

CAT Preparation 2026: How to Prepare for CAT Exam, 60-Day Strategy, Books, Free Mocks and Topper Tips; Download PDFs

Last 60 days CAT preparation: CAT preparation 2026 has entered its final lap. IIM Indore will conduct CAT 2026 on November 29, 2026. If the CAT 2024–2025 pattern continues, [CAT 2026 exam](#) will be a 120-minute computer-based test with three 40-minute sections (VARC, DILR and QA), and 68 questions. How to Prepare for CAT exam in 60 days? Your CAT 2026 preparation strategy should no longer be to learn every topic or concept; it is the time to focus on high-weightage areas, take and analyse [CAT mock tests](#) and past papers, and build a section-wise attempt strategy. This MBAUniverse.com guide gives you a week-by-week 60 days CAT preparation plan up to exam day. It covers exam pattern and syllabus in detail, how many mocks to take and how to analyse them, the best CAT books, and CAT Exam Preparation Tips by CAT Toppers. Download CAT 2026 preparation guide PDF and access 20+ free CAT mock tests based on actual CAT papers from the links in article below.



CAT Preparation 2026

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CAT Exam Preparation 2026: Overview

Your IIM preparation starts with CAT exam preparation. Around 2.50–3.00 lakh candidates are expected to take the CAT 2026 exam for admission to 22 IIMs and other top B-schools, offering approximately 11,500 IIM seats in India. IIM Indore is conducting CAT 2026 on November 29, 2026 in a strictly timed 120-minute format divided into three 40-minute sections: VARC, DILR and Quantitative Ability. So, your goal should be to get into the 95% to 99% percentile range for a good chance to get into IIMs, MDI, SPJIMR and other [top CAT](#)

[colleges](#), or at least 85% to 95% to get into good Tier-2 B-schools like Great Lakes and GIM Goa. Here are a few salient points to start your IIM CAT Preparation journey.

- CAT is a computer-based test conducted at approximately 170 test cities and 300+ test venues.
- CAT exam duration is two hours, with time allotted for the three sections being 40 minutes each.
- CAT exam pattern is divided into 68 questions covering three sections: Verbal Ability & Reading Comprehension; Data Interpretation & Logical Reasoning; and Quantitative Ability.
- CAT features two types of questions: Multiple-Choice Questions (MCQ) and Non-MCQ (TITA) questions. For MCQs, the marking scheme awards +3 for each correct answer and -1 for each incorrect answer. For TITA questions, +3 is awarded for a correct answer, with no negative marks for a wrong answer.
- Cracking CAT 2026 requires more than fundamental and conceptual understanding — it demands a high-level test-taking skill to navigate the sectional time-limits and set-selection challenges.

Read the following section for a complete guide on how to prepare for CAT exam in the last 60 days?

CAT Preparation in the Last 60 Days: Week-by-Week Plan

Wondering how to prepare for CAT 2026 in the last 60 days? Based on 100+ CAT toppers interview with IIM Ahmedabad, IIM Calcutta and IIT Delhi MBA students, who scored 99%, MBAUniverse.com presents CAT 2026 preparation strategy roadmap plan for last 60 days.

Start with a diagnostic mock, spend the first three weeks on high-weightage topics such as Arithmetic, Algebra and Reading Comprehension, then take two full mocks a week with an error log. Once the admit card is out, practice at your slot time, solve previous-year papers, and revise lightly in the final week.

CAT Preparation in the Last 60 Days plan (below) assumes that you have covered the basics at least once. If you have not, follow the same sequence but give Weeks 1 to 3 more time for concepts and take fewer full mocks. As Akshat Agarwal 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."

CAT 2026 Last 60 Days Plan at a Glance

Week	Dates	Main focus	Full mocks
Week 1	Sep 28 – Oct 4	Diagnostic mock, Arithmetic, daily RC	1 (diagnostic)

Week	Dates	Main focus	Full mocks
Week 2	Oct 5 – Oct 11	Algebra, VA, timed DILR sets	1
Week 3	Oct 12 – Oct 18	Close high-weightage gaps, start error log	2
Week 4	Oct 19 – Oct 25	Mocks, sectionals, Geometry and Number System revision	2
Week 5	Oct 26 – Nov 1	Fix section-wise attempt strategy	2
Week 6	Nov 2 – Nov 8	Admit card; mocks at your slot time	2
Week 7	Nov 9 – Nov 15	Previous-year CAT papers	1 + 2–3 past papers
Week 8	Nov 16 – Nov 22	Light revision, formulas, sleep cycle	1 (final mock)
Exam Week	Nov 23 – Nov 29	Rest, logistics, exam day	None

Let's understand above week-wise CAT Preparation in 2 Months Plan in more details.

Week 1: Diagnostic Mock and Arithmetic

- Take one full-length mock under exam conditions: three 40-minute sections, in one sitting. Treat the score as a baseline, not a verdict.
- Record your section-wise score, accuracy and the topics where you lost marks. This becomes your priority list for the next three weeks.
- Start with Arithmetic, the largest share of the QA section: percentages, profit and loss, ratio and proportion, averages, mixtures, time-speed-distance, time and work, and simple and compound interest.
- Solve at least two Reading Comprehension passages every day. RC accounts for 16 of the 24 VARC questions.

