

# CLIFFS

# GRE PREPARATION GUIDE

**Based  
on  
Current  
Exams**

**GRADUATE RECORD EXAMINATION • GENERAL TEST**

By

William A. Covino, Ph.D.

Bernard V. Zandy, M.A.

David A. Kay, M.S.

Written by testing experts

Most recent question types

Two full-length practice tests

Thorough analysis of each area

Complete answers and explanations

Proven strategies

**Cliffs**

**NOTES**

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# Graduate Record Examination

General Test

PREPARATION GUIDE

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## PREFACE

**YOUR GRE SCORES MAKE THE DIFFERENCE!** And better scores result from thorough preparation. Therefore, your study time must be used most effectively. You need the most comprehensive test preparation guide that you can realistically complete in a reasonable time. It must be thorough, direct, precise, and easy to use, giving you all the information you need to do your best on the GRE.

In keeping with the fine tradition of Cliffs Notes, this guide was developed by leading experts in the field of test preparation as part of a series to specifically meet these standards. The testing strategies, techniques, and materials have been researched, tested, and evaluated, and are presently used at GRE preparation programs at many leading colleges and universities. This guide features the **PATTERNED PLAN OF ATTACK** for each section and focuses on six major areas:

1. The Ability Tested
2. The Basic Skills Necessary
3. Understanding Directions
4. Analysis of Directions
5. Suggested Approaches With Samples
6. Practice-Review-Analyze-Practice

These major areas include important mathematical symbols, terminology, and formulas, and a helpful list of prefixes, suffixes, and roots. Two complete practice exams follow with answers and *in-depth* explanations.

This guide was written to give you the edge in doing your best by maximizing your effort in the minimum amount of time. If you take the time to follow the Study Guide Checklist in this book, you will get the best preparation possible.

## STUDY GUIDE CHECKLIST

- \_\_\_ 1. Read the GRE Information Bulletin.
- \_\_\_ 2. Become familiar with the Test Format, page 3.
- \_\_\_ 3. Familiarize yourself with the answers to Questions Commonly Asked about the GRE, page 5.
- \_\_\_ 4. Learn the techniques of a Successful Overall Approach, page 8.
- \_\_\_ 5. Carefully read Part II, Analysis of Exam Areas, beginning on page 11.
- \_\_\_ 6. Review math Symbols, Terminology, Formulas, and General Information, page 46.
- \_\_\_ 7. Strictly observing time allotments, take Practice Test 1, section-by-section (review answers after each section), page 63.
- \_\_\_ 8. Check your answers and analyze your results, page 114.
- \_\_\_ 9. Fill out the Tally Sheet for Problems Missed to pinpoint your mistakes, page 119.
- \_\_\_ 10. While referring to each item of Practice Test 1, study ALL the Answers and Explanations that begin on page 123.
- \_\_\_ 11. Review as necessary Basic Skills, Symbols, Terminology, Formulas, and General Information given in Part II of this book.
- \_\_\_ 12. Strictly observing time allotments, take Practice Test 2, page 163.
- \_\_\_ 13. Check your answers and analyze your results, page 214.
- \_\_\_ 14. Fill out the Tally Sheet for Problems Missed to pinpoint your mistakes, page 219.
- \_\_\_ 15. While referring to each item of Practice Test 2, study ALL the Answers and Explanations that begin on page 223.
- \_\_\_ 16. Again, selectively review materials as needed.
- \_\_\_ 17. Carefully reread Part II, Analysis of Exam Areas, beginning on page 11.
- \_\_\_ 18. Go over "FINAL PREPARATION" on page 260.

