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The Official Guide To The GMAT Review 2017 Bundle + Question Bank + Video



Synopsis

The Official Guide for GMAT Review 2017 (9781119347620) was previously published as The Official Guide for GMAT Review 2017 (9781119253884). Errors were found in the original printing that have been corrected in subsequent printings. Otherwise, all other content in both 2017 versions is identical. If you have already purchased a copy of the original The Official Guide for GMAT Review 2017 (9781119253884), you can access an errata (correction) document as well as additional information at: <http://wileyactual.com/gmat>

The Official Guide for GMAT Review 2017 Bundle Ace the GMAT with the only official study guides from the creators of the exam Everything you need to prepare for the GMAT exam in one package. Get all three of the Official GMAT study guides with new content and actual retired questions from the GMAT exam. The set bundle includes The Official Guide for GMAT Review 2017, The Official Guide for GMAT Quantitative Review 2017 and The Official Guide for GMAT Verbal Review 2017. All three guides come with exclusive access to an online question bank and videos with insight and tips on GMAT preparation from previous test-takers and the officials who create the test.

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Customer Reviews

I am a Harvard grad, 99% scorer and professional GMAT tutor with 16 years of experience, and am fairly obsessed with this test. I also take the GMAT at least once a year to stay up-to-date, including a recent score of 770 (48 V/47 Q). The 2017 GMAT Official Guide Bundle receives my strong recommendation because it provides a great source of real GMAT questions at a decent price (it

normally retails for about \$45). Also, all of the typos from the previous 2017 editions have now been fixed. One aspect of these books that you must understand is that they are not meant to teach you GMAT test-taking strategy. For that, look elsewhere (see product links below). However, they include some of the very best practice materials available, straight from the test-maker, and although the answer explanations are often convoluted, they are still useful in understanding how the GMAC thinks. Why are the 2017 Official Guides the very best place to start your GMAT preparation, other than the free GMATPrep software? Because the questions in these books are super-realistic. They are just like the questions on the real GMAT, because these books are written by the test-maker and use actual, retired GMAT questions. Don't waste your time and money practicing on questions made by any other companies--these are merely inferior imitations of the real thing. If you must use other materials for test strategy, then that's fine, and in most cases necessary, but try your best to stick to official questions whenever possible. Pro tip: You can take each of the 6 GMAT Prep CATs more than once, because the GMAT is an adaptive test (it adjusts the difficulty level of later questions based on your previous responses). There are about 4 to 16 times as many questions in the GMAC's question pool as there are in any given test, which means that every test you take will be different. Tests 1 and 2 draw from a (gigantic!) pool of about 1,500 questions, and tests 3, 4, 5, and 6 draw from a more modest pool of about 400 questions each. To re-take your GMAT Prep tests, click "reset" in the lower-left hand corner of the GMAT Prep software window, but make sure to take screenshots of your previous test sessions beforehand--frequent screenshots are a good idea anyway because the software is prone to crashing and losing your data. For your screenshots, use either the "Print Screen" (Windows Key + PrtScn) button on a PC or (Shift + Command + 3) on a Mac. It's important to remember that although these physical GMAT books are extremely helpful, the GMAT is still a computer-based test, which means that you should still spend at least 50% of your preparation time reading a screen instead of reading a piece of paper. For this reason, consider buying the Kindle versions of the guides, as well as making full use of the computer-based practice options (Exam Packs, Question Packs, Mobile App, etc.) available from the GMAC (see detailed product links below). Or, if you prefer to buy the physical books, then you can also use the access codes located in the sealed pouches in the back covers of the books to access a free web-based version of the books, where you can try most of the questions in the books in an online format, and organize quizzes by question type / difficulty level (easy, medium, hard). You will also have to create a Wiley account, which is mostly painless. I strongly suggest that you save your login information on your browser so that you won't have to enter your username / password every time you access the Wiley site.

THE GREAT DEBATE: THE PRINT

BOOKS + (INCLUDED) ACCESS TO THE FREE ONLINE QUESTION BANK FROM WILEY vs. THE (not yet available) KINDLE VERSION OF THE BOOKS

In this corner

First of all, remember that you should be spending lots of time exploring the GMAT Prep software (both the Exam Packs and the Question Packs) during your studies, in addition to the questions in these books / the Wiley question bank, especially if you are going for a score of 700 or above. Purchasing the print version of the books as a discount bundle seems like the obvious answer for many old-school GMAT tutors such as myself, since it also offers the option to use the online Wiley question bank, which includes nearly every question in the Official Guides in a computer-based format. Why not have the best of both worlds (print and digital) instead of digital only? The Kindle version of the books is accessible not just for Kindle owners but on nearly any device with a screen. They are exact copies of the physical books, in digital, searchable form. It's very easy to navigate among the different chapters of the books, for example, and to review individual questions. It's also helpful for Skype GMAT tutoring with a tutor like me, despite some formatting issues with equations, and it allows you to hold the entire Official Guide bundle in the palm of your hand. The Wiley question bank (accessible through the codes located in the back covers of the books) includes 6 months access to a question bank where you can try random questions from the Official Guides through the Wiley website. You can sort your questions by difficulty level / question type, and answer explanations are provided. You can also choose different modes of study, including practice mode and exam mode, and you can also name your sessions for later review. When the question bank works (at the moment it is down for maintenance, and any interface dependent on an internet browser is found to malfunction sometimes), it works quite well. The question bank is far from perfect, however, and the Kindle version clearly has its advantages, so this is not an obvious choice. In some regards, the Kindle version is superior, because the Wiley interface is not nearly as easy-to-use. Also, if you don't have internet access, then the question bank is inaccessible, in contrast to the Kindle version, which is basically a static, searchable PDF that lives on your device instead of in the cloud. There are definitely advantages and disadvantages to both, but I think the print + Wiley combo is the way to go for most old-schoolers like me, who grew up in the era of paper tests and taking lots of notes. Keep in mind that if you don't have internet access for a while, you can still access the roughly 1,500 questions on Exams 1 and 2 of the free GMAT Prep software. I do have a Kindle, and I even use the Kindle versions of the books on my computer during my Skype sessions with private students, but I still enjoy the tangible feeling of having the physical books. That being said, the GMAT is still a computer-based test, so I would advise you to spend at least 50% of your preparation time reading

a screen instead of a book. It all depends on how you plan to use the books, their current costs, and your personal moral code. Here are some key factors:

- 1) Wiley requires internet access, Kindle does not (other than the initial download, of course).
- 2) Wiley allows you to select the difficulty level (E/M/H) of the questions, Kindle does not (remember, it's just a PDF-style replica of the print books, which are only roughly ordered in terms of difficulty).
- 3) Kindle is quick and convenient, Wiley is not (you have to log into the question bank through your browser instead of a desktop application, you cannot access specific questions on demand, it has a clunky user interface).
- 4) Wiley requires an actual computer, and the Kindle does not (it will work through the app on your cell phone, etc.).
- 5) Like the GMATPrep Software (Exam Packs and Question Packs), Wiley resembles the actual GMAT exam more closely than does the Kindle version.
- 6) Kindle is (probably) better for the environment. But remember that all those glowing screens use a lot of energy too.
- 7) If you buy the Kindle version, then you will spend 100% of your time looking at a screen. If you buy the print + Wiley combo you will only be looking at a screen for about 50% of the time (GMATPrep software + Wiley question bank). In my opinion, 50/50 is better because we are human beings and thus subject to screen fatigue. Studying with paper versions of the books can be less stressful and is more convenient for taking notes, studying outside, etc.
- 8) Not a big deal, but the books are offered as a discount bundle on and the Kindle versions are not.
- 9) Perhaps most importantly, the Wiley bank is included, for free, with your purchase of the physical books. If you plan to do most of your work on the computer, then you could think of the physical books as a bonus to the online question bank, instead of the other way around. Some GMAT tutors are of the opinion that you should be working off a screen nearly all of the time that you prepare for the GMAT. If you agree with this assessment, then the Kindle version is probably the best option for you, since it's a lot better organized than is the Wiley question bank. However, I am of the opinion that working out of a book 50% of the time is fine, and in fact better for many, so I'm more inclined to recommend the print + Wiley combo for it's the best of both worlds (print and computer) quality. I also think that the random nature of the Wiley question bank (you cannot access specific questions by number, no answer key, etc.), one of its major weaknesses, is also one of its strengths, since this random question format is closer to the format of the GMAT itself, and the format of the GMAT Prep software (which contains far harder questions than nearly any question in the Official Guides!). However, don't expect the Wiley question banks to be a digital replica of the physical books. If you require that, then you'll need to purchase the Kindle version. To state the obvious, the best thing to have is both. But if I had to choose one, I would probably go with the print books and Wiley question bank. Finally, it should also be noted that the Reading

Comprehension portions of the book are nearly impossible to study on the Kindle, due to the large number of digital "page flips" required to go back and forth between the questions and the passages. Instead of giving you a paper and pencil, the GMAC also requires you to use a water-based marker and a laminated sheet like this one: *Manhattan GMAT Test Simulation Booklet w/ Marker*. I don't recommend always using the laminated sheet when you study, because it's messy and harder to keep track of your notes that way. But it makes sense to at least use it a few times, just to get the feel of it before test day.

OVER 130 NEVER-BEFORE SEEN QUESTIONS / OVER 45 NEVER-BEFORE-SEEN QUESTIONS

• Approximately 15% of the questions in these 2017 editions of the OG are new to the Official Guides. However, it is worth noting that "never before seen" is not entirely true, since all of these questions are retired questions from past GMAT computer exams (it says so right there on the cover). A more accurate description would be "never before seen on paper," but that probably wouldn't sell as many copies. For those of you who already have copies of the 2016 Bundle, here is a full list of the new questions in the 2017 version of the GMAT Official Guides:

MAIN OG / WHITE BOOK (131 new questions):

- Integrated Reasoning (8 new questions): 9, 10, 11, 21, 28, 35, 41 & 43
- Problem Solving (36 new questions): 2, 5, 7, 13, 19, 23, 32, 44, 45, 47, 50, 53, 62, 68, 69, 70, 71, 72, 88, 89, 91, 96, 100, 109, 116, 120, 123, 127, 128, 132, 140, 152, 192, 194, 201 & 209.
- Data Sufficiency (26 new questions): 231, 237, 243, 252, 254, 255, 258, 259, 262, 274, 275, 278, 283, 288, 291, 294, 304, 305, 310, 315, 316, 325, 327, 332, 347 & 359.
- Sentence Correction (21 new questions): 668, 669, 683, 684, 685, 688, 696, 697, 703, 704, 705, 724, 725, 738, 739, 740, 747, 762, 771, 799, & 803.
- Critical Reasoning (19 new questions): 546, 549, 562, 571, 582, 587, 592, 599, 607, 610, 612, 616, 617, 618, 619, 627, 629, 661, 666
- Reading Comprehension (21 new questions): 415-423, 427-430, 460-462, 529-533

QUANT REVIEW GUIDE / BLUE BOOK (47 new questions):