Week 2: Algebra, VA and DILR Sets

- Move to Algebra: linear and quadratic equations, inequalities, functions, progressions and logarithms.
- Continue two RCs a day and add Verbal Ability practice: para jumbles, para summary and odd sentence out.

- Solve two DILR sets daily within a time limit, mixing arrangements, puzzles, tables and caselets.
- Take one full mock at the weekend and analyse it the next day.

Week 3: Close Gaps and Start an Error Log

- Revisit the weak topics from your diagnostic mock and close the high-weightage gaps first.
- Increase to two full mocks this week — one on a weekday evening and one at the weekend — plus one sectional test for each section.
- Start an error log. For every wrong or skipped question, note the topic, the reason (concept, calculation, misreading, time or poor selection), the correct approach, and a date to re-attempt it.

Week 4: Mocks, Sectionals and Recognition-Level Revision

- Take two full mocks and two to three sectional tests.
- Revise Geometry, Number System and Modern Math to recognition level: know the standard question types. Do not start new, deep topics now.
- Spend at least as long analysing each mock as you spent taking it. Kunal Singh Bhaduria of MDI Gurgaon (PGDM 2023-25) says, "By taking Mocks and analyzing them properly I was able to identify the areas of improvement and work upon them to increase my scores."

Week 5: Lock Your Attempt Strategy

- Finalise a section-wise strategy and test it in both mocks this week: the order in which you take up RCs and VA, how you scan and select DILR sets, and a two-round approach in QA (easy questions first, then return).
- Play to your strengths. Shreyasee Sarkar of IIM Calcutta (MBA 2023-25) recalls, "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."
- After this week, stop changing your strategy. Refine it; do not replace it.

Week 6: Admit Card and Slot-Time Practice

- Download your CAT 2026 admit card as soon as it is released. [VERIFY release date on iimcat.ac.in] Note your slot, reporting time and test centre.
- Take both full mocks this week at the same time of day as your exam slot, so your concentration peaks at the right hour.
- Plan the route and travel time to your test centre.

Week 7: Previous-Year CAT Papers

- Solve two to three previous-year CAT papers (CAT 2023 to 2025 slots) in timed conditions. They show how CAT actually tests concepts better than any mock.
- Take one full mock and go back through your error log, re-attempting every question marked for this week.

Week 8: Final Mock and Light Revision

- Take your final full mock early in the week, then switch to revision only.
- Revise formulas, shortcuts and your error log. Keep up light daily reading.
- Avoid new topics and new study material.
- Fix your sleep cycle around your exam slot time. So if you have a morning slot, start getting up early to get your body clock ready to peak at exam time.
- Exam Week (November 23 – November 29)
- No full mocks in the last three to four days. Keep revision light and short.
- Keep ready your printed admit card, a valid photo ID, and a printed copy of the same photograph you uploaded in your CAT 2026 application, which the official Registration Guide requires on exam day.
- Sleep well the night before, reach the centre early, and trust the strategy you have practised.

If you are a working professional taking CAT exam, study two to three focused hours on weekdays and keep full mocks for weekends. If two mocks a week are not possible, take one mock and one set of sectionals, and never skip the analysis. As Soumik Banerjee of IIM Calcutta (MBA 2023-25) told MBAUniverse.com, “As I was a working professional, I had prepared a day wise schedule for myself, to effectively utilize my time.”

So start today! Take your diagnostic mock with MBAUniverse.com's 20+ free [CAT mock tests](#) or take [CAT previous year papers](#).

CAT Preparation Strategy for 99 Percentile

If you are aiming high to get 99% in CAT 2026, this section has useful tips. Many CAT toppers with 99+ percentile have cracked CAT with a clear, personalised strategy built around high-weightage topics and disciplined mock practice. Your CAT Preparation Strategy 2026 should focus on mastering the topics that carry the most weight, sharpening your strongest section, and taking full-length mocks with deep analysis. The proven, topper-backed pointers below will help you utilise your time effectively and push towards a 99 percentile and an IIM interview call.

- Master high-weightage Quantitative Aptitude topics — Arithmetic makes up around 40% of the QA section — along with Algebra.

- Develop a knack for Reading Comprehension, which carries approximately 67% weightage (16 of 24 questions) in the VARC section.
- Build a logical reasoning mindset for the tougher, logic-based DILR sets.
- Finalise your own test-taking strategy — CAT toppers advise against blindly imitating another student, because a strategy works for someone when it suits their individual strengths and weaknesses.
- Focus on your strengths, and closer to the exam, avoid focusing on your weaknesses — target enough questions from your stronger areas to secure a good score.
- Take 2–3 full-length mocks per week in the final phase, simulating actual test conditions, followed by deep analysis of every question attempted and not attempted.
- Develop your final exam strategy — which section to attempt first and how to manage time across the sectional limits.

Read in-depth section-wise CAT exam preparation guide in the following sections.

CAT Preparation Books and Study Material

Which are the best CAT exam books? With just a few weeks to go for CAT exam, do you want to know which are the best CAT Preparation Books 2026? Arun Sharma CAT Books are the favorite of CAT Toppers. CAT books of Arun Sharma cover all three sections of the CAT examination preparation. Check latest editions of books of Arun Sharma for CAT 2026 exam in the table below. Nishit K Sinha CAT Books are also popular with CAT aspirants, however they are not frequently updated. Check CAT examination preparation books by Nishit K Sinha in the table below. In addition to the CAT preparation books listed above, the best CAT Study Material 2026 includes CAT PYQs and preparation material by TIME and IMS. Finally, online video lectures are also available on CAT preparation websites by Rodha, Cracku and other CAT experts. Read the [full list of best books for CAT preparation 2026](#), with latest editions and prices.

