

CAT 2024 Syllabus

The main sections for CAT Syllabus 2024 include Verbal Ability & Reading Comprehension (VARC), Data Interpretation & Logical Reasoning (DILR) and Quantitative Aptitude (QA). There are a total of 66 questions which will be asked from each section (~20 questions each). Experts suggest referring to books by Arun Sharma and Nishit K Sinha. Moreover, free online videos by top coaching institutes can give you a competitive edge.

Get Familiar With CAT Exam Pattern and Marking Scheme

Every year, over 2 lakh candidates apply for the CAT exam fighting for a total of 5500 seats in the 21 IIMs. CAT Syllabus consists of three main components viz. Verbal Ability and Reading Comprehension (VARC), Data Interpretation and Logical Reasoning (DILR), and Quantitative Ability (QA). Total number of questions for each question is provided in the table below.

Section	Number of Questions	Total Marks
Verbal Ability and Reading Comprehension (VARC)	24	72
Data Interpretation and Logical Reasoning (DILR)	20	60
Quantitative Ability (QA)	22	66
Total	66	198

Clearing CAT is not easy, the 66 questions asked in the exam are challenging. The exam is difficult, and the competition level is very high with only 0.02% of students getting into IIMs. It requires a well-planned and meticulously designed preparation strategy of at least 3-4 months to achieve the 90+ percentile range. Note that the cut-offs for IIMs are usually in the range of 95-99+ percentile.

Things To Consider Before Preparing For CAT

- **Thoroughly Understand the Syllabus:** Understanding the CAT Syllabus is the key to understanding your strengths and weaknesses. Riddhi Dugar, CAT Topper who scored 99.91 percentile in CAT 2023 says- “I finished my syllabus a few months before the exam itself, this allowed to focus more on mocks and understand my strengths and weaknesses”
- **Analyze Past Papers and Trends and Gather Quality Study Materials:** if you have the right study material, you can devise the right study plan. This includes previous year question papers and test series. Anirudh Das who scored 99.81 in CAT 2023 emphasises on tracking your scores in test series. He says- “I relied on keeping track of the scores that I got in each of the tests and check on the topics I wasn’t able to score I used the tracker sheet to analyse my test scores. I think it helps you accelerate your progress, so a definite must-have.”
- **Figure out your schedule:** It is important to understand what time you’ll have no commitments and disturbances. If you are a student or a working professional, you need to find slots and windows in your schedule where you can give your undivided attention to your CAT Preparation. I personally recommend preparing a morning schedule as you’ll find yourself at most ease during the morning.
- **Prepare a detailed study plan:** Once you have your schedule sorted, you can focus on your study plan. Note that Anirudh Das, one of the toppers of CAT 2023 prepared for CAT within 3 months. He cracked one of the most difficult MBA exams in India with 99.81 percentile. Therefore, it doesn’t matter if you are short on time, if one can do it, so can you!
- **Practice Regularly with Mock Tests:** As Kartik Bhageria says, the CAT 2023 topper with 99.99 percentile, mock test is the key. In his interview, he says- “I focused majorly on mock test and question paper to increase my attempt time with better accuracy”. The key is to not get stuck for long on one topic.
- **Maintain Consistency and Discipline:** Practice makes a man perfect but that comes with Consistency and Discipline. Jayant Kochar’s (CAT 2023- 99.62 percentile) success mantra is ‘Consistency is the Key’. He says- ‘Be consistent with the number of hours that you put into your preparation, that is what will keep you going’.