- Problem Solving (26 new questions): 1, 10, 11, 16, 19, 24, 38, 53, 59, 63, 68, 71, 76, 77, 79, 83, 85, 87, 89, 114, 136, 137, 139, 145, 158, 164
- Data Sufficiency (19 new questions): 184, 185, 186, 189, 194, 199, 202, 208, 211, 218, 219, 222, 225, 230, 236, 262, 295, 297, 300

VERBAL REVIEW GUIDE / PINK BOOK (45 new questions):

- Sentence Correction (17 new questions): 189, 190, 200, 210, 211, 216, 241, 243, 245, 250, 254, 258, 260, 279, 281, 296, 299
- Critical Reasoning (13 new questions): 106, 110, 117, 124, 133, 139, 146, 153, 158, 166, 172, 180, 188
- Reading Comprehension (15 new questions): 11-16, 46-54

--(For explanations and classifications of every question in the 2016 Official Guide, google "GMAT Club Guide to the GMAT Official Guide 2016.") Are the questions from the 2017 versions any better than the questions they are replacing from the 2016 edition? No, not really. All of the questions in

the books are old questions from past GMAT exams (retired questions), so there is no guarantee that these 220+ new questions are either any newer or any more helpful than are the questions they supplant from the 2016 Editions of the OGs. Moreover, early adopters of the 2017 editions will find that certain questions are so new that it's hard to access online explanations until GMAT tutors like me (GMATClub username: mcelroytutoring) start posting them, which could take weeks or even months. While I will concede that the questions in this book are roughly ordered from easy to hard, there are some curious places where low-numbered questions are quite difficult for most of my students, and vice-versa. Thus, I think that we can't necessarily take GMAC at their word here, especially since there has already been evidence in past official guides of the GMAC moving the exact same questions to radically different locations in the books, which suggests that we shouldn't trust the GMAC at its word in this regard. If the questions are truly ordered from easy to hard, for example, then why would a question numbered in the 30s suddenly show up numbered in the 90s in the next year's edition?

A WARNING ABOUT THE DIFFICULTY LEVEL OF THE QUESTIONS IN THE OFFICIAL GUIDES: It is important to note that the difficulty level of questions in these books is sufficient for most test takers, but is admittedly a bit lacking on the high end. High scores take note: If you are aiming for a GMAT score of 700-plus, then you should spend more time practicing on questions from the GMATPrep software and Exams Pack 1 and 2, which offer more difficult questions that will bear a closer resemblance to the questions you will see on your actual test day. Remember: the GMAT is an adaptive exam. If you answer a lot of questions right, then the test keeps getting harder (as your score rises), and if you answer a lot of questions wrong, then the test keeps getting easier (as your score lowers). And the questions on the test are front-loaded so that the first 1/3 of questions have a much larger impact on your score than does the final 1/3 of questions. (There is a SEVERE penalty for not finishing the sections, however, so make sure that you give yourself time to answer all the questions before time expires, even if they are just random guesses. At all costs, make sure to answer every question before time expires.) If you do run out of official GMAT Prep computer tests (the first two are free, and you can buy four more from GMAC), then I can recommend the Manhattan GMAT CATs (computer adaptive tests). Just buy one book from the Manhattan GMAT series, and it will give you access to all 6 online CATs: GMAT Sentence Correction (Manhattan Prep GMAT Strategy Guides) For free video explanations to all the math questions in these books, google "GMAT Quantum," or if you prefer to read your explanations, then just try google searching the first few lines of your question's text. I would also strongly recommend that you check out informative websites

such as GMAT Club, Beat the GMAT, and Atlantic GMAT, and that you consider retaining the services of a qualified private tutor such as myself.

HOW TO STUDY FOR THE GMAT:

My core philosophy: use official GMAT questions only! It's OK if you end up memorizing all the solutions and answers that's part of the point, as is repetition of certain questions until you fully understand them. There are thousands of real GMAT questions available from the GMAC, so it's unlikely that you will ever run out. Imitation questions are not quite the same, so why settle for anything less than the real deal? For purposes of brevity, I am only including a one-month study plan, but the truth is that most students need at least 3-6 months to study for the GMAT. To turn this 1-month study plan into a 3-month or 6-month study plan, simply break the study plan into smaller increments. Ideally, your studying should be done at regular intervals throughout the day, instead of one large chunk, to maximize retention. Take frequent breaks, but also try to get used to working for 4 hours straight at least once a week, to simulate test conditions. If you don't have time to take a full section, then don't use the GMAT Prep Exams, because you will need to finish the entire test in order to review the questions afterward. Even if you only want to try a Quant section, for example, you will have to click through the rest of the test, or wait for time to expire, which is annoying. Better to use the Question Packs, the OGs or the Mobile App for smaller increments of time. Also, if you're a Mac user like me, then you should know that the "Escape" button does not work on the GMAT Prep software. Instead, try (Command + Tab) to switch to other open applications. Don't forget to utilize GMAT club for explanations to any questions whose explanations in the books don't make sense. Just google search the first few lines of your question's text.

MY RECOMMENDED GMAT STUDY PLAN:

"Section" = a timed, scored section from the GMAT Prep Software (Exams 1 through 6). Helps you practice test-taking techniques, and leveraging the GMAT algorithm. "Practice" = unscored (no composite score, only correct/incorrect) and the time limit is less strict. Take as long as you need for understanding. Remember that you don't necessarily need to pay for Exam Packs 1 and 2, because there are approximately 1,500 potential questions in (free) Exams 1 and 2, so you can just keep resetting the tests and using them again. The IR sections will be exactly the same (not adaptive!), but the quant and verbal sections will be different every time. Another option is to install the GMAT Prep software on 2 different computers. 2 different computers = 2 different versions of the test = nearly twice as many questions to practice. Here is a sample weekly schedule that I would recommend IF YOU ARE TRYING TO PREPARE IN ONLY ONE MONTH (see modifications for 2-6 month study plans below).