Best Book for CAT Preparation 2026

Section	Book & Edition	Author
Verbal Ability and Reading Comprehension	How to Prepare for Verbal Ability and Reading Comprehension (13th Edition)	Arun Sharma & Meenakshi Upadhyay
	Verbal Ability and Reading Comprehension for CAT	Nishit K. Sinha
Quantitative Ability	How to Prepare for Quantitative Aptitude (13th Edition)	Arun Sharma
	Quantitative Aptitude for CAT	Nishit K. Sinha

Section	Book & Edition	Author
	<i>Quantitative Aptitude</i>	R. S. Aggarwal
Data Interpretation & Logical Reasoning	<i>How to Prepare for Data Interpretation (10th Edition)</i>	Arun Sharma
	<i>How to Prepare for Logical Reasoning (9th Edition)</i>	Arun Sharma
	<i>Data Interpretation for CAT</i>	Nishit K. Sinha
	<i>Logical Reasoning for CAT</i>	Nishit K. Sinha

CAT Preparation 2026: Understanding Exam Pattern

Your CAT preparation for MBA admission must begin with understanding the 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. Overall, CAT exam pattern has become more focused on conceptual clarity, time management, and logical reasoning ability. Over the last five years, the CAT pattern has undergone several notable changes in its pattern, as highlighted below.

1. Total Number of Questions:

- In 2019 and 2020, CAT had 100 questions (VARC: 34, DILR: 32, QA: 34).
- From 2021 onwards, the number of questions was reduced to 66 (VARC: 24, DILR: 20, QA: 22), making the test shorter but more intense. This pattern continued till CAT 2023.
- CAT 2024 and 2025 saw DILR increase to 22 questions, bringing the total to 68

2. Time Duration:

- Until 2019, CAT had a 3-hour duration (60 minutes per section).
- From 2020 onwards, the exam duration was reduced to 2 hours, with 40 minutes per section, which increased the pressure on time management.

3. Sectional Pattern & Difficulty Level:

- **VARC section** has seen a greater emphasis on Reading Comprehension, with fewer Verbal Ability questions.
- **DILR Section** has become more reasoning-focused, with tougher logic-based sets and fewer straightforward data interpretation questions.
- **QA Section** has shifted slightly towards Arithmetic, making it more accessible for non-engineering background candidates.

4. Question Types – MCQ vs. TITA:

- The TITA (Type in the Answer) questions have fluctuated but generally make up 25-30% of the total paper. Check break-up of CAT 2025 in the following section.
- The number of MCQs has reduced, making the paper more unpredictable, as TITA questions do not have negative marking.

5. Slot-wise Variations & Normalization:

- Since CAT is conducted in multiple slots, the level of difficulty has varied across different slots, requiring score normalization to ensure fairness in percentile calculations.

CAT Exam Pattern 2026

CAT preparation 2026 should start with understanding the exam pattern. CAT 2026 exam pattern is divided in three sections. Check expected breakup in table below.

CAT Exam Pattern 2026 (Expected)

Section No.	Section Name	Duration	MCQs	TITA	Total
I	VARC	40 min	20	4	24
II	DI and LR	40 min	11	11	22
III	QA	40 min	14	8	22
Total		120 min	45	23	68

CAT Marking Scheme 2026

An important aspect of CAT exam preparation is understanding the CAT exam marking scheme. CAT exam features two types of questions: MCQ and Non-MCQ (TITA) questions. In CAT 2025 exam paper, out of the total 68 questions, there were 45 MCQ questions and 23 non-MCQ questions. CAT 2026 Marking Scheme for both types is as follows:

- **Multiple-Choice Question (MCQ):** CAT marking scheme awards +3 marks for each correct answer, -1 mark for each incorrect.
- **Non-MCQ (TITA) Questions:** For TITA questions, there are no options given, and candidates have to type their own answers. CAT marking scheme awards +3 marks for each correct TITA answer, but no negative marks are awarded for wrong TITA answers.
- Total marks in CAT exam are 204 marks.

CAT Preparation 2026: Understanding Syllabus

Having understood the exam pattern, the next important question for effective CAT Preparation 2026 is: what is the CAT exam preparation syllabus? CAT 2026 exam syllabus

covers all the three sections: VARC, DILR, and QA. While IIMs do not release a fixed syllabus, the CAT exam syllabus can be derived from CAT exam pattern. CAT exam syllabus overview is given below. It is based on CAT exam pattern and key topics covered in last 10 years CAT Papers.

- **CAT 2026 exam syllabus covers three sections:** Verbal Ability & Reading Comprehension (VARC), Data Interpretation & Logical Reasoning (DILR), and Quantitative Ability (QA).
- [CAT Reading Comprehension](#) Syllabus includes passages from literature, business, science, philosophy, and social sciences areas.
- [CAT Verbal Ability Syllabus](#) includes Para Jumbles, Para Summary, and Odd One Out.
- [CAT Data Interpretation Syllabus](#) includes questions on Charts and Graphs.
- [CAT Logical Reasoning Syllabus](#) include questions on arrangements, puzzles, blood relations, syllogisms, and Venn diagrams.
- [CAT Quantitative Aptitude syllabus](#) include topics from arithmetic, algebra, geometry, number systems, and modern mathematics.

