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How to Use This Book

Welcome to Kaplan's GMAT Prep Plus 2021

Congratulations on your decision to pursue an MBA or other graduate management degree and thank you for choosing Kaplan for your GMAT preparation.

You've made the right choice in acquiring this book—you're now armed with a comprehensive GMAT program that is the result of decades of researching the GMAT and teaching many thousands of students the skills they need to succeed. You have what you need to score higher; the next step is to make the commitment to your study plan, which, according to the GMAT test maker, averages about 100 hours of preparation for 600+ and 700+ scorers.

Let's start by walking you through everything you need to know to take advantage of this book and your online resources.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

In this section, you will learn how to:

- Identify the types of study resources this book contains, including instruction covering everything tested on the GMAT, strategies for every question type, and practice questions of all types
- Explain how to register and access this book's online resources, which include full-length computer adaptive tests, analysis of your results, answers and explanations, video workshops, and more
- Create a study plan that lets you start your preparation for the GMAT with confidence

Your Book

There are two main components of your *GMAT Prep Plus* study package: your book and your online resources. This book contains:

- Detailed instruction covering the essential verbal, math, and writing concepts
- Time-tested and effective Kaplan Methods and strategies for every question type
- More than 350 practice questions, followed by detailed answer explanations

Your Online Resources

Your Kaplan online resources give you access to additional instruction and practice materials to reinforce key concepts and sharpen your GMAT skills:

- Six full-length computer-adaptive practice tests (CATs). Take one at the beginning of your studies to discover your strengths and weaknesses. Later in your prep, take practice tests every week or two to become thoroughly familiar with the test's format and timing and to measure your progress.
- Analysis of your performance on each practice test, including detailed answer explanations
- Practice sets and quizzes for the Verbal, Quantitative, Analytical Writing, and Integrated Reasoning sections of the GMAT
- A 200-question Qbank for additional targeted practice
- Video workshops featuring veteran GMAT instructors
- The GMAT Strategy Sheet

Getting Started

Studying for the GMAT can be daunting, and with so many resources available to you, it may not be clear where to begin. Don't worry; we'll break it down one step at a time, just as we'll do with the GMAT questions that you will soon be on your way to mastering.

Getting Started

1. Register your online resources.
2. Take a computer-adaptive GMAT practice test to identify your strengths and weaknesses.
3. Create a study plan.
4. Learn and practice using this book and your online resources.
5. Take more computer-adaptive practice tests to gauge your

progress.

Step 1: Register Your Online Resources

Register your online resources using these simple steps:

- .. Go to kaptest.com/moreonline.
- !. Follow the on-screen instructions. Please have a copy of your book available.

Access to the online resources is limited to the original owner of this book and is nontransferable. Kaplan is not responsible for providing access to the online resources to customers who purchase or borrow used copies of this book. Access to the online resources expires one year after you register.

Step 2: Take a GMAT Practice Test

It's essential to take a practice test early on. Doing so will give you the initial feedback and diagnostic information that you will need to achieve your maximum score. Taking a full-length test right at the start can be intimidating, but remember: your practice test scores don't count. During your first practice test—and any practice test you take—turn off your cell phone, give the test your full attention, and learn from your performance.

Your diagnostic test is Practice Test 1, and you'll find it in your online resources under **Get Started**. Practice Test 1, like all of Kaplan's online

full-length tests, is a computer-adaptive test (CAT), which is the same format as the actual GMAT. The computer-adaptive format presents distinct challenges for time management, because you can only move forward through the test. Because you can't skip a question and come back to it later, you need to decide for each question how much time to spend trying to get it right and when you should just guess and move on. This ability to triage questions as you meet them is key to maximizing your GMAT score, and you can only practice it in an adaptive online test.

After taking Practice Test 1, review the detailed answer explanations to better understand your performance. Our explanations label each question according to its question type and topic; these labels align with the material covered throughout this book. Look for patterns in the questions you answered correctly and incorrectly. Were you stronger in some areas than others? This analysis will help you target your practice time to specific concepts.

Step 3: Create a Study Plan

Use what you've learned from your initial practice test to identify areas for closer study and practice. Take time to familiarize yourself with the key components of your book and online resources. Think about how many hours you can consistently devote to GMAT study. We have found that most students have success with about three months of committed preparation before Test Day.

