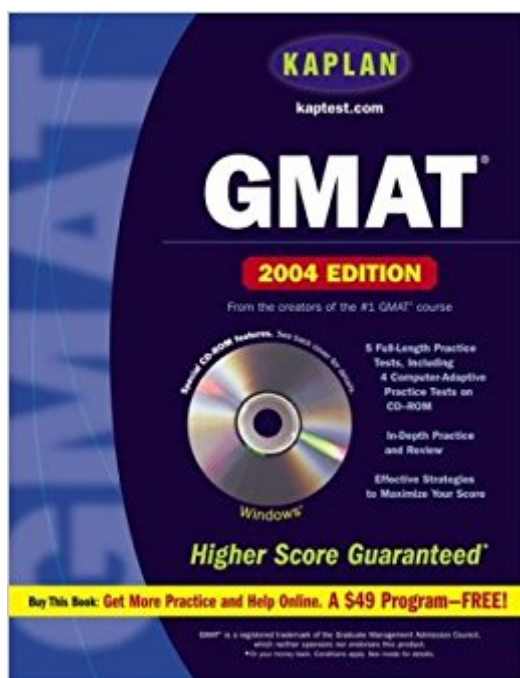


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Kaplan GMAT 2004 With CD-ROM (Kaplan GMAT Premier Program (w/CD))



Synopsis

You will score higher. We guarantee it. Kaplan's "GMAT(R) 2004 with CD-ROM" comes complete with a comprehensive review of all the material on the exam, plus Kaplan's proven test-taking strategies to help maximize your score. This powerful combination is a highly effective way for you to score higher on the GMAT(R) and make yourself competitive for business school admissions. Succeed on the Analytical Writing Assessment with Kaplan's expert strategies on approaching the computerized essay grader. Prepare with quizzes for Problem Solving, Critical Reasoning, Data Sufficiency, Reading Comprehension, Sentence Correction, and a new, expanded GMAT(R) Math Reference section. Practice with 5 full-length practice tests, including 4 computer-adaptive ones -- all with complete explanations for every answer. Score Higher with effective strategies for managing time, succeeding on every question type, dealing with stress, and more. Plus Special CD-ROM Features Include: 4 computer-adaptive practice GMAT exams Personalized analysis of your test performance Over 200 grammar and math flashcards 9 verbal practice tests 9 math practice tests 15 math review lessons Sign up for the "Business School Edge." Tap into Kaplan's expertise with the "Business School Edge," our free email newsletter. Filled with admissions tips, the latest test and career news, important deadline reminders, study aids, and more, the "Business School Edge" is an excellent resource for critical business school admissions information. Sign up today at kaptest.com Test Prep, Admissions and Guidance. For life. Kaplan has helped more than 3 million students achieve their educational and career goals. With 185 centers and more than 1,200 classroom locations throughout the U.S. and abroad, Kaplan provides a full range of services, including test prep courses, admissions consulting, programs for international students, professional licensing preparation, and more. For more information, contact us at 1-800-KAP-TEST or visit kaptest.com

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Customer Reviews

Kaplan is the educational division of The Washington Post Company, which also publishes Newsweek. Kaplan offers courses in London and at 185 centres throughout the world.

Chapter One Introduction to the GMAT Highlights Find out what's on the GMAT Learn how the GMAT's format works and how it's scored Navigate the GMAT: Computer basics Pros and cons of the computer-adaptive test Let's start with the basics: The GMAT is, among other things, an endurance test. The GMAT consists of 150 minutes of multiple-choice testing, plus two 30-minute Analytical Writing Assessment sections. Add in the administrative details, plus two 5-minute breaks, and you can count on being in the test center for about four hours. It's a grueling experience, to say the least. And if you don't approach it with confidence and rigor, you'll quickly lose your composure. That's why it's so important that you take control of the test, just as you take control of the rest of your application process. What's on the GMAT? The GMAT begins with two Analytical Writing Assessment sections. For each of these sections, you have 30 minutes to type an essay into the computer using a simple word-processing program. The test may start with either the "Analysis of an Issue" topic or the "Analysis of an Argument" topic. After the essay sections, there are two 75-minute multiple-choice sections -- one Quantitative and one Verbal. The Quantitative section contains 37 math questions in two formats: Problem Solving and Data Sufficiency, which are mixed together throughout the section. The Verbal section contains 41 questions in three formats: Reading Comprehension, Sentence Correction, and Critical Reasoning, which are also mixed throughout the section. Within each section, question types appear in random order, so you never know what's coming next. This is how the sections break down: Analytical Writing Assessment "Analysis of an Issue" Topic 1 essay 30 minutes Analytical Writing Assessment "Analysis of an Argument" Topic 1 essay 30 minutes Quantitative Section Data Sufficiency Problem Solving 37 questions 75 minutes Verbal Section Reading Comp Sentence Correction Critical Reasoning 41 questions 75 minutes Some important things to note: You'll get a five-minute break after the second essay section and another break between the two multiple-choice sections. So-called experimental