Read following sections for in-depth section-wise CAT preparation strategy with syllabus, important topics, previous years questions and more.

CAT Preparation 2026: Verbal Ability

This section explains the CAT Preparation 2026 strategy for verbal ability section. CAT Verbal Ability and Reading Comprehension section is sub divided into two parts. CAT Reading Comprehension has approximately 67% weightage (16 of 24 questions), while CAT Verbal Ability has approximately 33% weightage (8 of 24 questions).

Verbal Ability (VA) section tests a candidate's command over the English language, logical reasoning in language-based questions, and ability to analyze written information. To prepare effectively for CAT Verbal Ability section, you should know the exam pattern, type of questions asked, syllabus and CAT Preparation Strategy 2026 given below.

a) CAT 2026 Verbal Ability Pattern

[CAT Exam Pattern 2026](#) 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.

CAT Verbal Ability Pattern: CAT 2025 Slot 1

Question Type/Area	No of Qs.	Type
Paragraph Completion	2	MCQ
Para Summary	2	MCQ

Question Type/Area	No of Qs.	Type
Odd Sentence Questions	2	TITA
Jumbled Paragraphs	2	TITA
Total Number of Questions	8	MCQ & TITA

b) CAT 2026 Verbal Ability Syllabus

Verbal Ability (VA) section tests a candidate's command over the English language, logical reasoning in language-based questions, and ability to analyze written information.

CAT Verbal Ability syllabus includes topics such as Para Jumbles, Para Summary, and Odd One Out, which test a candidate's ability to structure information logically. Based on previous years' papers, CAT VARC Syllabus 2026 and type of questions is given below.

CAT Verbal Ability Syllabus 2026

Topic Area	Description
Paragraph Completion	Paragraph Completion questions present a paragraph with its final sentence missing. Candidates must choose the most logical and contextually appropriate concluding sentence from the given options. This question type tests your ability to understand the central idea, tone, and flow of a passage.
Para Jumble	Candidates are given four to five jumbled sentences that must be arranged in the correct logical order to form a coherent paragraph. These questions test logical flow, coherence, and an understanding of transition words.
Para Summary	A short paragraph is provided, and candidates must choose the most accurate summary from the given options. This tests comprehension, the ability to differentiate between main ideas and supporting details, and logical reasoning.
Odd One Out	A set of four to five sentences is given, and candidates must identify the one that does not fit into the sequence. This assesses the ability to identify logical continuity and coherence in writing.

Read more about [CAT Verbal Ability pattern](#), syllabus and preparation.

c) CAT Verbal Ability Preparation Strategy

Given the nature of questions given above, CAT 2026 Verbal Ability Preparation requires time and effort to improve your understanding and use of English language. Follow this CAT Verbal Ability preparation strategy to improve your performance in this section.

1. **Improve Reading Skills**
2. **Strengthen Logical Sequencing for Para Jumbles**
3. **Master Para Summary Questions**
4. **Crack Odd One Out Questions**
5. **Build Strong Vocabulary**
6. **Improve Critical Reasoning Skills**
7. **Develop a Strategy for Non-MCQ (TITA) Questions**
8. **Practice Mock Tests and Previous Year Papers**

d) CAT Verbal Ability Preparation Books and Study Material

Following CAT preparation books for Verbal Ability section are very helpful:

- How to Prepare for Verbal Ability & Reading Comprehension for CAT by Arun Sharma, Meenakshi Upadhyay (13th Edition, 2026)
- Verbal Ability and Reading Comprehension for the CAT by Nishit K. Sinha (Pearson)
- High School English Grammar and Composition by Wren & Martin
- The IMS/TIME/Career Launcher Study Modules

Online Resources are also available. Read complete guide to [CAT 2026 Verbal Ability Preparation](#).

CAT Preparation 2026: Reading Comprehension

This section explains the CAT Preparation 2026 strategy for reading comprehension section. CAT Reading Comprehension Section has 66% weightage (16 Questions) within the CAT Verbal Ability and Reading Comprehension section. CAT Reading Comprehension section involves answering questions based on passages from different subject areas such as literature, business, science, philosophy, and social sciences. To prepare effectively for CAT Reading Comprehension Section, you should know the exam pattern, type of questions asked, syllabus and preparation strategy given below.

a) CAT 2026 Reading Comprehension Pattern

Before we discuss how to prepare for Reading Comprehension Section, it is useful to understand the overall CAT exam pattern. CAT 2026 exam pattern is expected to be similar to CAT 2025 exam pattern. Check table below.

CAT Reading Comprehension Questions: CAT 2025 Slot 1

Question Type/Area	No of Qs.	Type
RC 1: Alienists and the art of diagnosing mental disorders	4	MCQ
RC 2: Income inequality and economic growth	4	MCQ
RC 3: Objections to Electronic Music as a musical genre	4	MCQ
RC 4: Complex Systems and the dynamics of tail events	4	MCQ
Total Number of Questions	16	MCQ

b) CAT 2026 Reading Comprehension Syllabus

Reading Comprehension (RC) is a very important part of the VARC section in the CAT exam. RC section involves reading passages from different subject areas such as literature, business, science, philosophy, and social sciences, and answering a set of questions that test candidate's understanding. These passages test a candidate's ability to understand complex information, identify key ideas, draw inferences, and evaluate arguments.