Get Insights From Previous Years' CAT Question Papers

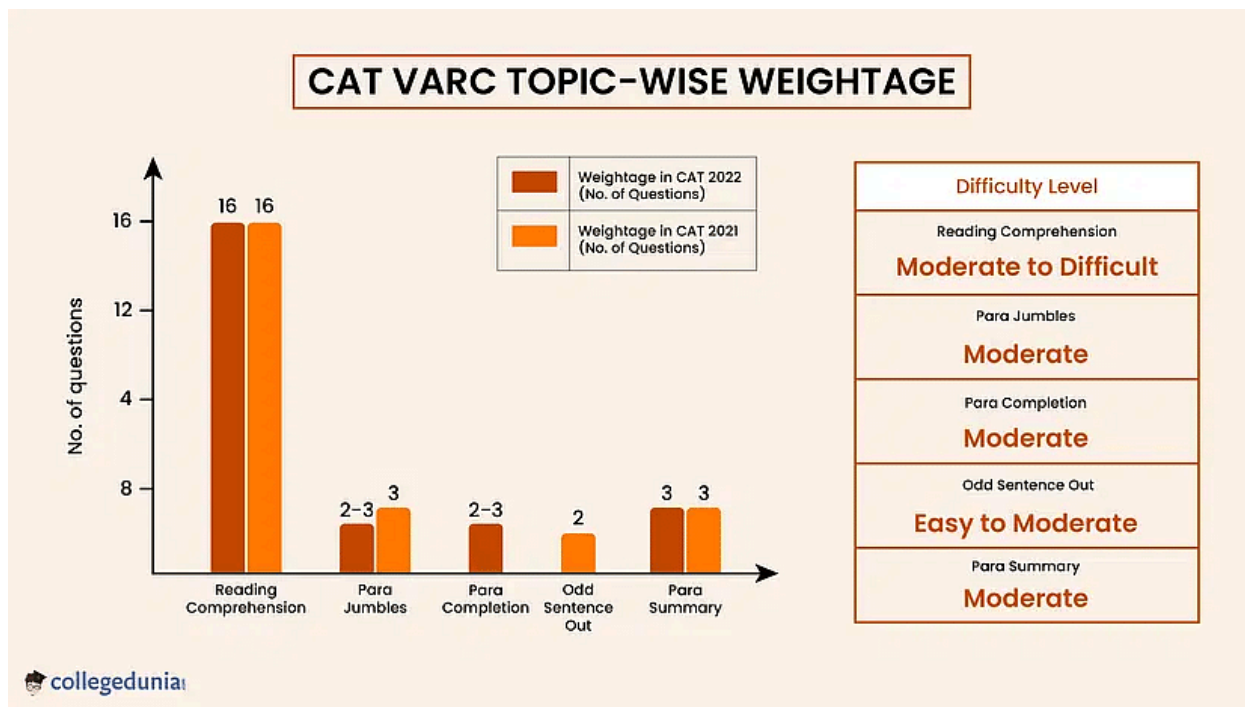
Solving CAT previous year papers in the last 20-30 days before the exam is the best source of revising formulas/ methods of solving questions in less time. Given below are the links to get CAT question papers of previous years for VARC, DILR, and Quant.

Year	CAT Question Paper PDF
CAT 2023 Paper	Download PDF
CAT 2022 Paper	Download PDF
CAT 2021 Paper	Download PDF
CAT 2020 Paper	Download PDF

Break down the CAT Syllabus to Strategise Preparation

1. [Verbal Ability and Reading Comprehension \(VARC\)](#)
2. [Data Interpretation and Logical Reasoning \(DILR\)](#)
3. [Quantitative Ability \(QA\)](#)

Verbal Ability and Reading Comprehension (VARC)



Out of the chapters in CAT VARC syllabus, reading comprehension accounts for maximum questions in the paper every year. There are 8 verbal ability questions in CAT from para jumbles, para summary, para completion. The remaining 16 questions are from reading comprehension. We have provided below CAT verbal ability and reading comprehension syllabus weightage for the last three years.

VARC Topics	CAT 2023	CAT 2022	CAT 2021	CAT 2020
Reading Comprehension	16	16	16	18
Para Jumbles	3	3	3	3
Para Summary	3	3	3	3
Odd Sentence Out/ Para Completion	2	2	2	2

Is VARC difficult? [Learn More](#)

How to prepare for Verbal Ability and Reading Comprehension (VARC)?

Study Material: You can download CAT VARC study material from the links provided below. The free study material for CAT VARC syllabus includes concepts, shortcut methods, sample questions, and more.

Para Jumbles	Para Completion
Error Detection	Reading Comprehension
Phrase Modifiers	Sentence Completion
Type of Clauses	CAT VARC Solved Sample Questions

Preparation Strategy: CAT VARC is of moderate to high difficulty, especially the RC passages. To score 99 percentile in CAT VARC, you need to focus on these 3 points each during your preparation and on the exam day-

During Preparation

- Focus on increasing your on-screen reading speed: Read more e-books, e-magazines, articles on various topics.
- Solve reading comprehension passages and para jumbles from previous year papers.
- Join a coaching institute's mock test series- CL, TIME, IMS, etc.

