



10 FAQs ABOUT THE GMAT® EXAM

The Graduate Management Admission Test® (GMAT®) is a standardized exam, delivered in English, and used in admissions decisions in nearly 6,000 graduate business and management programs around the world. The GMAT is a valid predictor of academic performance in MBA and other graduate management programs – schools use it because they trust it. The GMAT provides a uniform gauge of academic skills for admissions professionals who must choose students from a huge range of academic programs and undergraduate majors, which helps level the playing field and allows every test taker to demonstrate their skills fairly. Here are some FAQs about the GMAT.

1. What is the format and how long is the exam?

The GMAT is a computer adaptive test designed to measure academic potential for MBA programs and other types of graduate business study, allowing test takers to demonstrate those skills as they apply for admissions. There are four sections: Analytical Writing Assessment (one 30-minute essay), Integrated Reasoning (30 minutes, 12 questions), Quantitative (37 questions), and Verbal (41 questions). Both the Quantitative and Verbal sections are multiple choice sections lasting 75 minutes each. With optional rest breaks, the exam takes approximately four hours. Your scores on the GMAT are reported as: AWA score (0 to 6 in half-point intervals); separate Verbal and Quant scores; a GMAT Total score (derived from your Verbal and Quantitative scores); and a separate Integrated Reasoning score (1 to 8 in single-digit intervals).

2. Does everyone get the same questions?

No. The Quantitative and Verbal sections of the GMAT are computer adaptive, which means that the questions themselves, and the difficulty of individual questions, adjust to the test taker. The Quantitative and Verbal sections start with moderately difficult questions, and in general, the more questions you answer correctly, the harder the test becomes. If you answer incorrectly, your next question will probably be easier. You may not skip

any questions. Neither the Integrated Reasoning or the Analytical Writing sections are computer adaptive, but test takers do see differing questions.

3. What if I don't finish the test?

Preparation, practice, and pace are very important to complete the exam. If you do not complete the exam, your score will be negatively affected, so you should try to finish as many questions as possible. Try not to spend too much time attempting to answer a single question. During your practice and prep, learn your pacing and try your best to stick to it during the exam. You may not skip questions, so if you have to guess, eliminate as many options as you can and choose the remaining answer you think is best. Make an educated guess if you must and monitor your time throughout the test.

4. If I'm in college now and plan to work for a few years before going to business school, should I take the GMAT now or later?

You should consider taking the exam now, while you're used to studying and taking tests. GMAT scores are good for five years, so you'll have lots of time to consider your options and send your scores to programs that interest you. In fact, another benefit to taking the test early is that you have a better chance of being targeted by business schools that are a good match. You can create a profile and sign up to be contacted by business schools at the official website of the GMAT exam, mba.com.

5. Do I have to know extremely high-level English vocabulary or math to take the GMAT?

No. The GMAT tests your analytical and reasoning abilities in writing, reading, quantitative, and integrated reasoning. The GMAT is a test of higher order reasoning, not math or language proficiency skills. The Verbal section includes reading comprehension, critical reasoning, and sentence correction, which tests how well you understand and analyze written English and how you best express an idea. There are no verbal analogies. For the Quantitative section, you need to understand fundamental arithmetic, elementary algebra, and commonly known geometry concepts, but the required skill level is relatively low. Calculators are not allowed, so all the problems are solvable with paper and pencil. The difficulty of the Quantitative section stems from the logic and analytical skills required, not the underlying math skills. Higher-order reasoning skills, like being able to analyze information from a variety of sources in multiple formats, are needed for the Integrated Reasoning section.

THE GMAT EXAM:

- Used in admission decisions by nearly 6,000 graduate business programs at approximately 2,000 schools around the world.
- Available year-round in 112 countries.
- Costs US\$250, includes up to five official score reports sent to programs of your choosing.
- For more information, go to the Official Website of the GMAT Exam: mba.com.

6. Is there a passing score to get into business school?

No. GMAT scores are used in admissions decisions along with undergraduate records, application essays, interviews, letters of recommendation, work experience, and other information. Schools accept students with a wide range of GMAT scores, and the average Total GMAT score is 546; the average score is 4.34 for the Integrated Reasoning section and is reported separately.

7. Does it help to prepare for the GMAT?

Yes. In order for the test to properly reflect your capabilities, you must be familiar with the exam and the question formats. When you register for the test at mba.com, you can download the free GMATPrep® software, which includes two full-length tests with retired questions. You can also purchase study materials to practice for all sections of the exam at mba.com/store.

8. Do I need a business background to take the test?

No. The GMAT exam is a gauge of your academic potential for business study and a test of your higher order reasoning skills and does not assume any business knowledge. Students with many different undergraduate majors take the GMAT exam.

9. Should I retake the test to get a better score?

It depends. You might consider retaking the test if your score seems unusually low compared with your academic record or if you did not finish the test. Those retaking the test—who, by definition, believe they could do better—score on average about 31 points higher on their second sitting, but about 25 percent end up with a lower score.

10. How far in advance do I need to register to take the test?

Most people register between 30 and 60 days before taking the test. Appointments tend to fill up early for Fridays and weekends, and on dates close to large program deadlines. Aside from giving yourself enough time to prepare, you might also want to give yourself enough time to retake if necessary. You can test only once in any 31-day period.

ONLINE RESOURCES

Net Impact Business as UNusual

Net Impact, an international non-profit network of sustainability-minded student leaders and professionals, offers a guide to more than 100 schools demonstrating a commitment to social and environmental responsibility. netimpact.org/learning-resources/publications-guides/business-as-usual

Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business

The leading accreditation agency of business schools in the US and offers a site to peruse business schools accredited by AACSB International in the Best Biz Schools site. aacsb.edu | bestbizschools.com

Executive MBA Council

Overview of programs, alumni spotlights, and a search feature to compare EMBA programs. emba.org/index.htm

Businessweek

Find articles pertaining to business education, b-school life, management chats, and virtual tours of campuses in the US. Visit the Bloomberg Businessweek “Getting In” blog. businessweek.com/business-schools
businessweek.com/bschools/blogs/mba_admissions

Forté Foundation

Resources specifically geared toward women interested in careers in business and management. fortefoundation.org

International Business Times

Articles about getting into business school. ibtimes.com/education

mba.com School Finder

mba.com is a student/adviser site to schedule your GMAT exam, download FREE prep materials, view a calendar of events for school information sessions, and details about the decision to go to business school. The School Finder tool lets students find and compare schools. mba.com | gmat.com

GMATCH Online Fair

Sign up to meet leading international MBA programs at the online GMATCH fair. Learn from interactive panel sessions with admissions and recruiting officers from around the world. mba.com/gmatch

Ask the School Experts Blog

Get your questions about applications, admissions, classroom and career success answered - directly from our insiders. <http://asktheexpert.mba.com/>

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