

CAT SELF PREPARATION 2025

What is CAT Exam Pattern and Syllabus?

Your CAT preparation must begin with understanding CAT exam pattern. CAT Exam pattern is divided in three sections: Verbal Ability & Reading Comprehension, Data Interpretation & Logical Reasoning, and Quantitative Ability. Each section can be further divided into sub-sections. Over the last five years, the CAT exam pattern has undergone several notable changes in its pattern, number of questions, and difficulty level. CAT exam pattern has become more focused on conceptual clarity, time management, and reasoning ability. CAT 2024 exam pattern is given below. CAT 2025 pattern will be very similar to this.

Having understood the exam pattern, the next important question is: what is the CAT 2025 exam syllabus? While IIMs do not release a fixed syllabus, the CAT exam syllabus can be derived from CAT exam pattern. For more details, read this in-depth article on [CAT Syllabus](#).

Next, read about CAT 2025 preparation strategy for each section in detail.

CAT 2024 Exam Pattern for Slot 1, 2, 3

Section No.	Section Name	Duration	MCQs	TITA	Total
I	Verbal Ability & Reading Comprehension	40 min	20	4	24
II	Data Interpretation & Logical Reasoning	40 min	12	10	22
III	Quantitative Ability	40 min	14	8	22
Total	-	120 min	46	22	68



Self Preparation for CAT 2025 for CAT Verbal Ability and Reading Comprehension Section

To prepare for Verbal Ability and Reading Comprehension Section of CAT exam without coaching, you should understand topics and type of questions asked in the previous year paper. Check details of questions/topics that appeared in this section in CAT 2024.

Verbal Ability & Reading Comprehension Syllabus

Based on previous year papers, VARC section syllabus includes Reading Comprehension (RC), Paragraph Completion, Summary Writing, and Odd Sentence questions, testing candidates on their reading speed, comprehension, and verbal reasoning..

How to prepare for CAT VARC Section Without Coaching?

Below are a few tips to help you prepare for Self Preparation for CAT VARC Section without coaching at your home.

- Improve your vocabulary and grammar: First step it to make a habit of reading regularly. You must read books, magazines, or newspapers every day for atleast 30-45 minutes. You can expand your vocabulary and improve your reading speed.
- Select Preparation Material: Select suitable preparation material to help you understand the basics of the verbal ability section. Your material should include grammar and verbal reasoning segments in VA and detailed explanations for every question. You can select CAT books by Arun Sharma, or online preparation material from TIME or IMS Coaching. Check more details below.
- Understand the “underlying meaning” of articles, passages: CAT requires accuracy and speed to score well. Practice reading articles with high speed to identifying the main message of the author.

- Practice reading comprehension questions per day: After completing basic preparation, you should practice answering a reading comprehension passage with 4-5 questions daily. It will help you understand the section better. You can take free MBAUniverse.com Mock CAT, which are 100% based on CAT previous year question papers.

CAT 2024 – Verbal Ability & Reading Comprehension Section Breakdown

Area	Topic	No. of Questions	Type
Reading Comprehension	RC 1: An exploration of the concept of craftsmanship, discussing its relevance and evolution over time.	4	MCQ
Reading Comprehension	RC 2: An analysis of how Netflix influences global culture, examining its role in shaping viewing habits and cultural trends	4	MCQ
Reading Comprehension	RC 3: A discussion on kangaroos, covering aspects such as their behavior, habitat, and significance in the ecosystem	4	MCQ
Reading Comprehension	RC 4: An examination of economic principles or phenomena, potentially discussing market dynamics, economic theories, or financial systems	4	MCQ
Verbal Ability	Parajumble	3	MCQ
Verbal Ability	Para Summary	3	MCQ
Verbal Ability	Odd Sentence	2	TITA

How to self prepare for CAT DILR Section?

To self prepare for CAT Data Interpretation & Logical Reasoning section, you should understand type of questions and topics asked in the previous year paper. Check details of questions/topics that appeared in this section in CAT 2024.