questions will be scattered through the test. They will look just like the other multiple-choice questions, but won't contribute to your score. We'll talk more about each of the question types in later chapters. The big thing to take note of right now: You'll be answering roughly 78 multiple-choice questions in two and a half hours. That's just a little less than two minutes for each question, not counting the time required to read passages. Clearly, you're going to have to move fast. But you can't let yourself get careless. Taking control of the GMAT means increasing the speed of your work without sacrificing accuracy!

Your GMAT Scores You'll receive four scores for the GMAT: Overall scaled score, ranging from 200 to 800 Quantitative scaled subscore, ranging from 0 to 60 Verbal scaled subscore, ranging from 0 to 60 Analytical Writing Assessment score, ranging from 0 to 6 (this score is separate from your overall quantitative and verbal score) Because the test is graded on a preset curve, the scaled score will correspond to a certain percentile, which will also be given on your score report. An overall score of 590, for instance, corresponds to the 80th percentile, meaning that 80 percent of test takers scored at or below this level. The percentile figure is important because it allows admissions officers at business schools to quickly get a sense of where you fall in the pool of applicants.

SOME SAMPLE PERCENTILES

Percentile	Approximate Score (Range 200-800)
99th percentile	750
95th percentile	700
90th percentile	670
80th percentile	620
75th percentile	600
50th percentile	530

Although many factors play a role in admissions decisions, the GMAT score is usually an important one. And, generally speaking, being average just won't cut it. Although the median GMAT score is somewhere around 500, you need a score of at least 600 to be considered competitive by the top B-schools. According to the latest Kaplan/Newsweek careers guide, the average GMAT scores at the best business schools in the country -- such as Stanford, Sloan (MIT), Kellogg (Northwestern), and Wharton (Penn) -- are above 670. That translates to a percentile figure of 90 and up! Fortunately, there are strategies that can give you an advantage on the computer-adaptive GMAT. You can learn to exploit the way that the computer-adaptive test (CAT) generates a score. We'll explain how in the next section.

How Does the Computer-Adaptive Test Format Work? The computer-adaptive format takes some getting used to -- in fact, it's pretty weird at first. Here's how it works. You will see only one question at a time. Instead of having a predetermined mixture of basic, medium, and hard questions, the computer will select questions for you based on how well you are doing. The first question will be of medium difficulty. If you get it right, the second question will be selected from a large pool of questions that are a little harder; if you get the first question wrong, the second will be a little more basic. If you keep getting questions right, the test will get harder and harder; if you slip and make some mistakes, the test will adjust and start giving you easier problems, but if you answer them correctly, it will go

back to the hard ones. Ideally, the test gives you enough questions to ensure that scores are not based on luck. If you get one hard question right, you might just have been lucky, but if you get ten hard questions right, then luck has little to do with it. So the test is self-adjusting and self-correcting. Because of this format, the computer-adaptive GMAT is structurally very different from a paper-based test. After the first problem, every problem that you see is based on how you answered the prior problem. That means you cannot return to a question once you've answered it, because that would throw off the sequence. Once you answer a question, it's part of your score, for better or worse. That means you can't skip around within a section and do questions in the order that you like. Another major consequence of the GMAT format is that hard problems count more than easy ones. It has to be this way, because the very purpose of this adaptive format is to find out at what level you reliably get about half the questions right; that's your scoring level. Imagine two students -- one who does ten basic questions, half of which she gets right and half of which she gets wrong, and one who does ten very difficult questions, half of which she gets right and half of which she gets wrong. The same number of questions have been answered correctly in each case, but this does not reflect an equal ability on the part of the two students. In fact, the student who answered five out of ten very difficult questions incorrectly could still get a very high score on the GMAT. But in order to get to these hard questions, she first had to get medium-difficulty questions right. What this means for you is that no matter how much more comfortable you might be sticking to the basic questions, you definitely want to get to the hard questions if you can, because that means your score will be higher.