While there is no fixed syllabus for RC in CAT, according to previous year CAT exam analysis, topics which often appear in RC section from based on Psychology, Philosophy, History, Arts and Museum, Society & Culture. Read more about [CAT Reading Comprehension](#) pattern, syllabus and preparation.

c) CAT Reading Comprehension 2026: Type of questions

Based on CAT previous year's papers, the question types expected in **CAT 2026 Reading Comprehension** are as below.

- **Main Idea-Based Questions:** Identify the primary theme of the passage.
- **Fact-Based or Detail-Based Questions:** Ask for specific details from the passage.
- **Inference-Based Questions:** Require deriving conclusions beyond the explicit text.
- **Tone and Attitude-Based Questions:** Understanding the author's perspective (e.g., optimistic, critical).
- **Vocabulary-Based Questions:** Word meaning, contextual usage.
- **Title-Based Questions:** Choosing the most appropriate title for the passage.
- **Logical Structure-Based Questions:** Understanding the flow and coherence of ideas.

d) CAT Reading Comprehension Preparation Strategy 2026

Tips for how to prepare for CAT 2026 Reading Comprehension section are given below.

1. **Improve Reading Speed Without Dropping Comprehension**
2. **Develop a Strong Vocabulary**

3. Identify and Adapt to Different Passage Types
4. Focus on the First and Last Paragraphs
5. Try to read the Questions First
6. Learn to eliminate Incorrect Options Systematically
7. Practice to Solve RCs in Defined Time
8. Analyze and Learn from Mistakes

e) CAT Reading Comprehension Books & Study Material

To prepare effectively, following CAT Reading Comprehension study material and books are very helpful:

- How to Prepare for Verbal Ability & Reading Comprehension for CAT by Arun Sharma, Meenakshi Upadhyay (13th Edition, 2026)
- Verbal Ability and Reading Comprehension for the CAT by Nishit K. Sinha (Pearson)
- The IMS/TIME/Career Launcher Study Modules

Read complete guide to [CAT 2026 Reading Comprehension Preparation.](#)

CAT Preparation 2026: Data Interpretation

Data Interpretation in the CAT exam is a key part of the Data Interpretation and Logical Reasoning (DILR) section. CAT Data Interpretation section tests a candidate's ability to analyze, interpret, and draw conclusions from a given numerical data presented in table/graph or other formats. CAT DI section requires strong logical reasoning and calculation skills, and a basic understanding of patterns, trends, and relationships.

a) CAT Data Interpretation Exam Pattern 2026

Before we discuss how to prepare for CAT Data Interpretation section, it is useful to understand the overall CAT exam pattern. CAT 2026 exam pattern is expected to be similar to CAT 2025 exam pattern. Check table below.

CAT Data Interpretation Questions: CAT 2025 Slot 1

Area	Set Description	No. of Questions	Question Type
Data Interpretation	Performance rating of 6 employees	5	1 MCQ 4 TITA
Data Interpretation	Import-Export data of 5 countries	4	4 MCQ

Area	Set Description	No. of Questions	Question Type
Total No of Questions		9	MCQ & TITA

b) CAT Data Interpretation Syllabus 2026

CAT 2026 Data Interpretation syllabus includes topics that test a candidate's ability to understand and interpret data in different forms. While there is no fixed CAT DI LR syllabus, the key topics covered in this section are Data Tables, Bar Graphs, Line Charts, Venn Diagrams, Mixed Graphs, Data Sufficiency and Logical DI. Read more about [CAT Data Interpretation Syllabus](#) 2026.

c) CAT 2026 Data Interpretation Preparation Strategy

CAT Preparation Strategy 2026 for Data Interpretation section involves building mathematical calculation skills and understanding different formats of data presentation like graphs and charts. Data Interpretation for CAT 2026 preparation tips are given below:

1. **Build Maths Calculation Skills**
2. **Understand Different Data Presentation Formats**
3. **Focus on Logical Reasoning**
4. **Improve "Data Sufficiency" Skills**
5. **Use "Approximation Techniques"**
6. **Develop a Step-by-Step Approach**
7. **Take Sectional Tests and Mocks and Learn from Mistakes**

d) CAT 2026 Data Interpretation Preparation Books and Material

Following CAT 2026 preparation books for Data Interpretation section are very helpful:

1. **How to Prepare for Data Interpretation for CAT by Arun Sharma (10th Edition, 2026)**
2. **Logical Reasoning and Data Interpretation for CAT by Nishit K. Sinha**
3. **Previous Year CAT Papers**
4. **TIME, IMS, and Career Launcher Study Material**
5. **Mock Tests and Sectional Tests**
6. **Newspapers and Business Magazines**
7. **YouTube Channels for DI Preparation**

Read complete guide to [CAT 2026 Data Interpretation Preparation](#).