Table: CAT 2024 Data Interpretation and Logical Reasoning Section Questions & Topics

Set No.	Area	Set Description	No. of Questions	Question Type
1	Data Interpretation	A candlestick plot displays opening, closing, and price trends for seven shares	4	3 MCQ, 1 TITA
2	Data Interpretation	A chart details the number of countries visited by three individuals across Asia, Europe, and ROW	4	2 MCQ, 2 TITA
3	Data Interpretation	Two candidates campaign with different strategies, affecting student votes	5	4 MCQ, 1 TITA
4	Logical Reasoning	Six teams play a structured QUIET tournament with intra- and inter-group matches.	5	5 TITA
5	Logical Reasoning	Six web surfers distributed stars among four bloggers, with partial data provided.	4	3 MCQ; 1 TITA

Data Interpretation & Logical Reasoning Section Syllabus

CAT DILR section assesses analytical and problem-solving skills through data-based caselets, logical puzzles, seating arrangements, tournaments, and graphs/charts-based interpretation.

How to prepare for CAT DILR Section Without Coaching?

Here are the tips for Self Preparation for CAT 2025 DILR section.

- **Select Preparation Material:** Select suitable preparation material to help you understand the basics of the Data Interpretation & Logical Reasoning section. You can select CAT preparation books by Arun Sharma, or online preparation material from TIME or IMS Coaching. Check more details below.
- **Practice DI LR questions every day:** After completing basic preparation, you should practice answering a few DILR questions every day. You can take free MBAUniverse.com Mock CAT, which are 100% based on CAT previous year question papers.
- **Focus on accuracy and speed:** The DILR section depends on an aspirant's speed and accuracy in answering questions. After a few months of basic preparation, revision and practice of the syllabus are essential to increasing speed and accuracy.

[Preparing for CAT 2025? Get 40% Discount on IMS Coaching Courses. Enrol Now](#)

Self Preparation for CAT 2025 for Quantitative Ability Section

The structure and content of Quantitative Ability section in CAT exam is shared below. Following details on QA section in CAT will help you to take the right path on your CAT preparation journey.

CAT 2024 Section wise Exam Pattern: Quantitative Ability

Area	No. of Questions	Type of Questions
Arithmetic	8	SICI, Time and Work, Time-Speed-Distance, Ratio Proportion, Mixtures & Alligations, Multiple operations, and Profit & Loss
Algebra	7	Quadratic equations, Inequality with graph, Functions, and Identity-based questions

Geometry	3	Quadrilaterals, Sphere with Cuboid
Modern Math	3	Logarithms, Sequences, Permutations
Number System	1	Remainders and Numbers

Quantitative Ability Syllabus for CAT

Once you know about the QA question Pattern in CAT exam, your next step for CAT 2025 self preparation journey is to scan the CAT Syllabus for Quantitative Ability section. Please note that CAT exam QA syllabus is not pre-defined by IIMs and is based on latest topics that appeared in past CAT exams.

Topic	Syllabus
Arithmetic	Averages; Ratio & Proportion; Speed, Time and Distance; Time and Work; LCM and HCF; Percentages, Profit and Loss; Interest (Simple and Compound); Number System
Algebra	Linear & Quadratic Equations; Inequalities; Functions; Progressions; Algebraic Expressions to Polynomials; Complex numbers; Sequences and series; Permutations and combinations
Geometry/ Mensuration	Triangles, Lines and Angles (Supplementary, Complementary, Obtuse, Acute, and Right), Quadrilaterals, Circles; Theorems (Pythagoras, Midpoint, Apollonius, Basic Proportionality, Internal and External Angular Bisector), Co-ordinate Geometry, Quadrant System, Areas of Hexagonal Polygon, Triangle, and Rectangle. Square, Rhombus, Trapezoid, Volume, Total Surface Area, and Lateral Surface Area of Different Solids like Cubes, Cuboids, Cylinders, Pyramids, Cones, Spheres, Hemispheres, and Frustum
Trigonometry	Trigonometric ratios, identities, and heights and distances, Sine, Cosine

Modern Math	Sequence and Series, Binomial Theorem, Set Theory, Probability, Permutation & Combination
-------------	---

How to prepare for CAT Quantitative Ability without Coaching?