Section Management Techniques

In the chapters that follow, we'll cover techniques for answering various types of questions that you can expect to see on the GMAT. But you'll also need strategies for managing a section as a whole. Here are some strategies for attacking a section of the GMAT.

Be Systematic

Because it's so important to get to the hard questions as early as possible, work systematically at the beginning of a GMAT section. Use scratch paper to organize your thinking. If you eliminate choices, cross them off and guess intelligently. The first 10-15 questions of a section are crucial in determining your ability estimate, so invest the necessary time to try to answer these questions correctly. You must, however, leave enough time to mark an answer for every question in the section. You will be penalized for questions you don't reach.

Draw a Grid

If crossing off answer choices on paper tests really helps to clarify your thinking (using a process of elimination), you may want to consider making a grid on your scratch paper before you begin the GMAT. Use it to mark off answer choices that you have eliminated, as shown below. That way you can tell at a glance which answer choices are still in the running. If you end up using it often, it'll be worth the 10 seconds it takes to draw a simple grid.

What this means for you is that no matter how much more comfortable you might be sticking to the basic questions, you definitely want to get to the hard questions if you can, because that means your score will be higher.

Pace Yourself Of course, the last thing you want to happen is to have time called before you've done half the questions. It's essential, therefore, that you pace yourself, keeping in mind the general guidelines for how long to spend on any individual question or passage.

No one is saying that you should spend, for instance, exactly 90 seconds on every Critical Reasoning question. But you should have a sense of how long you have to do each question, so you know when you're exceeding the limit and should start to move faster. You'll develop this sense if you time yourself while working on practice GMAT questions.

Stop the Clock The timer in the corner can work to your advantage, but if you find yourself looking at it so frequently that it becomes a distraction, you should turn it off for 10 or 15 minutes and try to refocus your attention on the test, even if you lose track of time somewhat. The GMAT rewards focus and accuracy much more than it does speed.

Don't Waste Time on Questions You Can't Do We know that foregoing a possibly tough question is easier said than done; we all have the natural instinct to plow through test sections, answering every question as it appears. But it just doesn't pay off on the GMAT. If you dig in your heels on a tough question, refusing to move on until you've cracked it, you're letting your test macho get in the way of your test score. Like life itself, a test section is too short to waste on lost causes.

Remain Calm It's imperative that you remain calm and composed while working through a section. You can't allow yourself to be rattled by one hard question or Reading Comp passage to the degree that it throws off your performance on the rest of the Verbal section. Expect to find some difficult questions, but remember, you won't be the only one encountering difficult problems. The test is designed to challenge everyone who takes it. Having trouble with a difficult question isn't going to ruin your score, but getting upset about it and letting it throw you off track will. When you understand that part of the test maker's goal is to reward those who keep their composure, you'll recognize the importance of not panicking when you run into challenging material.

Analytical Writing Assessment -- GMAT Style The GMAT begins with two 30-minute essay topics. You not only have to analyze the given topic and plan your attack, but you must also type your essays into a simple word processing program. If you aren't comfortable with complex word processing programs, don't worry. The only commands you'll use are cut, paste, and undo. There's nothing fancy here, not even a spell-check. If you're worried about having to type your essays, you should spend some time practicing typing and getting comfortable with a keyboard between now and the day of the test. A slow typing speed could lower your score. Your essays will be graded by a human grader as well as a computerized essay grader, called the e-rater. But don't be thrown by this high-tech twist. The

e-rater was designed to make the same judgments that a good human grader would make. Even though you don't have to reinvent your writing style to suit the e-rater, there are some steps you can take to improve your chances of getting a good score for the e-rater. Good organization always counted, and now it's more important than ever. Outline your essay before you begin to write. Keep in mind that the length of your essay is not a factor; the computer doesn't count the number of words in your response. Use transitional phrases like first, therefore, because, and for example so that the computer can recognize the structured argument your essay contains. Avoid spelling and grammar errors. Although the e-rater doesn't grade spelling per se, if it can't tell what word you were trying to use or thinks you used the wrong words, it could give you a lower score. Strategically, assuming your typing skills are adequate, you don't have to do much of anything differently on the computer-adaptive test than you would when writing an essay on paper. You can write an outline on your scratch paper. You should spend about five minutes developing, 20 minutes composing, and the last five minutes proofreading each essay. For more tips on dealing with the GMAT AWA, take a look at chapter 11.