Day 1: COMPUTER DAY

- 75 minute Quant Section - GMAT Prep
- 75 minute Verbal Section - GMAT Prep
- Review Incorrectly

Answered Quant Questions + Math Concepts and Strategies4) Review Incorrectly Answered Verbal Questions + Verbal Concepts and Strategies5) 30 minute IR Section or Practice - GMAT Prep / IR tool from Wiley6) 30 minutes Essay PracticeDay 2: BOOK (OG) / WILEY DAY1) 37 Quant Questions in OG / Wiley2) 41 Verbal Questions in OG / Wiley3) Review Incorrectly Answered Quants4) Review Incorrectly Answered Verbals5) 12 IR Questions - Any SourceDay 3: COMPUTER DAY1) 37 Quant Questions in GMATPrep (Question Packs)2) 41 Verbal Questions in GMATPrep (Question Packs)3) Review Incorrectly Answered Quants + Math Concepts and Strategies4) Review Incorrectly Answered Verbals + Verbal Concepts and StrategiesDay 4: BOOK (OG) / WILEY DAY1) 37 Quant Questions in OG / Wiley2) 41 Verbal Questions in OG / Wiley3) Review Incorrectly Answered Quants + Math Concepts and Strategies4) Review Incorrectly Answered Verbals + Verbal Concepts and Strategies5) 12 IR Questions - Any SourceDay 5: COMPUTER DAY1) 75 minute Quant Section - GMATPrep2) 75 minute Verbal Section - GMATPrep3) Review Incorrectly Answered Quants + Math Concepts and Strategies4) Review Incorrectly Answered Verbals + Verbal Concepts and Strategies5) 30 minute IR Section or Practice - GMAT Prep / IR tool from Wiley6) 30 minutes Essay PracticeDay 6: BOOK (OG) / WILEY DAY1) 37 Quant Questions in OG / Wiley2) 41 Verbal Questions in OG / Wiley3) Review Incorrectly Answered Quants + Math Concepts and Strategies4) Review Incorrectly Answered Verbals + Verbal Concepts and Strategies5) 12 IR Questions - Any SourceDay 7: Take a rest! You're only human.Repeat for three more weeks, and you've completed approximately 2,160 real GMAT questions out of the approximately 4,000 official GMAT questions available.Here are my modifications for 2-6 month study plans:2-month study plan: complete 3 assignments (numbered above) per day.3-month study plan: complete 2 assignments per day.4-month study plan: complete 1-2 assignments per day.6-month study plan: complete 1 assignment per day.The founder of the GMAT Club forum has also written an excellent GMAT Study Plan on GMAT club. To see it, google "GMAT Study Plan - 2016 Edition : General GMAT Questions and Strategies."A QUICK AND IMPORTANT NOTE ON HOW TO REVIEW INCORRECTLY ANSWERED GMAT QUESTIONS:Yes, the correct answers (along with mildly helpful explanations) are all right there in the books. But at all costs, don't check the correct answer right away, because in many ways it ruins the utility of that question.When it comes time to re-try the questions that you answered incorrectly, I recommend that you either buy a 2nd copy of the books to keep blank, or that you simply re-try the questions on your computer screenBEFORE checking the answer. It's what I call a "blind review": going over all the questions you got wrong without first checking the correct answer/explanation, or seeing any of your previous work.Yes, I knowwhen you get something

wrong that you thought you got right, your first instinct is to immediately check the correct answer choice. However, try your best to avoid this temptation. In my opinion, blind review is one of the key facets of effective test prep. Thus, when using the physical book, you should only mark your answers in the book as correct or incorrect (this is easier when working with a partner). Most importantly, don't write down or look at the correct answers before you get a chance to review / re-try them at least once. Obviously, this type of study is much easier with a partner. If you're working by yourself out of the physical books or the Kindle editions, then there is no way to check your answers without actually looking at the correct letter answers. So, if you're studying solo, then I recommend that you write your answers "only your answers, not your work" on a separate sheet of paper. Do at least 40 questions at a time, to get a feel for what a GMAT Quant or Verbal section feels like. When you correct them, don't indicate the correct answers in the book yet "simply mark incorrect answers as incorrect. And try to correct your questions all at once instead of one at a time, so that when you review the actual question afterward, you are less likely to remember the correct answer. In contrast, if you go over questions by checking the correct answers right away, then you can create false confidence by fooling yourself into thinking that you understand the questions fully, when in fact you are still prone to those types of mistakes. The best way to know for sure is to try the questions again, from scratch, *without* the aid of the answer key, your previous answer, or the answer explanations. Only then should you confirm the correct answer and read the explanation provided." For those of you who are just getting started, here is the overall structure of the GMAT: 1) Analysis of an Argument Essay (AWA or Analytical Writing Assessment): 30 minutes, 1 question. 2) Integrated Reasoning (Multi-Source Reasoning, Table Analysis, Graphics Interpretation, Two Part Analysis): 30 minutes, 12 questions. Please note: unlike the Verbal and Quantitative sections, the IR section is not adaptive. For this reason, every time you try a GMAT Prep Exam you will see the same 12 IR questions. 3) Optional 8-minute break 4) Quantitative Section (Problem Solving, Data Sufficiency): 75 minutes, 37 questions (2 minutes per question) 5) Optional 8-minute break 6) Verbal Section (Reading Comprehension, Critical Reasoning, Sentence Correction): 75 minutes, 41 questions (1.8 minutes per question) Keep in mind that on the GMAT you cannot go back or skip any questions, and that the first 12-15 questions of the Verbal and Quantitative sections have the most impact on your score due to the adaptive scoring algorithm. A correct answer will yield a slightly harder question in most cases, and vice versa, and the GMAT will gradually determine your score as you go. The largest adjustments are made at the beginning of the test, which is why the first 1/3 of questions are so essential. Also, approximately 10 to 25% of the questions on the actual GMAT