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## **Part I: Introduction**



## FORMAT OF A RECENT GRE GENERAL TEST

<b>Section I</b>	<b>Verbal Ability</b>	<b>35–40 Questions</b>
30 Minutes	Sentence Completion	6–8 Questions
	Analogies	8–10 Questions
	Reading Comprehension (2 passages)	10–12 Questions
	Antonyms	10–12 Questions
<b>Section II</b>	<b>Verbal Ability</b>	<b>35–40 Questions</b>
30 Minutes	Sentence Completion	6–8 Questions
	Analogies	8–10 Questions
	Reading Comprehension (2 passages)	10–12 Questions
	Antonyms	10–12 Questions
<b>Section III</b>	<b>Quantitative Ability</b>	<b>Approximately 30 Questions</b>
30 Minutes	Quantitative Comparison	15 Questions
	Math Ability (with graphs)	15 Questions
<b>Section IV</b>	<b>Quantitative Ability</b>	<b>Approximately 30 Questions</b>
30 Minutes	Quantitative Comparison	15 Questions
	Math Ability (with graphs)	15 Questions
<b>Section V</b>	<b>Analytical Ability</b>	<b>Approximately 25 Questions</b>
30 Minutes	Analytical Reasoning	22 Questions
	Logical Reasoning	3 Questions
<b>Section VI</b>	<b>Analytical Ability</b>	<b>Approximately 25 Questions</b>
30 Minutes	Analytical Reasoning	19 Questions
	Logical Reasoning	6 Questions
<b>Section VII</b>	<b>Either Verbal, Quantitative, Analytical, or Experimental</b>	<b>Approximately 30 Questions</b>
30 Minutes		

NOTE: The order in which the sections appear and the number of questions in each section may vary because there are several forms of the new GRE. The actual test will contain a seventh section of experimental questions; this section may appear at any point in the test.

## **GENERAL DESCRIPTION**

The GRE General Test is used along with other information about your college achievements in order to assess your potential for success in graduate school. The test lasts approximately three hours and consists entirely of multiple-choice questions.

The verbal section tests your reading comprehension and the breadth of your vocabulary. The quantitative section presents problems in arithmetic, algebra, and geometry. The analytical section tests your ability to read closely and reason logically from given information. All questions have the same point value.

## **QUESTIONS COMMONLY ASKED ABOUT THE GRE**

**Q: WHO ADMINISTERS THE GRE?**

**A:** The GRE is administered by Educational Testing Service (ETS) which is located in Princeton, New Jersey. If you wish any information not covered in this book, write to ETS at Box 1502, Berkeley, California 94701, or at Box 955, Princeton, New Jersey 08540.

**Q: CAN I TAKE THE GRE MORE THAN ONCE?**

**A:** Yes. But be aware that your scores from each testing will appear on your score report. Therefore, even when you take the test for "practice," the results can have a real impact on your record.

**Q: WHAT MATERIALS MAY I BRING TO THE GRE?**

**A:** Bring your registration form, positive identification, a watch, three or four sharpened Number 2 pencils, and a good eraser. You may not bring scratch paper, calculators, or books. You may do your figuring in the space provided in the test booklet.

**Q: IF NECESSARY, MAY I CANCEL MY SCORE?**

**A:** Yes. You may cancel your score on the day of the test by telling the test center supervisor, or you may write or telegraph ETS; your cancelation request must reach ETS within four days of the test date. Your GRE score report will note that you have canceled a score.

**Q: SHOULD I GUESS ON THE GRE?**

**A:** YES! There is no penalty for guessing on the new GRE. Before taking a wild guess, remember that eliminating one or more of the choices increases your chances of choosing the right answer.

**Q: HOW SHOULD I PREPARE FOR THE GRE?**

**A:** Understanding and practicing test-taking strategies will help a great deal, especially on the verbal and analytical sections. Subject-matter review is particularly useful for the math section. Both subject matter and strategies are fully covered in this book.

**Q: WHEN IS THE GRE ADMINISTERED?**

**A:** The GRE is administered nationwide six times during the school year, in October, December, January, February, April, and June, on Saturdays. The General Test begins at 8:30 A.M. and the Advanced Tests begin at 1:30 P.M. There are special summer administrations, given in limited locations, in July, August, and September.

**Q: WHERE IS THE GRE ADMINISTERED?**

**A:** The GRE is administered at hundreds of schools and colleges in and out of the United States. A list of testing centers is included in the GRE information bulletin published by ETS. The testing or placement office at your college or university should have information about local administrations.

**Q: HOW AND WHEN SHOULD I REGISTER?**

**A:** A registration packet, complete with return envelope, is attached to the GRE information bulletin published by ETS. Mailing in the forms provided, plus the appropriate fees, completes the registration process. You should register about six weeks prior to the exam date.

**Q: IS WALK-IN REGISTRATION PROVIDED?**

**A:** Yes, on a limited basis. If you are unable to meet regular registration deadlines, you may attempt to register on the day of the test (an additional fee is required). You will be admitted only if space remains after preregistered students have been seated.