CAT Preparation 2026: Logical Reasoning

This section explains the CAT Preparation 2026 strategy for logical reasoning section. Logical Reasoning (LR) is a key part of the Data Interpretation & Logical Reasoning (DILR) section in the CAT exam. Logical Reasoning for CAT evaluates a candidate's ability to analyze patterns, identify relationships, and solve complex problems. It is important to note here that questions in CAT Logical Reasoning section do not require any specific mathematical formulas, but require reasoning and structured problem-solving ability.

a) CAT Logical Reasoning Exam Pattern 2026

Common Logical Reasoning questions in CAT exam include arrangements, puzzles, blood relations, syllogisms, Venn diagrams, and logical sequences. Check CAT 2025 Exam Pattern in the tables below.

CAT Logical Reasoning Questions: CAT 2025 Slot 1

Area	Set Description	No. of Questions	Question Type
Logical Reasoning	Circular arrangement set involving 4 persons and 7 chairs	5	4 MCQ 1 TITA
Logical Reasoning	Five persons tapping yes and no	4	2 MCQ 2 TITA
Logical Reasoning	Train movement from stations A to E	4	4 TITA
Total No of Questions		13	MCQ & TITA

b) CAT Logical Reasoning Syllabus 2026

CAT 2026 logical reasoning syllabus includes topics that test a candidate's ability to answer logical questions. While there is no fixed CAT LR syllabus, the key topics covered in this section are Seating Arrangements, Blood Relations, Syllogisms, Coding-Decoding, Direction Sense, Puzzles, Venn Diagrams & Set Theory, Input-Output, Clocks & Calendars, Logical Sequences and Data Sufficiency (Logical Reasoning). Read more about [CAT Logical Reasoning](#) pattern, syllabus and preparation.

c) CAT Logical Reasoning Preparation Strategy 2026

CAT 2026 Logical Reasoning Preparation Strategy involves understanding different types of LR questions and finding their solutions. Logical Reasoning for CAT preparation tips are as follows:

1. Understand Key Question Types
2. Develop a Step-by-Step Approach
3. Use Diagrams and Tables
4. Improve your Analytical Thinking
5. Learn Shortcuts and Techniques
6. Take Sectional Tests, Mocks and Past Year Papers

d) CAT 2026 Logical Reasoning Books and Study Material

Now that you have understood the type of questions and preparation approach, read about best CAT Logical Reasoning Books 2026 and study material.

1. How to Prepare for Logical Reasoning for CAT by Arun Sharma (9th Edition, 2026)
2. Previous Year CAT Papers
3. TIME, IMS, and Career Launcher Study Material
4. Mock Tests and Sectional Tests
5. Puzzle and Logical Thinking Books
6. YouTube Channels for Logical Reasoning Preparation

Read complete guide to [CAT 2026 Logical Reasoning Preparation](#).

CAT Preparation 2026: Quantitative Ability

This section explains the CAT Preparation 2026 strategy for quantitative ability section. Quantitative Ability or Quantitative Aptitude section in CAT exam is the test of mathematics. QA comprises questions on Arithmetic, Algebra, Geometry, Modern Math and other topics. CAT Quantitative Aptitude questions will carry a weightage of 33% of total CAT. Within the Quantitative Aptitude section, around 40% questions are based on Arithmetic topics. CAT Quantitative Aptitude is the last section in the CAT exam.

a) CAT 2026 Quantitative Aptitude Pattern

CAT Quantitative Aptitude Pattern 2026: CAT Quantitative Aptitude Exam Pattern is divided into Arithmetic, Algebra, Geometry, Modern Math, Number Systems, and a few other topics. CAT Quantitative Aptitude Exam Pattern 2025 with areas and types of questions is given in the table below.

CAT Quantitative Aptitude Questions: CAT 2025 Slot 1

Sub-section & Module	Description	No. of Questions
Number System	Factors 1, Digits Based 1, Set Based 1	3

Sub-section & Module	Description	No. of Questions
Algebra	Log 1, Linear Equations 2, Functions 2, Inequality 1	6
Arithmetic	TSD 1, T&W 1, SI CI 1, Percentage 1, Ratio 1, PLD 1, Mixture 1, Maxima & Minima 1	8
Modern Math	P&C 1	1
Geometry & Mensuration	Circle 1, Polygon 1, Coordinate Geo 2	4
Total		22

b) CAT 2026 Quantitative Aptitude Syllabus 2026

CAT Quantitative Aptitude Syllabus is not pre-defined by IIMs or published on CAT exam official website. CAT Quantitative Aptitude Syllabus 2026 is based on topics that have appeared in past CAT exams. Based on past five year's exam pattern, CAT Quantitative Aptitude important topics and their weightages are as follows:

Topics	Percentage
Arithmetic	~38%
Algebra	~34%
Geometry	~15%
Number System	~8%
Modern Math	~5%

Based on type of questions that have appeared in previous year's papers, CAT 2026 Quantitative Aptitude Syllabus covers following topics: Arithmetic, Algebra, Geometry/ Mensuration, Modern Math. Read more about [Quantitative Aptitude](#) pattern, syllabus and preparation.

c) CAT Quantitative Aptitude Preparation 2026

How to prepare for Quantitative Aptitude for CAT 2026? 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. Read an effective strategy for how to prepare for Quantitative Aptitude for CAT Exam below.