(and 4 of the 12 IR questions) are experimental – you don't know which ones they are, and they don't count toward your score. Here are my most essential GMAT Resources:

Practice:

- 1) Free GMATPrep Software - 2 diagnostic CATs (Exams 1 and 2: 180 questions total) and 90 practice questions out of 1,500 possible questions
- 2) GMAT 2017 Official Guide Bundle - 1 diagnostic test and over 1,500 practice questions and answer explanations (you are here) - about \$45
- 3) GMATPrep Exam Pack 1 - 2 diagnostic CATs (Exams 3 and 4: 180 questions total) out of 400 possible questions - GMATPrep Exam Pack 1 [Online Code] \$50
- 4) GMAT Prep Exam Pack 2 (New Release with 2 New Tests -- not yet available on) - 2 more diagnostic CATs (Exams 5 and 6: 180 questions total) out of 400 possible questions - \$50

Please note: you can save \$10 by buying #3 and #4 together as an Exam Pack Bundle from the GMAT website for \$90.5

Question Packs:

- 5) GMATPrep Question Pack 1 - 404 questions with answer explanations and ability to sort questions by type and difficulty - \$30
- 6) The Official Guide for GMAT® Review 2016 Mobile App
- 7) The Official Guide for GMAT® Review 2016 - \$5 for 50 questions and \$30 upgrade for an additional 800 questions
- 8) GMAT Focus Quizzes - 24 questions per quiz (math only) - \$30 per quiz and 4 total. GMAT Focus Online Quantitative Diagnostic Tool: Single Use
- 9) GMAT Focus Online Quantitative Diagnostic Tool: Single Use [Online Code]
- 10) IR Prep Tool - 48 Integrated Reasoning Questions
- 11) GMAT IR Prep Tool [Online Code] - \$20
- 12) GMAT Write - 4 Auto-Graded Essays for \$30
- 13) GMAT Enhanced Score Report - Technically this is not a practice tool, but it provides an in-depth look at your score, including overall rankings, rankings by question type, time management information and a summary of your strengths and weaknesses, which can be helpful if you plan to take the test more than once. - \$25

Strategy:

- 1) GMAT Club Forum - Free explanations to nearly every official GMAT question, as well as questions written by other companies (I do not recommend practicing on non-official questions).
- 2) GMAT Quantum - Free video explanations to nearly every official GMAT quantitative question.
- 3) Manhattan Prep GMAT Series: \$144 for the entire series – Complete GMAT Strategy Guide Set (Manhattan Prep GMAT Strategy Guides) or about \$19 for one book which gives you access to 6 online CATs
- 4) GMAT Sentence Correction (Manhattan Prep GMAT Strategy Guides)
- 5) Ace the GMAT by Brandon Royal: \$8 for Kindle version
- 6) Ace the GMAT: Master the GMAT in 40 Days
- 7) LSAT Pretests for Extra Critical Reasoning and Critical Reading Practice: \$20 for 10 tests
- 8) 10 More, Actual Official LSAT PrepTests: (PrepTests 19 through 28) (Lsat Series)
- 9) Magoosh Free Online Materials
- 10) Powerscore Critical Reasoning Bible: \$21
- 11) The PowerScore GMAT Critical Reasoning Bible
- 12) Powerscore Reading Comprehension Bible: \$35
- 13) The PowerScore GMAT Reading Comprehension Bible
- 14) Princeton – Cracking the GMAT Premium Edition

with 6 Computer-Adaptive Practice Tests, 2017 (Graduate School Test Preparation) and Kaplan are OK for strategy too. I prefer Princeton Review's GMAT guide (full disclosure: P.R. is my former employer) to Kaplan's (in my humble opinion, a mediocre, corporate behemoth who somehow always manages to rank #1 on with lots of suspect 5-star reviews), but any effort to write an "all in one" guide to a test as complex as the GMAT is destined to be at least a partial failure. The Kaplan and Princeton guides can be helpful if you are a below-average scorer trying to obtain an above-average score without too much effort, but the perfectionists among us will be frustrated by their lack of depth and unrealistic practice questions. Finally, you can google "GMAT Action Plan - McElroy Tutoring" to read my personal, frequently updated recommendations for GMAT Prep. Please feel free to leave comments and/or ask questions below--I enjoy analyzing the intricacies of this challenging test.

Founded by a Stanford MBA, GMAT Genius offers the highest quality GMAT preparation services to GMAT aspirants worldwide. Our mission is crystal-clear: to help you achieve GMAT success. We have thoroughly analyzed the 2017 Official Guides and want to share our insights with you. Please note that this second edition corrects numerous errors that were contained in the original printing of the main Official Guide. Feel free to read our detailed analysis of the 2017 GMAT Official Guide Bundle or skip down to our conclusions.