**Q: WHAT IS THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THE GENERAL TEST AND THE ADVANCED TEST?**

**A:** Your general scholastic ability is measured by the General Test; the questions on this section presume a broad, general college background. The Advanced Test deals with specific subject matter corresponding to your specific graduate study; the questions measure your undergraduate knowledge of the discipline you wish to pursue in graduate school.

**Q: WHAT SUBJECTS ARE COVERED BY THE ADVANCED TESTS?**

**A:** You may take an Advanced Test in any one of the following areas: Biology, Chemistry, Computer Science, Economics, Education, Engineering, French, Geography, Geology, German, History, Literature in English, Mathematics, Music, Philosophy, Physics, Political Science, Psychology, Sociology, and Spanish. Subscores are reported for the tests in Biology, Engineering, French, Geography, Geology, History, Music, Psychology, and Spanish.

**Q: SHOULD I PREPARE DIFFERENTLY FOR THE ADVANCED TEST THAN FOR THE GENERAL TEST?**

**A:** The test-taking strategies which help on the General Test will also help on the Advanced Test, because it too consists entirely of multiple-choice questions. A short sample Advanced Test is sent to Advanced Test registrants by ETS; its questions are the most reliable indication of the level and range of questions you can expect. A general review of the material covered by the courses in your undergraduate major will be helpful insofar as it refreshes your memory of key facts, concepts, and personalities.

Constructing multiple-choice questions of your own, based on what you have learned, is an ideal way to prepare.

**Q: WHAT IS THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THE “OLD” GRE AND THE “NEW” GRE?**

**A:** Until October of 1981, the GRE consisted of five sections: Verbal Ability (50 minutes, 80 questions), Quantitative Ability (Quantitative Comparison-Math Ability, 50 minutes, 55 questions), Analytical Ability (Analysis of Explanations, 25 minutes, 40 questions), Analytical Ability (Logical Diagrams-Analytical Reasoning, 25 minutes, 30 questions), and a Verbal, Math, Analytical, or Experimental section (25 minutes). The “new” GRE is composed of seven sections, each 30 minutes in length: two sections of Verbal Ability (35–40 questions each), two sections of Math Ability (30 questions each), two sections of Analytical Ability (Analytical Reasoning-Logical Reasoning, 25 questions each), and one section that is experimental. The “new” GRE has eliminated Analysis of Explanations and Logical Diagrams. The score on the “new” test does equate with the score on the “old” test.

**Q: HOW WILL COLLEGES USE MY SCORE ON THE NEW ANALYTICAL SECTION?**

**A:** The use of this section varies from college to college. Many colleges still discount the analytical score and emphasize the verbal and quantitative scores, simply because the analytical section is so new. For some schools, the analytical score is considered quite seriously; for others it is used to substitute for possible weaknesses in your verbal or quantitative scores. Consult the graduate school to which you are applying to find out precisely how they consider your analytical score.



## TAKING THE GRE: A SUCCESSFUL OVERALL APPROACH

Many who take the GRE don't get the score that they are entitled to because they spend too much time dwelling on hard questions, leaving insufficient time to answer the easy questions they can get right. Don't let this happen to you. Use the following system to mark your answer sheet:

1. Answer easy questions immediately.
2. Place a "+" next to any problem that seems solvable but is too time-consuming.
3. Place a "-" next to any problem that seems impossible. Act quickly; don't waste time deciding whether a problem is a "+" or a "-."

After working all the problems you can do immediately, go back and work your "+" problems. If you finish them, try your "-" problems (sometimes when you come back to a problem that seemed impossible you will suddenly realize how to solve it).

Your answer sheet should look something like this after you finish working your easy questions:

- 1.    Ⓐ   ●   Ⓒ   Ⓓ   Ⓔ
- + 2.   Ⓐ   Ⓑ   Ⓒ   Ⓓ   Ⓔ
- 3.    Ⓐ   Ⓑ   ●   Ⓓ   Ⓔ
- 4.   Ⓐ   Ⓑ   Ⓒ   Ⓓ   Ⓔ
- + 5.   Ⓐ   Ⓑ   Ⓒ   Ⓓ   Ⓔ

Since there is now *no penalty for guessing*, be sure to fill in an answer for each question. *Make sure you erase your "+" and "-" marks before your exam is over.* The scoring machine may count extraneous marks as wrong answers.

By using this overall approach, you are bound to achieve your best possible score.