On Exam Day

- After reading the RC passage once, go through the questions to skim important areas for answering.
- You have 40 minutes to answer 24 questions, however, you should consider these 40 minutes to answer your target of about 15-16 questions for a 99+ percentile.
- Mark difficult questions for attempting later in case you have time left. [More VARC Preparation Tips](#)

Data Interpretation and Logical Reasoning (DILR)

In the last 2 years, an equal number of questions have been asked from CAT logical reasoning syllabus and CAT data interpretation syllabus. With no specific topics fixed for CAT DILR syllabus by IIM, it is essential to cover all the important topics based on the analysis of last 5 years papers and trends.

DILR Topics	Question Sets
Arrangements (Matrix, Grid, Seating, etc.)	14-15
Logical Reasoning Based DI	10
Venn Diagram	7
Tables and Missing Data	6
Games and Tournament	6-8
Caselets	5-7
Order and Ranking	3
Network and Route Maps/ Charts	3
Maxima-Minima	2
Miscellaneous	11

Previously, the ratio of questions from LR and DI varied significantly every year. In 2020, DI had 16 questions and LR only 8 while In 2019 and 2018, LR had 20 while DI had only 12. You can check the syllabus for Logical Reasoning and Data Interpretation in the table below:

Logical Reasoning Syllabus	Data Interpretation Syllabus
Games and Tournaments	Tables
Team Formations	Pie Chart
Seating Arrangements	Bar Graphs and Column Graphs
Order & Ranking	Data Caselets
Direct Sense Test	Route & Network Diagrams
Logical Deductions	Line and Trend Charts
Data Arrangement Puzzles	Scatter Plot
Syllogisms	Bubble Charts

How to Prepare for Data Interpretation and Logical Reasoning (DILR)?

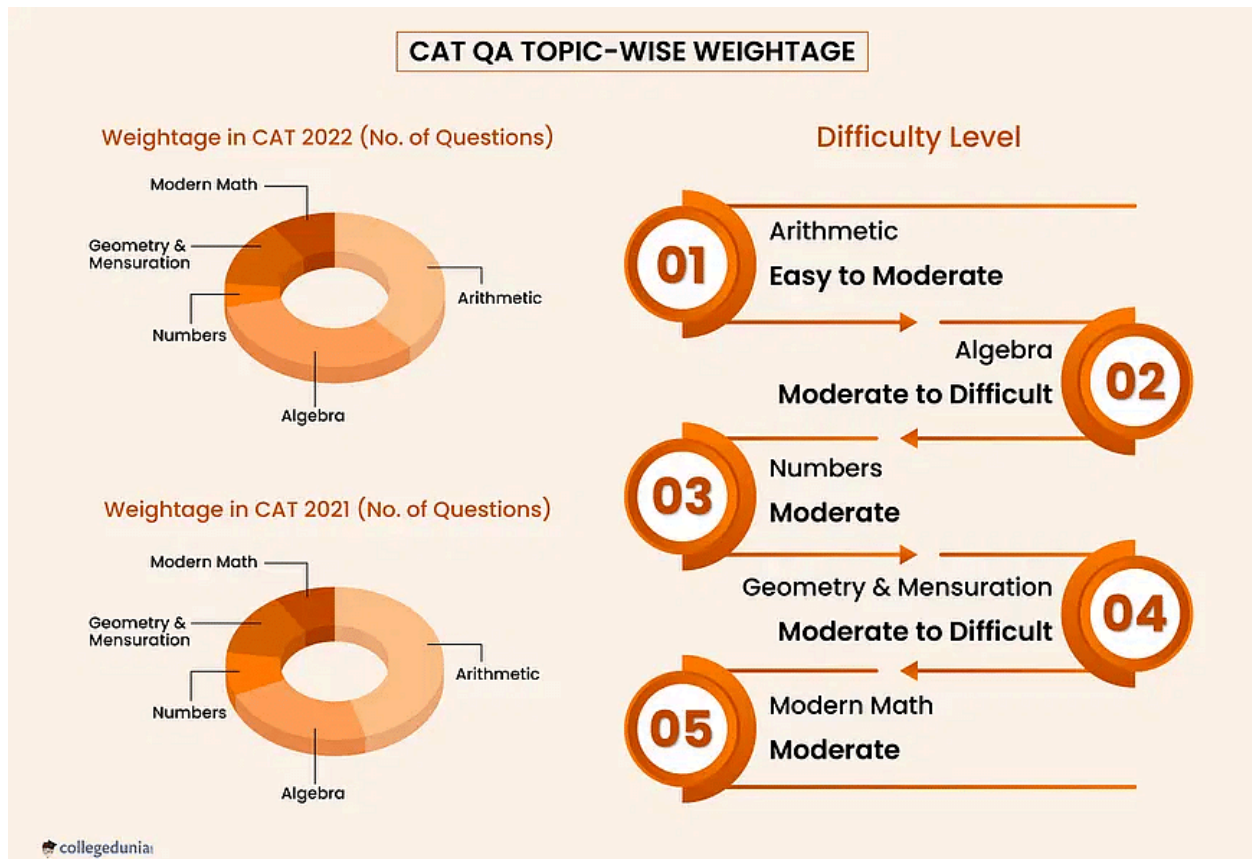
To prepare for logical reasoning and data interpretation for CAT, the only mantra is practice.