The Quantitative Ability (QA) section of CAT primarily tests a candidate's mathematical concepts, problem-solving ability, and speed. A structured approach with concept clarity, regular practice, and time management is key to scoring well in this section. Here's an effective strategy for self preparation for QA section:

- Understand the syllabus and prioritize topics: As shared above, the topic-wise breakdown includes arithmetic (percentages, profit & loss, ratios, time & work, time-speed-distance, averages), algebra (quadratic & linear equations, inequalities, logarithms), geometry & mensuration (triangles, circles, polygons), number system (factors, divisibility, remainders, base systems), and modern math (permutation & combination, probability, set theory).
- Build strong conceptual clarity: After understanding the topics covered, start by understanding formulas and basic concepts for each topic. Refer to NCERT Class 9 & 10 books. Recommended books include Arun Sharma, Nishit Sinha, and Quantum CAT by Sarvesh Verma. Coaching material from IMS, TIME, Cracku, Rodha and 2IIM are also good. Check more details below.
- Focus on topic-wise practice: Begin with solving easy questions, then gradually move to moderate and difficult ones. Solve sectional topic-wise tests after completing each chapter. Maintain a formula book or notes for quick revision.
- Increase calculation speed: Practice mental calculations to save time in the exam. Avoid calculator during mock and practice tests.
- Develop problem-solving approach: Learn different approaches to solving a question, such as the traditional method, approximation, and options elimination. Identify shortcut techniques. Work on reducing time taken per question by improving efficiency.



- Take mock tests and analyze performance. Start with sectional tests, then move on to full-length mocks. Analyze mistakes thoroughly, check where you went wrong, and improve weak areas. You can take free [MBAUniverse.com Mock CAT](https://mbauniverse.com), which are 100% based on CAT previous year question papers.

Self Preparation for CAT 2025: Advantages and Disadvantages

Self Preparation for CAT without coaching has some benefits and some disadvantages. Let's understand them in detail.

Advantages of CAT Self-Preparation

- **Flexibility in Study Schedule:** You can plan your preparation according to your strengths, weaknesses, and available time.
- **Cost-Effective:** Self-preparation removes the need for expensive CAT coaching classes, saving significant costs.
- **Customized Study Plan:** You can focus on specific weak areas and use resources that suit their learning style.
- **Access to Free and Paid Online Resources:** There is plenty of study materials, mock tests, and video lectures are available online.
- **More Time for Conceptual Understanding:** Self-paced learning allows you to spend extra time mastering difficult concepts.
- **Saves Travel Time and Effort:** No need to commute to coaching centers, allowing more time for study and revision.

Disadvantages of CAT Self-Preparation

- **Lack of Structured Guidance:** Without expert mentorship, you may struggle to identify the right approach to preparation. However, websites like [MBAUniverse.com](https://mbauniverse.com), social media platforms like Reddit and You Tube channels are offering a lot of guidance.
- **No Personalized Feedback:** Unlike coaching institutes, self-prep lacks regular evaluation and expert feedback on performance.

- Requires Strong Discipline and Motivation: Staying consistent and focused without external pressure can be challenging. But you can prepare your day wise plan and stick with it.
- Time Management Challenges: Without a fixed schedule, aspirants might struggle to balance different sections effectively.

In summary, CAT self preparation can be highly effective if you can maintain discipline, use the right resources, and regularly assess their performance through mock tests. However, if you need structured learning and regular guidance, coaching institutes will be helpful.

Preparation Books for CAT Self Study

If you are searching for best books for self preparation for CAT 2025, check the list of CAT preparation books with latest edition and prices below.

CAT preparation material free is also available online. YouTube channels of top CAT Coaching Institutes has free CAT preparation material. CAT preparation websites like MBAUniverse.com are also good resources.

