

Magoosh's

# GMAT

Study Plan Cheat Sheet



[gmat.magoosh.com](https://www.gmat.magoosh.com)

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## The Magoosh Team

We're a team of passionate educators in Berkeley, California. We like word games, video games, and helping students do really well on standardized exams so that they can achieve their educational dreams! :) You can learn more about us and what we do on our [Team page](#). If you have any questions, feel free to contact us at [help@magoosh.com](mailto:help@magoosh.com)!

## Meet Our GMAT Expert, Elliot



Elliot supports Magoosh students as part of the Academic Help team, with a focus on live tutoring. Elliot has logged over 5,000 hours in 1-on-1 test prep sessions, and has posted 99% scores on the GMAT, GRE, and LSAT, since earning his MBA in 2009. Elliot is a reformed rock climber bum who enjoys spending time gardening now that he mostly stays in one place.

## What is Magoosh?

Magoosh is an online GMAT prep tool that offers:

- Over 300 Math and Verbal videos, that's over 20 hours of video!
- Over 1,300 Math and Verbal practice questions, with video explanations after every question
- Material created by expert tutors who have in-depth knowledge of the GMAT
- E-mail support from our expert tutors within 24 hours
- Customizable practice sessions and mock tests
- Personalized statistics based on performance
- Access anytime, anywhere from an internet-connected device

# Your Guide to Studying for the GMAT

As a GMAT tutor, I've been asked for tips and tricks on pretty much everything under the sun, but the question I answer most often by far is, "How should I put together my study plan?" The details of the answer are unfortunately pretty complicated, and of course, a little different for everyone.

But after seeing hundreds of students go through the process, I can tell you that almost everyone who ends up with the score they want has these 4 things in common:

- They stick to a schedule
- They dial in the most common math and english topics (and just refresh others)
- They make a game out of it
- They master repeatable tips and tricks (but also make a few educated guesses)

This "cheat sheet" has been designed to help you stay on track to join them. Let's break down the most important pointers and resources you'll need.



## 1. Stick to a Schedule Based on Your Diagnostic Results

Okay, but what schedule should you stick to? To answer that, you'll take a diagnostic mock test and assess where you stand relative to your score goals.



**Plan A, a full length Official practice exam (free!):**

<https://www.mba.com/exam-prep/gmat-official-starter-kit-practice-exams-1-and-2-free>



**Plan B, Magoosh's shortened diagnostic test:**

<https://magoosh.com/gmat/gmat-diagnostic-test/>

Based on diagnostic results (and any previous GMAT experience):

- Build a personalized study schedule with this tool:  
<https://magoosh.com/gmat/build-your-own-gmat-study-schedule/>
- Follow a study schedule designed by our GMAT experts:  
<https://gmat.magoosh.com/study-plans>

Ideally, you'll become an active study planner and play start, stop, and continue with your GMAT study schedule on a weekly basis as you go. But in the meantime here's one simple rule for scheduling your GMAT study time effectively:

From your diagnostic test (or your last realistic practice set), **the percent of questions you got wrong because of Math or English concepts you didn't know or haven't reviewed yet should be about equal to the percent of your GMAT hours that go toward "studying"** — working on lesson videos and quizzes, flashcards, etc...

The rest should be for realistic work on practice problems and lots of repetitive review!



## 2. Dial in the Most Common Math and English Topics (and Refresh Others)

Some folks are already comfortable with most of the academic content on their diag, others guess their way through or struggle to complete it. Even if you need a deep dive on a lot of the math topics, remember that some come up a lot more often than others. Accordingly you should focus a lot more time dialing those in, and feel okay just refreshing everything else.

Recommended Resources

- Free lessons on math fundamentals for those who need a deeper dive (no GMAT tricks yet): <https://www.khanacademy.org/math/algebra-basics>
- Learn which math topics have the highest impact: <https://magoosh.com/gmat/math/what-kind-of-math-is-on-the-gmat-breakdown-of-quant-concepts-by-frequency/>



### 3. Make a Game Out of It

You may have seen GMAT “methods” or “strategies” out there, but whatever you call it, students who succeed in maxing their scores see that GMAT is more about skills than knowledge.

**Game-ify your GMAT experience and focus only on what gets you points!**

#### Quant Strategy

On quant, the game is recognize and repeat. First, diagnose what’s familiar in each question, then reproduce the same solution you’ve practiced on other similar questions. Focus on training yourself to recognize patterns in the quant questions, rather than feeling like you need to be super clever or come up with something new on every hard one.

#### Verbal Strategy

Game-ify the verbal section: The game is the process of elimination. Don’t just pick the one that you think “makes the most sense,” instead focus on training yourself to find just one good technical reason to eliminate each incorrect answer and be happy picking whatever’s left over.

#### Tools to Game-ify Your Prep

- Game-ify your GMAT pacing/timing: <https://magoosh.com/gmat/about/tips/gmat-timing-strategy/>
- Game-ify every practice problem with an error log: <https://magoosh.com/gmat/gmat-error-log/>



## 4. Master Repeatable Tips and Tricks

For starters, here are some tips and tricks for the types of problems that students tend to ask me about the most:

### Word Problem Tips

- Word problems with equations: <https://magoosh.com/gmat/gmat-word-problems/>
- Word problems with work rates: <https://magoosh.com/gmat/gmat-work-rate-problems/>
- Word problems with speeds: <https://magoosh.com/gmat/gmat-math-rate-questions/>
- More Word problems with speeds: <https://magoosh.com/gmat/gmat-motion-problems/>
- Variables in the answer choices:  
<https://magoosh.com/gmat/math/gmat-practice-problems-variables-in-the-answer-choices/>

### More Quant Tips

- Plugging in on Problem solving:  
<https://magoosh.com/gmat/how-to-plug-in-numbers-on-gmat-math-questions/>
- Process of elimination on Data sufficiency:  
<https://magoosh.com/gmat/gmat-data-sufficiency-tips/>

### Verbal Tips

- Process of elimination for Reading Comprehension:  
<https://magoosh.com/gmat/gmat-rc-eliminating-wrong-answers/>
- Process of elimination for Critical Reasoning:  
<https://magoosh.com/gmat/save-time-on-gmat-critical-reasoning-questions/>

- Tips for Sentence Correction:  
<https://magoosh.com/gmat/gmat-sentence-correction-strategies/>

Of course, there is no comprehensive “cheat sheet” for all the tips and tricks that might be useful on test day. Experiment with different ways to work through the hard ones, and search [GMAT Club](#) for input when explanations aren’t helping and tutors are inaccessible.

**Good Luck!**