- First go through CAT DILR books by Arun Sharma
- Then watch some youtube videos on how to approach questions from a particular topic
- Finally, just start with attempting questions from CAT previous year papers and afterwards take mock tests. [Get More DILR Preparation Tips](#)

You can download CAT DILR study material from the links provided below. The free study material for CAT DILR syllabus includes concepts, shortcut methods, sample questions, and more.

Seating Arrangement	Puzzles
Venn Diagram for Probability	Blood Relations
Combination Graphs	Bar Graph
Pie Charts and Tables	Statement and Assumptions
Calendar	Clocks
Syllogisms	CAT Solved Questions of DILR

Quantitative Aptitude (QA)



CAT Syllabus for Quantitative Aptitude is divided into Arithmetic, Algebra, Geometry, Number System, and Modern Math. Important topics for each section includes:

CAT Quant Syllabus	Important Topics
Arithmetic	Time, Speed, and Distance
	Time & Work
	Profit, Loss, and Discount
	Percentages, Ratio & Proportion

	Simple Interest & Compound Interest
	Mixtures & Alligations
Algebra	Quadratic and Linear Equations
	Maxima-Minima
	Basic Algebraic Identities
	Inequalities
	Functions and Graph Modifications
	Polynomials
Geometry & Mensuration	Circles
	Triangles
	Parallelograms
	Polygons
	Lines and Angles
	Coordinate Geometry

	3D Figures- Cone, Cylinder, Sphere, Cube, Cuboid
	Mensuration
Number System	Cyclicity
	Remainder Theorems
	Units Digit
	HCF-LCM
	Surds and Indices
	Divisibility and Factorization
Modern Math	Permutation & Combination
	Probability
	Set Theory (Venn Diagrams)
	Binomial Theorem
	Arithmetic Progressions
	Geometric Progressions

Out of the chapters in CAT QA syllabus, arithmetic and algebra account for about 70% weightage in CAT question paper every year. We have provided below CAT quantitative aptitude syllabus weightage for the last three years. [Is Quant Hard? Learn More](#)

Quant Topics	CAT 2022	CAT 2021	CAT 2020
Arithmetic	8-9	7-10	10
Algebra	4-9	6-8	6-8
Geometry & Mensuration	3-4	3-5	5-6
Number System	1-3	1-2	2-3
Modern Math	0-3	1	0-2
Overall	22	22	26

Study Material: You can download CAT Quant study material from the links provided below. The free study material for CAT quant syllabus includes concepts, shortcut methods, sample questions, and more.

Arithmetic	Algebra
Geometry	Number System
Mensuration	Modern Math
Venn Diagrams	Shortcut Methods for CAT Quant

How to Prepare for Quantitative Aptitude?