- **Understand the syllabus and prioritize topics**

- **Build strong conceptual clarity**
- **Focus on topic-wise practice**
- **Strengthen calculation speed**
- **Develop problem-solving approach**
- **Take mock tests and analyze performance**
- **Use the right study materials and resources**

d) CAT Quantitative Aptitude Preparation Books 2026

Following CAT 2026 preparation books for Quantitative Aptitude section are very helpful:

- How to Prepare for Quantitative Aptitude for CAT by Arun Sharma
- Quantitative Aptitude Quantum CAT by Sarvesh K. Verma
- Quantitative Aptitude for Competitive Examinations by R.S. Aggarwal:
- TIME, IMS, and Career Launcher Study Material
- CAT Previous Year Papers & Mock Test Series:
- CAT Quantitative Aptitude YouTube Channels

Read complete guide to [CAT 2026 Quantitative Aptitude Preparation.](#)

CAT Preparation Online 2026

CAT Exam Preparation Online: In last few years, CAT Online Coaching has become more popular than traditional classroom coaching for a large segment of aspirants, offering top-quality faculty, flexible schedules, comprehensive mock series, and course fees that are 40-50% lower than offline alternatives. According to research by MBAUniverse.com, the best online coaching for CAT exam is provided by Rodha, Elites Grid, Cracku, 2IIM, IMS Online Courses. Read this [CAT online coaching guide](#) for more details. It covers CAT best coaching online and top online course for CAT.

CAT Preparation 2026: Fees & Discounts

CAT preparation 2026 Fees: CAT 2026 preparation costs vary significantly based on the type of program, from budget-friendly test series under Rs 10,000 to comprehensive classroom programs exceeding Rs 60,000. Most top coaching institutes (IMS, TIME, Career Launcher, Cracku) offer multiple program formats such as: test series only, self-learning, online live coaching, and classroom, each at different price points. Online programs are typically 40–50% cheaper than classroom programs and have grown in popularity since 2020. The table below shows the typical CAT Preparation Fees 2026 range for each program type, helping you choose what matches your budget and learning style.

CAT Preparation Fees 2026: A Comparison

Program Type	Format	Fee Range (per program)	Best For
Test Series Only	Online	Rs 7,000 – Rs 11,000	Self-prep aspirants who only need mocks
Self-Learning	Online (recorded)	Rs 18,000 – Rs 27,000	Working professionals, flexible schedule
Online Live Coaching	Online (live + recorded)	Rs 30,000 – Rs 36,000	Want live faculty interaction without travel
Classroom Coaching	Offline (in-person)	Rs 50,000 – Rs 75,000	Prefer traditional classroom environment

All fees are exclusive of 18% GST. Most institutes offer discounts of up to 30% on online programs during the season.

CAT Preparation Coaching: Best Institutes in 2026

CAT exam preparation coaching is an important step towards cracking the CAT exam, especially for beginners and candidates with low academics. MBAUniverse.com surveyed over 1,000 CAT aspirants across MBAUniverse.com, Reddit and other online communities between January and April 2026. Based on their feedback, the best CAT 2026 preparation coaching options fall into four categories:

Category	Top institutes / faculty	Fees (Rs, indicative)	Best for
Offline classroom coaching	TIME, IMS, Career Launcher	55,000–75,000	Structured timetable, peer learning, direct faculty interaction
Online comprehensive programmes	IMS Online (18,160–35,950), Rodha (18,000–25,000), Elites Grid (28,000–35,000), Cracku (15,000–20,000), 2IIM (20,000–30,000)	15,000–35,950	Flexibility, lower fees, choice of faculty
Section-wise specialists	VARC: Gejo Srinivasan (VARC1000). DILR: Shahzar Sir (Elites Grid), Raghu Sir (2IIM). QA: Rodha (for non-engineers), Arun Sharma (author and Quant expert)	Varies	Extra support in one weak section

Category	Top institutes / faculty	Fees (Rs, indicative)	Best for
Free resources	Official IIM mock on iimcat.ac.in, YouTube channels, Reddit communities, MBAUniverse.com free CAT mock tests and sample papers	Free	Self-motivated aspirants on a budget

Which option suits you?

- Offline coaching suits aspirants who need classroom discipline.
- CAT preparation coaching online suits working professionals and candidates without a nearby centre, at a much lower cost.
- Rodha is the most recommended platform for non-engineers and students with weak quant basics.
- Test series: aspirants who mainly need mocks can consider one, such as IMS SimCAT Core (Rs 7,450).

Whichever you pick, attend a demo class first. Also check the quality of mocks and post-mock analysis and avoid joining multiple institutes, as it dilutes focus. The best CAT preparation 2026 low academics option is Rodha. Compare all institutes: see the complete [Top 10 CAT Coaching Institutes 2026](#) ranking with fees, ratings and student reviews.

CAT Preparation without Coaching 2026

CAT preparation 2026 Free: Many CAT toppers with 99+ percentile have cracked CAT without formal coaching courses. CAT Self Preparation is entirely possible with the right resources, a disciplined study plan, and serious mock test practice. So if you are keen on CAT 2026 preparation free, follow these CAT 2026 self preparation tips recommended by toppers:

- **Know the Exam Pattern and Syllabus First:** Understand CAT 2026 pattern and syllabus given in above sections. Check previous years' question papers. Map it against your strengths and weaknesses across VARC, DILR, and QA.
- **Build a Day-wise Study Plan:** Prepare a realistic daily schedule and stick to it. Without coaching, self-discipline is your most important preparation tool.
- **Use the Right Books:** Arun Sharma's QA and VARC series, Nishit K. Sinha's DILR book, and Wren & Martin for grammar are sufficient for complete self-study. Read the full guide to [Best Books for CAT 2026 Preparation](#).
- **Leverage Free Online Resources:** YouTube channels Rodha, 2IIM CAT, and Cracku cover all three sections well. For VARC, read The Hindu, Aeon Essays, and The Economist daily. Download free CAT Previous Year Papers from MBAUniverse.com.

