



CAT 2011

~ Experience, Precautions, Strategy ~

The CAT 2011 exam has only two sections, instead of three as in the earlier versions of CAT. The exam window will remain open till 18 November, 2011.

CAT 2011, the 20-day long computer based test for admission to the IIMs and 150+ other B-schools, is being delivered in 36 cities across the country. A total of 2.05 lakh students will be taking the CAT 2011 this year in the entire test period of 20 days. It is said that forty different sets of question papers have been prepared for CAT this year. The results of CAT 2011 will be declared on January 11.

Given below is a detailed experience-sharing from a test-taker's point of view:

- The CAT 2011 testing process has commenced from 22nd Oct.
- Students across test centres in India are reporting a technically smooth and glitch-free testing experience
- Contrary to popular perception and experience of Indian examinations and examinees, the CAT test centres are not madly crowded
- Please ensure that you check all the data submitted while filling the online CAT admission form (name, date of birth etc.)
- As a precaution, ensure that you carry at least two photo IDs in original (for ex: Pan card and passport, or Pan card and Voter ID card)
- For the first slot (morning), the process starts early. One has to be there by 8:30 am sharp.
- Thus, you have to be at the test centre 1.5 hrs before the test. You have to wait for the supervisors to start their 'checking of documents' process
- It happens carefully, slowly, one candidate at a time
- Then you will be ushered into the test centre – at times a long walk from the main gate – to the biometric confirmation console
- Before this begins, a physical checking of your person will take place, and everything carried by you (including handkerchiefs and combs) may be taken away and put in a plastic pouch (with a token number – the token given to you). Of course, mobiles too are taken away!
- Again, the Biometric process is careful and slow, where candidates go in one by one, and sitting in pairs of two (at some centres), their biometric data capture is done
- A camera mounted on the PC takes the picture (so make sure you take a bath in the morning!), and a fingerprint reader takes multiple readings of your index finger of both hands
- Once the Biometric supervisor is confident of the process completion, he will allot you your PC station number, and direct you to the computer lab
- Other supervisors/invigilators will physically guide you to the computer allotted to you
- Once you are seated, you will be given a laminated sheet - 'Testing Guidelines and Regulations' – with 23 points mentioned covering all aspects of your expected behaviour over next 3 hours
- You will then be given 8 blank rough sheets, and 2 pencils
- Then your username and password is entered by the Exam Invigilator (you do not have to enter these), and your name and photo will pop up on the screen (this is the photo that was clicked a while ago)
- You will also see two buttons – One for "15 minutes Exam Tutorial" and another for "Start Test"
- Don't get too excited! You are not to start anything now. Wait for their instructions
- Once they ask you, please click on the "Tutorials" button, and start the 15 min explanation of the testing software
- It's a good idea to carefully go through all the 13 odd slides of this tutorial
- Once the tutorial ends, wait
- The Exam Invigilator will (may) come to your station and click the "Start Test" button

- The test gets loaded now. It may take some time – so don't panic!
- Once the test (CAT 2011) loads, the Non-Disclosure Agreement appears on the screen
- It is a stern warning that you must not discuss any particular content and question of the test you are about to give, with anyone else anywhere ever! If you do so, stern action may be taken
- Once you accept that (got a choice?), the test starts
- The first section in CAT 2011 is of 70 minutes, and is titled "Mathematical Aptitude and Data Interpretation"
- The 30 questions appear in front of you, ready to determine the quality of next 30 years of your life!
- These 30 questions are all mixed up; there is no fixed order
- Different candidates get different orders of questions, and also some different questions
- A timer is slowly ticking away on top right of the screen, reminding you of all the computerised tests you took at your training/coaching class!
- Keep solving the questions, as per your convenience. You can keep moving back and forth in this section
- Rough work (which you will need to do) has to be carefully managed in the sheets given, with a pencil
- Hence, it is a good idea that while practising with various tests at home, you use a pencil, and not a pen
- Be gentle with the pencil – if the edge breaks, you may not get multiple replacements from the Invigilator (you cannot carry sharpeners)
- Use the "Review" button intelligently to work faster – it allows you to directly reach the questions that you tried to solve but had to leave in between (otherwise you have to start from question 1 and click "next" again and again till you reach the unsolved question)
- The "Mark" and "Unmark" buttons do not have any impact on your scoring – once you have chosen an option by clicking the mouse on the chosen option, it is the completion of your answering process
- As you near the end of your time limit of 70 minutes, 5 minutes prior a warning pop up will remind you to wind up your work now
- Another reminder appears just 1 minute prior to end-of-section
- As the time runs out, the section closes automatically
- You are now supposed to start the second section – it is "English Language and Logical Reasoning"
- Questions start appearing as before, in no fixed order (i.e. Mixed order)
- You may again need to use the rough sheets to solve the logical reasoning questions – so do not exhaust all the sheets in the first section itself! Keep some pages blank
- Again, the 70 minutes start ticking away, and finally, the two reminder pop-ups, and end of section 2
- The computer then thanks you for writing the CAT 2011, and reminds you that results will be available from 11th January 2012 onwards
- Don't get excited. They won't allow you to leave immediately
- After a few minutes, the invigilator(s) will return your Admit Card to you, collect the rough sheets and pencils from you, and then one by one, will ask you to leave
- Don't forget to collect your belongings by giving the token to the security guard
- Overall, you took 4.5 hours to finish the whole process
- Remember – you need to have stamina to give your best shot. Hence, take lots of rest in the 3-4 days prior to your testing slot

~ Kar ke dikhayenge ~