Verbal Reasoning Section

The GMAT Verbal Reasoning section measures your ability to read and comprehend written material and to reason and evaluate arguments. The Verbal Reasoning section includes reading sections from several different content areas. Although you may be generally familiar with some of the material, neither the reading passages nor the questions assume detailed knowledge of the topics discussed.

Three types of multiple-choice questions are intermingled throughout the Verbal Reasoning section:

- Reading Comprehension
- Critical Reasoning
- Sentence Correction

For test-taking tips specific to each question type in the Verbal Reasoning section, practice questions, and answer explanations, see chapters 7 through 9.

1.9 How Are Scores Calculated?

Verbal Reasoning and Quantitative Reasoning sections are scored on a scale of 6 to 51, in one-point increments. The Total GMAT score ranges from 200 to 800 and is based on your performance in these two sections. Your score is determined by:

- The number of questions you answer
- The number of questions you answer correctly or incorrectly
- The level of difficulty and other statistical characteristics of each question

Your Verbal Reasoning, Quantitative Reasoning, and Total GMAT scores are determined by an algorithm that takes into account the difficulty of the questions that were presented to you and how you answered them. When you answer the easier questions correctly, you get a chance to answer harder questions, making it possible to earn a higher score. After you have completed all the questions on the exam, or when your time is expired, the computer will calculate your scores.

You will receive five scores: Total Score (which is based on your Quantitative Reasoning and Verbal Reasoning scores), Integrated Reasoning Score, and Analytical Writing Assessment Score. The following table summarizes the different types of scores, the scales, and the increments.

Type of Score	Scale	Increments
Total (based on Quantitative Reasoning and Verbal Reasoning)	200–800	10
Quantitative Reasoning	6–51	1
Verbal Reasoning	6–51	1
Integrated Reasoning	1–8	1
Analytical Writing Assessment	0–6	0.5

Your GMAT scores are valid for five years from the date of the exam.

Your GMAT score includes a percentile ranking that compares your skill level with other test-takers from the past three years. The percentile rank of your score shows the percentage of tests taken with scores lower than your score. Every July, percentile ranking tables are updated. Visit mba.com to view the most recent percentile rankings tables.

To register for the GMAT™ exam go to www.mba.com/gmat