- **Take Mocks and Analyse Thoroughly:** Start with one mock every two weeks, increasing to two to three per week in the final two months. Spend equal time analysing as attempting. Take 20+ free [CAT Mock Tests 2026](#) on MBAUniverse.com.
- **Join a CAT Aspirant Community:** Active CAT groups on Reddit and Telegram provide peer learning and doubt-clearing. You can join one, and schedule a daily/weekly check.
- **Track and Course-Correct:** Review section-wise mock scores every week. Adjust your study plan based on data, not instinct.

Read complete guide to [CAT 2026 self preparation](#) and [CAT 2026 Online Preparation](#).

How to Start CAT Preparation: CAT Preparation for Beginners

If you are starting CAT preparation from scratch, begin with the basics before moving to full mocks. Check the CAT preparation for beginners tips below.

1. **Understand the exam pattern first.** If the CAT 2024–2025 pattern continues, CAT 2026 will be a 120-minute computer-based test with three sections of 40 minutes each: VARC, DILR and QA. It will have 68 questions. MCQs carry +3 marks for a correct answer and –1 for a wrong one. TITA questions carry no negative marking. Read the [CAT Exam Pattern](#).
2. **Know the syllabus.** IIMs do not release a fixed syllabus. Past papers show that QA covers Arithmetic, Algebra, Geometry, Number Systems and Modern Maths, while RC passages come from areas such as literature, business, science and philosophy. Read the CAT Syllabus.
3. **Take a diagnostic mock.** Attempt one full mock under exam conditions. Treat the score as a baseline, not a verdict. Take CAT mock test.
4. **Build high-weightage topics first.** Arithmetic makes up around 40% of the [QA section](#), and Reading Comprehension carries about 67% of VARC (16 of 24 questions). QA's recent shift towards Arithmetic makes it more accessible for candidates from non-engineering backgrounds.
5. **Start an error log early.** For every wrong or skipped question, note the topic, the reason, the correct approach and a date to re-attempt it.
6. **Stay consistent.** Working professionals can study two to three focused hours on weekdays and keep mocks for weekends. As Akshat Agarwal of IIT Delhi MBA (2023–25) advises, "Consistent, daily effort is crucial."

CAT Mock Tests 2026: Best Preparation Tool

Mock tests play a crucial role in CAT 2026 preparation, helping aspirants develop time management skills, exam temperament, and accuracy. Regular mock practice is key to success in CAT exam. MBAUniverse.com offers free CAT 2026 Mock Tests and [CAT 2026 Sample Tests](#). Check why CAT Mocks are important and top [CAT Mock Tests](#).

Best CAT Mock Test Series

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

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 Topper Preparation Tips

MBAUniverse.com presents proven [CAT 2026 Preparation Tips from CAT toppers](#) who are now studying at IIM Ahmedabad, IIM Calcutta, IIM Kozhikode and SPIJMR. These CAT preparation 2026 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 2026 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 left for the exam, 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 month 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.”
- **Motivate Yourself During CAT Preparation Journey:** A few CAT toppers revealed that they watched motivational movies like 3 Idiots, The Pursuit of Happyness, Forrest Gump and Rocky during exam preparation to keep motivated.

CAT Preparation 2026 PDF Download

CAT 2026 Preparation PDF guide with toppers tips is available on MBAUniverse.com. Simply click on download PDF button below, complete a quick registration, and your CAT preparation PDF will download automatically. This CAT 2026 Preparation PDF download is totally free on MBAUniverse.com.

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Will CAT 2026 be Tough?

CAT exam is often considered as one of India's toughest management entrance exams. Its difficulty arises not just from the exam pattern, but also from the intense competition for limited seats in the IIMs and other top B-schools. Check reasons why CAT is a tough exam.

- **Unpredictable Difficulty Level of Question:** CAT questions range from moderate to difficult, with unpredictable patterns each year.
- **Time Pressure:** The exam is strictly time-bound, with candidates required to solve ~68 questions in just 2 hours.
- **Sectional Balance:** Each of the three sections tests different skill sets, making balanced preparation essential.
- **High Competition:** Competition is intense, with about 3.00 lakhs applicants vying for approximately 11,500 IIM seats.

Summary

CAT Examination Preparation 2026: IIM Indore will conduct CAT 2026 on November 29, 2026. Expected [CAT 2026 exam](#) pattern is a 120-minute computer-based test with three 40-minute sections (VARC, DILR and QA), and 68 questions. With about 60 days left, your last 60 days CAT preparation strategy should focus on high-weightage areas, take and analyse CAT mock tests and past papers, and build a section-wise attempt strategy. Above MBAUniverse.com guide gives you a week-by-week 60 days CAT preparation plan up to exam day. Start by taking [CAT mock test](#) or [CAT previous year question paper](#). Also read: [CAT 2026 Syllabus](#) and [CAT 2026 Pattern](#).