Best Books for CAT Preparation

Section	Book	Author	Cost
Verbal Ability and Reading Comprehension	How to Prepare for VERBAL ABILITY & READING COMPREHENSION	Arun Sharma	Rs.718.00 incl. GST Order Now
	Verbal Ability and Reading Comprehension for CAT	Nishit K. Sinha	Rs. 405.00 incl. GST Order Now
Quantitative Ability	How to Prepare for QUANTITATIVE APTITUDE	Arun Sharma	Rs. 739.00 incl. GST Order Now



	Quantitative Aptitude for CAT	Nishit K. Sinha	Rs. 618.00 incl. GST Order Now
	Quantitative Aptitude	R S Aggarwal	Rs. 405.00 incl. GST Order Now
Data Interpretation & Logical Reasoning	How to Prepare For DATA INTERPRETATION	Arun Sharma	Rs. 614.00 incl. GST Order Now
	How to Prepare For LOGICAL REASONING	Arun Sharma	Rs. 618.00 incl. GST Order Now
	Data Interpretation for CAT	Nishit K. Sinha	Rs. 488.00 incl. GST Order Now
	Logical Reasoning for CAT	Nishit K. Sinha	Rs. 649.00 incl. GST Order Now
	High School English Grammar & Composition	Wren and Martin	Rs. 430.00 incl. GST Order Now
	Word Power	Norman Lewis	Rs. 105.00 incl. GST Order Now

[Preparing for CAT 2025? Get 40% Discount on IMS Coaching Courses. Enrol Now](#)

[Online Mock Tests: Best CAT Preparation Tool for Studying without coaching institute](#)

Mock tests play a crucial role in self preparation for CAT, helping aspirants develop time management skills, exam temperament, and accuracy. Regular mock practice is key to success in CAT exam. Check why CAT Mocks are important and top CAT Mock Tests.

Why Are Mocks Important?

- Simulates the Actual CAT Exam: Helps in adapting to the exam pattern, difficulty level, and time constraints.

- Improves Time Management: Enables aspirants to distribute time effectively across VARC, DILR, and QA sections.
- Helps Identify Strengths & Weaknesses: Performance analysis highlights topics that need improvement.
- Builds Exam Stamina: Sitting for a full-length test for 2-3 hours improves concentration and endurance. This helps during the actual exam.

Best CAT Mock Test Series

Here are top CAT Mock Tests according to CAT Toppers.

Coaching Institute	Why it is a good choice	Cost (Approx.)
IMS SimCATs	Closest to actual CAT, Good analytics, Varying difficulty levels for simulation	Rs. 5,000-Rs. 7,000
TIME AIMCATs	Extensive mock series. Considered harder than others but has moderate tests too	Rs. 5,000-Rs. 7,000
Career Launcher (CL) Test Series	Balanced difficulty, detailed solutions & analysis	Rs. 4,500-Rs. 6,500
Elites Grid Mocks	Highly regarded for LRDI section	Rs. 3,500-Rs. 5,000
Cracku Mocks	Low cost, Budget-friendly, detailed video solutions	Rs. 3,000-Rs. 4,500
2IIM Mocks	CAT-level difficulty, concept-based solutions	Rs. 3,500-Rs. 5,000
<u>MBAUniverse.com Mock CAT</u>	Based on CAT Past Papers	Free

How to Effectively Use Mocks?

- Start with one mock per week, gradually increasing to 2-3 per week closer to the exam.



- Analyze each mock thoroughly—identify incorrect answers, time-consuming questions, and weak areas.
- Develop a section-wise strategy based on your strengths and weaknesses.
- Experiment with different strategies (order of attempting sections, time allocation, etc.).
- Review previous CAT papers along with mocks to recognize recurring question patterns.

You can buy online Mock CAT Tests from various coaching companies listed above. But if you are looking for free high quality CAT Mock Tests, check 20+ free CAT Mock Tests available on MBAUniverse.com. They are 100% based on last 10 Years' Actual CAT Papers.

CAT self preparation study plan

A well-planned month-wise CAT self preparation time table is key for scoring well in CAT exam. Ideally, preparation should begin a few months before the exam. Here is a month wise CAT Preparation Strategy.

Month 1-2: Build Strong Fundamentals

- Understand the syllabus and exam pattern (VARC, DILR, QA).
- Strengthen concepts in all three sections using books or preparation material by CAT coaching companies.
- Practice daily reading of The Hindu, Business Standard/ Mint and AEON to improve VARC comprehension skills.
- Attempt one sectional test per week to benchmark progress.
- Create a CAT preparation group online or in-person to keep yourself motivated

Month 3-4: Practice & Speed Building

- Time to shift from theory to problem-solving with timed practice.
- Identify weak areas and work on them.
- Start taking mocks (one every 10-15 days) and analyze them well

Month 5: Intensive Practice & Mocks

- Increase mock frequency to one per week, followed by deep analysis of

every question attempted and not attempted.