To improve your score in CAT quantitative aptitude, keep these things in mind during preparation:

- Make notes of the important formulae and shortcut techniques for last month's revision.
- There are various free videos on youtube that can provide you with CAT quant shortcut methods and techniques and topic-wise tricks to save time.
- To improve your calculation speed, practice mental math or vedic math.
- Solve a question multiple times using multiple approaches to know the most efficient method for you.
- Take mock tests every week and analyze your performance. Most coaching centers also provide the best approach you should use for answering the questions in less time. [More Quant Preparation Tips](#)

Get 99 percentile in Quant

To get a 99 percentile in the CAT quant section, you need to make sure you get at least 13-14 questions right with not more than 1-2 questions incorrect. The points to keep in mind while attempting CAT quant paper on the exam day is:

- Do not spend more than 2-2.5 minutes on any question. Leave it if you cannot answer.
- Choose questions wisely- do not try to attempt every question.
- Avoid attempting questions you are not confident about. Negative marking should be avoided as much as possible.

Study Tips And Strategies by Subject Matter Experts

It requires a well-planned and meticulously designed preparation strategy of at least 3-4 months to achieve the 90+ percentile range. Note that the cut-offs for IIMs are usually in the range of 95-99+ percentile. Follow some of the tips to succeed:

- Solve questions asked in the previous year to be exam-ready.
- Taking CAT mocks is inevitable if you wish to crack the exam. Without attempting mocks, it is not possible to manage time and questions on exam day.
- Develop reading habits- either online articles, newspapers, magazines, textbooks, etc.
- Watch YouTube videos to get short tricks and methods to solve questions in less time.

Even an average student can get 90 percentile in CAT. It all depends on your preparation and exam day strategy. If you have covered topics of CAT syllabus as per weightage and follow these guidelines on the exam day, you can score above 90 percentile in CAT:

- Start with questions from topics that you find easy.
- Attempting the complete paper should not be your target. A good attempt in CAT to get you above 95%ile is:
 - VARC- 13-15 questions
 - DILR- 9-11 questions
 - Quant- 10-12 questions
- Avoid spending more than 2 minutes on one question.

Books We Found Helpful for CAT Preparation

Subject	Books	Author
Verbal Ability and Reading Comprehension	How to Prepare for Verbal Ability and Reading Comprehension for CAT	Arun Sharma
	Verbal Ability and Reading Comprehension For CAT	Nishit K Sinha
	Mastering the Verbal Ability for CAT Common Admission Test	Ajay Singh
Data Interpretation and Logical Reasoning (DILR)	How to Prepare for Logical Reasoning for CAT	Arun Sharma
	How to Prepare for Data Interpretation for CAT	Arun Sharma
	Logical Reasoning and Data Interpretation for CAT	Nishit K Sinha
Quantitative Ability	How to Prepare for Quantitative Aptitude for CAT	Arun Sharma

	Quantitative Aptitude For CAT	Nishit K Sinha
	Quantitative Aptitude Quantum CAT	Sarvesh Verma

Common Mistakes to Avoid During CAT Preparation

1. Not starting Early: A thumb rule for CAT preparation time is a minimum of 500 hours. If you put in even 3 hours of hard work and preparation, all you need is 5.5 months of preparation. So if you start early, you are not going to regret the extra time you have at your disposal.
2. Not Strategizing Your Preparation: You can achieve more with less effort if you work smartly. Assess your strengths and weaknesses and devise a plan targeting your weak spots. Once you have your plan you won't be in the dark.
3. Not Taking/Analyzing Mock Test: For any competitive exam, the best way to test yourself is by giving mocks. It stimulates a similar environment as there in the CAT Exam. While taking the mock, make sure you analyse yourself adequately and work on your mistakes.
4. Not doing Revisions: Short-term memory in an average human being lasts for about an hour. You need revisions of topics you study to convert them into permanent storage in your brain as part of long-term memories. Therefore, it is important you revise the topics every now and then.
5. Skipping Topics: It is only okay to skip topics if you're supplementing it with loads of mock tests, if not you will regret the 4 marks you could have scored if you hadn't skipped that particular topic.