Consider the following statistic as you build your study plan: according to the GMAT test makers, the average 600+ or 700+ scorer prepares for the GMAT for about 100 hours. We recommend you add 20 percent to

this figure and plan to put in 120 total hours of practice before Test Day. Roughly estimated, if you spend an average of 2 hours per chapter in this book, that gets you to more than 50 hours. The six computer-adaptive practice tests are each about 3.0 hours, if you do the writing section and Integrated Reasoning, followed by about 1.5 hours of review. And you'll use your Qbank for hours of online practice and watch the video lessons on key topics. All told, that gets you to about 90 hours of preparation. That 90 hours may be enough for some test takers, and it will be more than enough to give you an indication of where you stand relative to your GMAT goals. The most convenient way to bulk up your study plan is to enroll in one of Kaplan's GMAT self-guided options. For more information on GMAT self-guided practice tools and courses, as well as instructor-led courses, visit [KaplanGMAT.com](https://www.kaplan.com/gmat).

Schedule time for study, practice, and review. Many people find it works best to block out short, frequent periods of study time throughout the week. Also, keep a log of questions you find challenging or simply interesting. Come back to these questions every week or two until you feel you've learned all you can from them. Then check them off or cross them out and focus on the new questions you've added to your log. Check in with yourself often to make sure you're not falling behind your plan or forgetting about any of your resources.

Step 4: Learn and Practice

Your book and online resources come with many opportunities to develop and practice the skills you'll need on Test Day. Read each chapter of this book and complete the practice questions. Depending on how much time you have to study, you can do this work methodically, covering every chapter, or you can focus your study on those question

types and content areas that are most challenging for you. You will inevitably need more work in some areas than in others, but know that the more thoroughly you prepare, the better your score will be.

Remember also to take and review the practice sets and quizzes in your online resources, as well as using your Qbank to make custom quizzes. These additional test-like questions allow you to put into practice the skills you are learning. As always, review the explanations closely.

Initially, your practice should focus on mastering the needed skills and not on speed. Become more conscious of timing as you become more proficient.

Step 5: Take More Computer-Adaptive Practice Tests

Once you feel you have addressed the areas that gave you trouble on Practice Test 1, take another full-length practice test, also available in your online resources. You will learn more about CATs in [Chapters 1 and 2](#) of this book. The Kaplan CATs are realistic practice tests, and taking the full-length tests that come with this book is one of the best ways to prepare fully for what you will face on the real GMAT.

Always review your practice test results thoroughly to make sure you are addressing the areas that are most important to your score. Allot time to review the detailed explanations so that you can learn from your mistakes and not make these errors when it actually matters, on Test Day. After your second practice test, you'll probably find that some of your initial weaknesses aren't weaknesses anymore. Now, to continue to build your score, you'll probably want to adjust your study plan to

focus on some different areas. Continue taking full-length practice tests every week or two leading up to Test Day.

If you would like access to more of Kaplan's CATs and practice questions, as well as in-depth instruction on the question types and strategies, look into the variety of practice resources and course options available at [KaplanGMAT.com](https://www.kaplan.com/gmat).

Thanks for choosing Kaplan. We wish you the best of luck on your journey to business school.



Changes and Corrections

The material in this book is accurate and up-to-date at the time of printing. However, the Graduate Management Admission Council may have instituted changes in the tests or test registration process after this book was published. Be sure to read carefully the materials you receive when you register for the test.

If there are any important late-breaking developments, we will post that information online at [KaplanGMAT.com](https://www.kaplan.com/kaplan-gmat).

If there are changes or corrections to the materials in this book, these can be found at [kaptest.com/publishing](https://www.kaptest.com/publishing).

THE GMAT

CHAPTER 1

Introduction to the GMAT

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After studying this chapter, you will be able to:

- List the four sections of the GMAT and explain the order in which they are presented
- Describe the 200–800 point scoring scale, including which sections contribute to it, and describe the scoring scales for the other sections
- Describe the materials you will use when taking the GMAT
- Explain when and how to register for the GMAT

Let's start with the basics. The GMAT is, among other things, an endurance test. It is a computerized test consisting of 127 minutes of multiple-choice math and verbal questions, a 30-minute reasoning section, and a 30-minute analytical essay. Add in the administrative details, plus two 8-minute breaks, and you can count on being in the testing center for about 3.5 hours.

It's a grueling experience, to say the least. And if you don't approach it with confidence and rigor, you'll quickly lose your composure. That's why it's so important that you take control of the test, just as you take control of the rest of your business school application process.

Here are the basics.



GMAT Format

The GMAT consists of four sections, and you can choose your section order on Test Day. Before you begin your test, you'll be presented with three orders and asked to select one:

- Analytical Writing Assessment (AWA), Integrated Reasoning (IR), Quantitative, Verbal
- Verbal, Quantitative, Integrated Reasoning, Analytical Writing Assessment
- Quantitative, Verbal, Integrated Reasoning, Analytical Writing Assessment

If you do not choose an order, then after 2 minutes, the first order—beginning with Analytical Writing—will be chosen for you.