OVERVIEW The Official Guides for GMAT Review contain retired real GMAT questions, and are an essential component of your GMAT preparations. The GMAC places questions in order of increasing difficulty, based on its assessment of difficulty. The three books in this bundle have no overlap in practice questions. Since we have published a detailed review for each of the three Official Guide books included in this bundle, our objective below is to provide a combined analysis of each question type (e.g. combine data for all Problem Solving questions across all books). You will find a list of new questions and detailed question categorization in our reviews of the individual books:

- The Official Guide for GMAT Review 2017 with Online Question Bank and Exclusive Video
- The Official Guide for GMAT Quantitative Review 2017 with Online Question Bank and Exclusive Video
- The Official Guide for GMAT Verbal Review 2017 with Online Question Bank and Exclusive Video

The 2017 edition contains 221 new questions out of the 1,558 total questions (including Integrated Reasoning). Excluding the 100 questions in the Diagnostic Exam section of the main book, the new questions represent just over 15% new content. These are new questions that we have not encountered before; they are not questions recycled from older GMAC resources. One formatting change in the 2017 edition is that all questions in a book (other than Integrated Reasoning) now are numbered together consecutively, whereas

previously each section was numbered independently.

PROBLEM SOLVING

The Official Guide Bundle contains a total of 430 Problem Solving questions. The GMAC classifies question difficulty into three categories as follows:

- Easy 167 (39%, 22 more than 2016)
- Medium 107 (25%, 10 fewer)
- Hard 156 (36%, 12 fewer)

There are 62 new Problem Solving questions, with difficulty of Easy / Medium / Hard as follows: 35 / 13 / 14. This is in lieu of 62 questions from the 2016 edition that have been removed, with difficulty of Easy / Medium / Hard as follows: 23 / 13 / 26. The GMAC has assigned a different difficulty rating to a total of 10 Problem Solving questions.

GMAT GENIUS

GMAT Genius classifies question difficulty into five categories. Our assessment of Problem Solving skews noticeably less difficult / more towards the center and is only 62.6% correlated with the GMAC's assessment, demonstrating tremendous subjectivity involved in assessing question difficulty. Here's our breakdown:

- Super Easy 42 (10%, 1 more than 2016)
- Easy 124 (29%, 7 more)
- Medium 172 (40%, 9 fewer)
- Hard 68 (16%, 1 more)
- Very Hard 24 (6%, same)

Although many math questions entail multiple math concepts, GMAT Genius classifies questions based on our assessment of the primary math concept. We break down the 430 Problem Solving questions as follows:

- Arithmetic - Basic: 21 (4.9%, 6 more than 2016)
- Arithmetic - Absolute Value: 7 (1.6%, same)
- Arithmetic - Divisibility/Factors/Multiples: 24 (5.6%, 2 fewer)
- Arithmetic - Exponents & Roots: 32 (7.4%, 2 fewer)
- Arithmetic - Fractions & Ratios: 51 (11.9%, 2 fewer)
- Arithmetic - Percents: 35 (8.1%, 2 fewer)
- Arithmetic - Pos/Neg & Odd/Even: 4 (0.9%, same)
- Arithmetic - Primes: 4 (0.9%, same)
- Algebra - Inequalities: 8 (1.9%, 2 more)
- Algebra - Linear Equations: 22 (5.1%, 4 fewer)
- Algebra - Quadratics: 16 (3.7%, same)
- Algebra - Simultaneous Equations: 13 (3%, 1 more)
- Algebra - Variables in Answers: 11 (2.6%, 2 more)
- Geometry - Circles: 9 (2.1%, same)
- Geometry - Coordinate: 13 (3%, 1 fewer)
- Geometry - Rectangles: 12 (2.8%, same)
- Geometry - Triangles: 10 (2.3%, same)
- Geometry - Other: 11 (2.6%, same)
- Statistics - Averages: 32 (7.4%, same)
- Statistics - Other: 9 (2.1%, 3 more)
- Word Problems - Combinatorics: 11 (2.6%, 2 more)
- Word Problems - Functions & Sequences: 23 (5.3%, same)
- Word Problems - Groups/Sets: 9 (2.1%, 2 fewer)
- Word Problems - Probability: 10 (2.3%, same)
- Word Problems - Revenue/Profit/Interest: 12 (2.8%, same)
- Word Problems - Rate & Work: 21 (4.9%, 1 fewer)

DATA SUFFICIENCY

The Official Guide Bundle contains a total of 322 Data Sufficiency questions. The GMAC classifies question difficulty into three categories as follows:

- Easy 76 (24%, 8 more than 2016)
- Medium 82 (25%, 16 more)
- Hard 164 (51%, 24 fewer)

There are 45 new Data Sufficiency questions, with difficulty of Easy / Medium / Hard as follows: 16 / 19 / 10. This is in lieu of 45 questions from the 2016 edition that have been removed, with difficulty of Easy / Medium / Hard as follows: 8 / 3 / 34. The GMAC has not assigned

a different difficulty rating to any Data Sufficiency question. GMAT Genius classifies question difficulty into five categories. Our assessment of Data Sufficiency skews significantly easier and is only 57.7% correlated with the GMAC's assessment. Here's our breakdown: Super Easy 18 (6%, 3 fewer than 2016) Easy 78 (24%, 3 fewer) Medium 146 (45%, 1 more) Hard 66 (20%, 5 more) Very Hard 14 (4%, same) Although many math questions entail multiple math concepts, GMAT Genius classifies questions based on our assessment of the primary math concept. We break down the 322 Data Sufficiency questions as follows:

- Arithmetic - Basic: 18 (5.6%, 3 more than 2016)
- Arithmetic - Absolute Value: 1 (0.3%, same)
- Arithmetic - Divisibility/Factors/Multiples: 14 (4.3%, 2 more)
- Arithmetic - Exponents & Roots: 27 (8.4%, 1 more)
- Arithmetic - Fractions & Ratios: 20 (6.2%, same)
- Arithmetic - Percents: 22 (6.8%, 1 more)
- Arithmetic - Pos/Neg & Odd/Even: 14 (4.3%, 3 fewer)
- Arithmetic - Primes: 3 (0.9%, 1 more)
- Algebra - Inequalities: 20 (6.2%, same)
- Algebra - Linear Equations: 12 (3.7%, same)
- Algebra - Quadratics: 9 (2.8%, 2 fewer)
- Algebra - Simultaneous Equations: 23 (7.1%, same)
- Geometry - Circles: 10 (3.1%, 2 fewer)
- Geometry - Coordinate: 11 (3.4%, 1 more)
- Geometry - Rectangles: 7 (2.2%, same)
- Geometry - Triangles: 13 (4%, 1 more)
- Geometry - Other: 8 (2.5%, 1 more)
- Statistics - Averages: 20 (6.2%, 1 fewer)
- Statistics - Other: 16 (5%, 1 more)
- Word Problems - Functions & Sequences: 12 (3.7%, 1 more)
- Word Problems - Groups/Sets: 14 (4.3%, 2 fewer)
- Word Problems - Probability: 5 (1.6%, same)
- Word Problems - Revenue/Profit/Interest: 10 (3.1%, 3 fewer)
- Word Problems - Rate & Work: 13 (4%, same)

SENTENCE CORRECTION The Official Guide Bundle contains a total of 271 Sentence Correction questions. The GMAC classifies question difficulty into three categories as follows: Easy 66 (24%, same as 2016) Medium 101 (37%, 5 more) Hard 104 (38%, 5 fewer) There are 38 new Sentence Correction questions, with difficulty of Easy / Medium / Hard as follows: 13 / 16 / 9. This is in lieu of 38 questions from the 2016 edition that have been removed, with difficulty of Easy / Medium / Hard as follows: 12 / 10 / 16. The GMAC has assigned a different difficulty rating to a total of 3 Sentence Correction questions. GMAT Genius classifies question difficulty into five categories. Our assessment skews noticeably easier and is only 54.9% correlated with the GMAC's assessment, clearly demonstrating the subjectivity involved in assessing question difficulty. Here's our breakdown: Super Easy 8 (3%, 1 more than 2016) Easy 74 (27%, 7 fewer) Medium 113 (42%, 10 more) Hard 62 (23%, 1 fewer) Very Hard 14 (5%, 3 fewer) Although Sentence Correction questions typically entail multiple grammar concepts (as described on our website), GMAT Genius classifies questions based on our assessment of the primary tested concept. We classify the 271 Sentence Correction questions as follows:

- Verb Agreement: 25 (9%, 1 fewer than

2016) Verb Tense: 36 (13%, 2 more) Pronoun Ambiguity: 19 (7%, 3 fewer) Pronoun Agreement: 15 (6%, 2 more) Parallel Construction: 84 (31%, same) Misplaced Modifiers: 32 (12%, 5 more) Idioms: 17 (6%, 1 more) Comparison & Quantity: 19 (7%, 3 fewer) Expression & Meaning: 24 (9%, 3 fewer)

CRITICAL REASONING The Official Guide Bundle contains a total of 224 Critical Reasoning questions. The GMAC classifies question difficulty into three categories as follows: Easy 75 (33%, 1 more than 2016) Medium 71 (32%, same) Hard 78 (35%, 1 fewer) There are 32 new Critical Reasoning questions, with difficulty of Easy / Medium / Hard as follows: 10 / 14 / 8. This is in lieu of 32 questions from the 2016 edition that have been removed, with difficulty of Easy / Medium / Hard as follows: 10 / 14 / 8. The GMAC has assigned a different difficulty rating to a total of 2 Critical Reasoning questions. GMAT Genius classifies question difficulty into five categories. Our assessment skews slightly easier, yet is only 65.0% correlated with the GMAC's assessment, clearly indicating subjectivity involved in assessing question difficulty. Here's our breakdown: Super Easy 1 (0%, 1 more than 2016) Easy 69 (31%, 4 fewer) Medium 88 (39%, 1 more) Hard 47 (21%, 1 more) Very Hard 19 (8%, 1 more) We have grouped the questions based on the question type categorization that GMAT Genius uses for Critical Reasoning (as described on our website). We break down the 224 Critical Reasoning questions as follows: Weaken: 46 (21%, same than 2016) Strengthen: 46 (21%, 2 more) Assumption: 20 (9%, 3 fewer) Reasoning: 8 (4%, 2 fewer) Conclusion: 16 (7%, 2 more) Explain: 24 (11%, 2 more) Evaluate: 22 (10%, 3 fewer) Boldface: 13 (6%, 1 more) Complete the Passage: 29 (13%, 1 more)

READING COMPREHENSION The Official Guide Bundle contains a total of 261 Reading Comprehension questions across 49 passages. The GMAC classifies question difficulty into three categories as follows: Easy 79 (30%, 1 fewer than 2016) Medium 110 (42%, 2 fewer) Hard 72 (28%, 3 more) There are 36 new Reading Comprehension questions, with difficulty of Easy / Medium / Hard as follows: 19 / 12 / 5. This is in lieu of 36 questions from the 2016 edition that have been removed, with difficulty of Easy / Medium / Hard as follows: 5 / 31 / 0. The GMAC has assigned a different difficulty rating to a total of 10 Reading Comprehension questions. GMAT Genius classifies question difficulty into five categories. Whereas the GMAC assigns the same difficulty to all questions for a given passage (except in the Diagnostic Exam section), GMAT Genius assesses the difficulty of each question individually. Our assessment skews very slightly harder, but is only 62.2% correlated with the GMAC's assessment, in large part due to different difficulty assessment methodologies. Here's our breakdown: Super Easy 12 (5%, 1 more than 2016) Easy 62 (24%, 9 more) Medium 106 (41%, 9 fewer) Hard 62 (24%, 3 fewer) Very Hard 19 (7%, 2 more) We have grouped the

questions based on the question type categorization that GMAT Genius uses for Reading Comprehension (as described on our website). We break down the 261 Reading Comprehension questions as follows:

Primary Purpose: 38 (15%, 1 fewer than 2016)

Author's Tone: 16 (6%, same)

Organization: 7 (3%, same)

Function: 33 (13%, 3 fewer)

Specific Reference: 63 (24%, 5 fewer)

Inference: 89 (34%, 5 more)

Critical Reasoning: 15 (6%, 4 more)

INTEGRATED REASONING

The main Official Guide (part of this bundle) includes online access to 50 Integrated Reasoning practice questions. The IR set includes 8 new questions that we have not seen before, replacing 8 questions that were in the 2016 edition. The 50 questions consist of the following four types:

Multi-Source Reasoning 18 (3 changed)

Table Analysis 6 (1 changed)

Graphics Interpretation 10 (1 changed)

Two-Part Analysis 16 (3 changed)

For the first time with IR in the Official Guides, the GMAC has assigned a difficulty rating to each question. Each type has difficulty of Easy / Medium / Hard as follows:

Multi-Source Reasoning 6 / 6 / 6

Table Analysis 2 / 2 / 2

Graphics Interpretation 3 / 4 / 3

Two-Part Analysis 5 / 6 / 5

Total 16 / 18 / 16

For IR, GMAT Genius classifies question difficulty into the same three categories. Except for Two-Part Analysis, our assessment skews significantly easier, and contains notable differences from the GMAC. Our difficulty assessment is only 25.3% correlated with the GMAC's assessment, clearly showing the subjectivity involved in assessing question difficulty. Here's our breakdown of Easy / Medium / Hard:

Multi-Source Reasoning 9 / 8 / 1

Table Analysis 2 / 4 / 0

Graphics Interpretation 3 / 5 / 2

Two-Part Analysis 1 / 9 / 6

Total 15 / 26 / 9

ONLINE INTERFACE

Each Official Guide book includes an access code (see inside back covers) that provides 12-month usage of an online version of the book. Since the GMAT is a computer-based test, we believe that it is advisable to work through the questions online. We recommend that you use Exam Mode rather than Practice Mode, since we recommend that students practice using timed question sets that replicate test day conditions. The online practice interface has improved significantly from last year's version. The publisher implemented most of our recommendations. In particular, note the following improvements:

- 1) The test interface more closely resembles GMATPrep.
- 2) Exam Mode is now default mode, and you cannot skip questions in Exam Mode.
- 3) The overview screen shows the number of questions answered and that remain unanswered, for each question type and difficulty level.
- 4) All questions now indicate the corresponding book number, for easier cross-referencing.
- 5) Integrated Reasoning is now incorporated into the main interface, rather than using a separate interface.
- 6) The system now has a significantly longer period before it logs-out your session.
- 7) All session timing is now fully accurate.

Our only significant concern with the online interface is that the system limits you to 10

saved sessions. Once you reach this limit, you must delete at least one saved session in order to keep practicing. But doing so puts all the questions from that saved session back into the unanswered question pool. As such, we recommend that you separately track which question types / difficulties you have already completed. Furthermore, we suggest completing all Easy questions in a maximum of 10 sessions, advancing to Medium questions in max 10 sessions, and finally focusing on the Hard questions in max 10 sessions towards the end of your prep. If you have any suggestions for further improving the online interface, please let us know and we will pass your input on to the publisher of the Official Guides.

OTHER NOTE The Official Guides are for practicing with real GMAT questions, not for learning the underlying concepts. The 40-page Math Review section provides a very high-level overview of the math concepts tested on the GMAT. This math review will be highly inadequate except perhaps for the most advanced math students. Similarly, the brief introductions to the concepts tested on the verbal section are highly inadequate. We recommend that you use additional study materials to learn the math and verbal concepts.

Although all questions include answer explanations, many GMAT test takers are far from satisfied with these explanations. Math explanations can be brief and hard-to-understand for non-advanced students, and are sometimes convoluted or inefficient. Most GMAT test takers consider the Sentence Correction explanations quite cryptic. The Critical Reasoning and Reading Comprehension explanations, however, are reasonably good overall.

CONCLUSION The Official Guide has two primary weaknesses, in our opinion:

- 1) An insufficient amount of difficult practice questions, particularly based on GMAT Genius's assessment of difficulty
- 2) Math answer explanations that are too often either brief or convoluted and Sentence Correction explanations that are too cryptic

Despite these flaws, the Official Guides are an essential source of GMAT practice. We believe that every GMAT aspirant must use all three Official Guide books (this or the prior edition). For these reasons, we give this bundle a 5-star rating. If you already have the 2016 editions of the Official Guides, however, the replacement of 107 math questions and 106 verbal questions is not sufficient to make this edition worth purchasing.

GMAT Genius provides extensive free GMAT preparation advice on the GMAT Genius website at GMATgenius.com/gmat-preparation/. In addition, we offer the highest-quality private GMAT tutoring to students worldwide. Please let us know if we can provide any assistance with your GMAT prep. We wish you tremendous success with the GMAT!

Good quality questions, worthwhile for reading...helpful for GMAT aspirants

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