- Fine-tune time management strategies—learn which types of questions to attempt or skip.
- Attempt topic-wise revision tests for QA, LRDI, and VARC.

Month 6: Final Revision & Exam Strategy

- Take 2-3 full-length mocks per week, simulating actual test conditions.
- Revise all important formulas, shortcuts, and strategies.
- Develop a final exam strategy (which section to attempt first, how to manage time).

Last Week: Light Revision & Mental Preparation

- Revise all important formulas, shortcuts, and strategies.
- Solve previous CAT papers for last-minute revision.
- Avoid unnecessary stress—don't try to learn anything new.
- Maintain a consistent sleep cycle for exam day readiness.
- Stay confident and positive—trust your preparation.

CAT Toppers Preparation Strategies

MBAUniverse.com presents proven CAT 2025 Preparation Tips from CAT toppers who are now studying at IIM Ahmedabad, IIM Calcutta, IIM Kozhikode and SPJIMR. These preparation tips will help you utilize your time effectively and increase your performance. Links to full Topper interviews are also given below.

- **Finalize your own Test Taking Strategy:** First CAT Preparation 2025 Tips from CAT toppers is on the importance of developing your own strategy. The focus is on discouraging blind imitation, and acknowledging the uniqueness of individual strengths and weaknesses. Padmasandhya S, an IIM Ahmedabad student says, "The biggest mistake I have seen, is students following another "successful" student's exam-taking strategy. You must realize that the strategy works for them because it suits them! You need to find out, by trial and error, what works for you. Do not follow the herd!"

- **Prepare a Day-wise Study Plan:** The second CAT Last Minute Tips is to prepare a day-wise study plan. Now that you have just a few days to do, you must have a clear day-wise study plan keeping last 24 hours free. CAT toppers, who are now studying at top IIMs and IITs advocate for developing effective day wise study strategies. Akshat Agarwal, a student of IIT Delhi MBA 2023-25 batch recommends, “In the few weeks to CAT exam day, create a well thought out day-wise study plan and then stick to it. Consistent, daily effort is crucial.” Soumik Banerjee, IIM Calcutta MBA 2023-25 student adds, “As I was a working professional, I had prepared a day wise schedule for myself, to effectively utilize my time.”
- **Focus on your Strengths:** The next CAT exam tips is obvious but important! As simple as it may sound, CAT toppers stress the importance of planning their last-minute CAT preparation based on individual strengths. Sashank Kartik, a student of IIM Kozhikode PGP 2023-25 batch recommends, “As I knew that my strengths were LRDI and Quant, so I was prepared for managing my time efficiently.” Bhanu Pratap, IIM Calcutta MBA student of the 2023-25 batch shares, “I realized that my stronghold lies in RC rather than VA so I kept my plan simple to solve RC and then move to VA.”
- **Ignore your Weaknesses:** Closer to the exam dates, you should avoid focusing on your weaknesses. Shreyasee Sarkar, IIM Calcutta student of MBA 2023-25 said, “Closer to the exam, I ignored my weak area in the exam. I had the target of solving 2 out of 4 problems which constituted 10 questions because that was enough to get a good percentile in DILR as this was my weakest Section.”
- **Take Mocks and Analyse Thoroughly:** CAT Tips from several CAT aspirants stress the vital role of mock tests in their preparation. They highlight the significance of these tests in identifying weaknesses, refining strategies, and enhancing problem-solving speed. Kunal

Singh Bhadauria, MDI Gurgaon PGDM 2023-25 said, "By taking Mocks and analyzing them properly I was able to identify the areas of improvement and work upon them to increase my scores. The solution provided for the Mock tests helped me discover better methods to solve a particular problem and thus helped me increase my solving speed."

- **Watch Motivational Movies During CAT Exam preparation:** A few CAT toppers revealed that they watched motivational movies like 3 Idiots, The Pursuit of Happyness, Forrest Gump, Rocky and Forrest Gump during exam preparation to be motivated!