The order you take the sections in will not appear on your score report, and the test maker's research has not shown that section order gives one test taker a statistical advantage over another. If you are especially concerned about a section and want to take it when you are mentally freshest, then choose the order that puts that section first. If you want to build confidence by completing other sections first, then choose an order that puts that section later. And if you don't care what order you take the sections in, that's perfectly okay—just choose whichever order you have practiced most.

The Analytical Writing Assessment (AWA) requires you to complete an essay, typing it into the computer using a simple word processing program. You are given 30 minutes for this essay, during which you have to analyze the flawed reasoning behind a given argument and recommend how to improve the argument.

The Integrated Reasoning section is 30 minutes long. This section has 12 questions, each of which may require more than one response. The questions in this section ask you to draw conclusions based on information in tables, interpret graphs, understand information presented across different layouts, and find two answers that lead to a single solution.

The Quantitative section contains 31 questions in two formats, Problem Solving and Data Sufficiency, which are mixed together throughout the section. The Verbal section contains 36 questions in three formats, Reading Comprehension, Sentence Correction, and Critical Reasoning, which are also mixed throughout the section.

GMAT exam section	Questions	Time
Analytical Writing Assessment	1	30 minutes
Integrated Reasoning	12	30 minutes
Quantitative	31	62 minutes
Verbal	36	65 minutes

Total Testing Time	3 hours, 7 minutes
---------------------------	---------------------------

Length of Sections on the GMAT

You will also get two optional 8-minute breaks between sections. Kaplan recommends that you take these breaks. Also, note that a few experimental questions will be scattered throughout; they look just like the other questions but won't contribute to your score.

Order A	Order B	Order C
Analytical Writing Assessment	Verbal	Quantitative
Integrated Reasoning		
8-minute break (optional)		
Quantitative	Quantitative	Verbal
8-minute break (optional)		
Verbal	Integrated Reasoning	Integrated Reasoning
	Analytical Writing Assessment	Analytical Writing Assessment

Breaks on the GMAT by Section Order

We'll talk more about each of the question types in later chapters. For now, note the following: you'll be answering 79 multiple-choice questions in about 2.5 hours. Clearly, you'll have to move fast. But you can't let yourself get careless. Taking control of the GMAT means increasing the speed of your work without sacrificing accuracy.

GMAT Scoring

The most important score on the GMAT is the total score, which ranges from 200 to 800. Schools primarily look at this number. Over two-thirds of all GMAT test takers score within 120 points of the approximate mean, which is about 560. Pulling yourself out of that cluster is an important part of distinguishing your application.

Percentile	Score
99%	760-800
90%	710
80%	670
66%	630
51%	590

Some GMAT Percentiles vs. Total Scores

The total score is calculated from “scaled scores” from the Quantitative section and Verbal section. These scores are meant to provide a timeless, absolute measure of skill. For example, a Quant score of 40 in

2009 represents the same level of ability as does a Quant score of 40 in 2019.

While the scaled scores haven't changed over time, the population of test takers has. Quant performance has gone up, and Verbal performance has gone down. While Verbal section scores still follow a fairly even distribution, Quantitative scaled scores now skew high. Thus, percentiles have shifted.

Schools view your percentile performance (which is the same thing as a “percent ranking”) overall and on each section of the GMAT. The relationship between the section percentiles and the overall percentile is not simple. We're frequently asked, “One of my scaled scores is 82nd percentile and the other is 85th percentile. How can my overall score be 87th percentile?” An example shows how this works. Imagine that of 100 students taking the test, 50 people got a 51 Quant and an 11 Verbal, while the other 50 people got an 11 Quant and a 51 Verbal. You take the same test and get 40 Quant and 40 Verbal. You'd be 50th percentile on each section, because 50 percent of test takers in this sample group scored worse than you. However, your total score would put you higher than anyone else on the test—99th percentile.

Quantitative	
Percentile	Score
96%	51
85%	50
74%	49
67%	48

60%	47
57%	46
54%	45
49%	44

Verbal	
Percentile	Score
99%	45-51
96%	42
90%	40
85%	38
80%	36
71%	34
61%	31
51%	28

Some Percentiles vs. Scaled Scores for the Quantitative and Verbal Sections

Let's note two key takeaways about percentiles. The first is that your overall score is about balanced performance on the two sections. Generally, you will not win on the GMAT by nailing one section and hoping your performance will overcome a deficit on the other. The second key point is that admissions officers often look at Quant and Verbal percentiles separately and may reject a candidate who does not meet a certain threshold for either subscore. This is especially true for