Expert Advice and Insights by Toppers

Based on subject matter experts and toppers' advice, we have devised the most important things to keep in mind while preparing for the CAT. They are as follows-

1. Time Bound Practice
2. Avoid Referring to too many books
3. Mock tests are the King
4. Don't stick to one topic for a long
5. Seek Experts
6. Build Peer Groups

CAT Toppers' Strategy

CAT Topper	CAT Toppers Strategy and Interview
Kartik Bhageria (CAT 2023, 99.99%ile)	'advises aspirants to maintain consistency in their preparation.'
Parul Arora (CAT 2022, 99.93%ile)	Start preparing early, likely in April with a primary focus on clearing basic concepts followed by regular practice. Check CAT 2022 Topper Parul's Full Interview
Kushagra (CAT 2022, 99.7%ile)	Practice on a regular basis and do not forget to analyze your mistakes. Check CAT 2022 Topper Kushagra's Full Interview
Ankan Biswas (CAT 2022, 99.9%ile)	Attempt all sorts of mock tests to get efficient. Prioritize your strengths and then move on to the weaker sections. Check CAT 2022 Topper Ankan's Full Interview
Chirag Gupta (CAT 2021, 100%ile)	"I focused on getting my basics right at the beginning of the preparations. I focused on doing only easy questions first, and later attempted the harder ones. Be honest with yourselves during the preparation. It is important for you to not overestimate as well as underestimate your understanding of the concepts."
Kshitiz Singhal (CAT 2020, 99.99%ile)	"I started my preparation by knowing about the CAT exam pattern and syllabus. Once I completed the syllabus, I started taking mock tests. I bought study materials and took a mock test series from noted institutes for practice purposes. My suggestion for the aspirants is to work on your fundamentals, speed and accuracy."
Somansh Chordia (CAT 2019, 100%ile)	"I believe what helped me a lot while CAT preparation was the fact that I loved CAT's pattern and realised that the kind of skills I needed to develop. It's good and important to compare your performance with others as essentially it's a competitive exam but one should not get demoralised or overconfident in the process. I strongly believe in the idea that we can achieve only what we can imagine and actually believe in. So believe in yourself and the fact that wonders are possible."

Frequently Asked Questions

Ques. What is the syllabus for CAT 2024?

Ans. The syllabus for CAT includes quantitative aptitude, logical reasoning, verbal ability, reading comprehension, and data interpretation. MBA CAT Syllabus for each of these sections further include various topics of study.

Ques. Is there any official syllabus for CAT?

Ans. IIMs (the CAT Conducting Body) does not release the official syllabus on their website. You can only find the sectional syllabus as per the norms of CAT including VARC, DILR and QA. You can find the detailed CAT Syllabus here in this page.

Ques. What's a good score in CAT?

Ans. A score above 100 is a good CAT score as per the latest pattern. With CAT score above 100, your chances of getting 99+ percentile are higher.

Good CAT Score	CAT Percentile
104-108	99.5+
98-102	99+
98-98.5	99
90-93	98+

Ques. Which IIM is the hardest to get into?

Ans. With this idea, almost all IIMs are hard to get into, but the older ones acronymed as IIM BLACKIs are the hardest to get into. They include:

- [IIM Bangalore](#)
- [IIM Lucknow](#)
- [IIM Ahmedabad](#)
- [IIM Calcutta](#)
- [IIM Kozhikode](#)
- [IIM Indore](#)

Ques. Which IIM sets the toughest CAT paper?

Ans. Each year, CAT exam is conducted by one of the top 6 IIMs on a rotational basis. As per the analysis, CAT 2023, conducted by IIM Lucknow, was the toughest of all the CAT examinations. Also, the largest number of registrations that took place were during the CAT 2023 exam only.

Ques. How long should a candidate study in a day to get good grades in the entrance exam?

Ans. Regularity is important while preparing for CAT. Preparing a schedule that is convenient for you and helps you score better should be implemented. Candidates should not over-pressurize themselves by studying for many hours, but regularly studying should be in practice.

Ques. I am scared of Maths. How do I prepare for Quant in CAT?

Ans. Start with the basic concepts and refer to Arun Sharma for initial preparation. Develop a habit of solving questions regularly and prepare alternate solving techniques for them. If well practiced through Mocks and previous year question papers candidates can score a good percentile in Quant.

Ques. Does having a full-time job affect preparing for CAT exam?

Ans. With the proper strategy in place having a full-time job will not affect your preparation but not to a great extent. CAT preparation can be done parallel to your work. But, you must build a schedule and stick to it to devote the required time for the preparation. Prior experience added to your CV can only benefit from getting admission.