Navigating the GMAT: Computer Basics

Let's preview the primary computer functions that you will use to move around on the GMAT. ETS calls them "testing tools," but they're basically just boxes that you can click with your mouse. Here's what the various buttons do.

The Time Button Clicking on this button turns the time display at the top of the screen on and off. When you have five minutes left in a section, the clock flashes and the display changes from Hours/Minutes to Hours/Minutes/Seconds.

The Exit Button This allows you to exit the section before the time is up. If you budget your time wisely you should never have to use this button -- time will run out just as you are finishing the section.

The Help Button This one leads to directions and other stuff from the tutorial. You should know all this already, and besides, the test clock won't pause just because you click on Help.

The Quit Button Hitting this button ends the test.

The Next Button Hit this when you want to move on to the next question. After you press Next, you must hit Confirm.

The Confirm Button This button tells the computer you are happy with your answer and are really ready to move to the next question. You cannot proceed until you have hit this button.

The Scroll Bar Similar to the scroll bar on a Windows-style computer display, the scroll bar is a thin, vertical column with up and down arrows at the top and bottom. Clicking on the arrows moves you up or down the page you're reading.

Pros and Cons of the Computer-Adaptive Format

There are both good and annoying things about the GMAT's computer-adaptive format. The following are a few things you should be thankful for/watch out for as you prepare to try your luck on the test.

Eight Good Things about the Computer-Adaptive Test

There is a little timer at the top of the computer screen to help you pace yourself (you can hide it if it distracts you). There will be only a few other

test takers in the room with you -- it won't be like taking it in one of those massive lecture halls with distractions everywhere. You get a pause of five minutes between each section. The pause is optional, but you should always use it to relax and stretch. The computer-adaptive test is much more convenient for your schedule than the pencil-and-paper exam was. It's offered at more than 175 centers three to six days a week (depending on the center) all year long. Registering to take the computer-adaptive test is very easy, and sometimes you can sign up only days before the test. However, depending upon the time of the year and the availability of testing centers in your area, you may have to register several weeks in advance for a desired test date. The computer-adaptive test gives you more time to spend on each question than you got on the paper-based test. You can see your scores before you decide which schools you want to send them to. Perhaps the computer-adaptive test's best feature is that it gives you your scores immediately and will send them to schools just 10 to 15 days later.

Seven Annoying Things about the Computer-Adaptive Test

You cannot skip around on this test; you must answer the questions one at a time in the order the computer gives them to you. If you realize later that you answered a question incorrectly, you can't go back and change your answer. If the person next to you is noisy or distracting, the proctor cannot move you or the person, since your test is on the computer. You can't cross off an answer choice and never look at it again, so you have to be disciplined about not reconsidering choices you've already eliminated. You have to scroll through Reading Comprehension passages, which means you won't be able to see the whole thing on the screen at once. You can't write on your computer screen the way you can on the paper test (though some have tried), so you have to use scratch paper they give you, which will be inconveniently located away from the computer screen. Lastly, many people find that computer screens tire them and cause eyestrain -- especially after four hours.

The following chapters of this book provide an overview of the different sections you'll encounter on the GMAT exam. But before you move on to them, take note of the GMAT Registration Checklist opposite. This checklist will serve as a useful resource for you when it's time to sign up for the test.

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I bought the 2003 version in May and decided to get the 2004 version in July because I wanted to get more practice tests. Wrong! The paperback itself is essentially identical except the cover page. As far as I can tell, the tests in cd are the same from 2003. Their ad is very misleading, and I plan to mail my book to the publisher to get my money back. If you have the 2003 version or can get it for a cheaper price, then go with the 2003.

I bought this book, the Arco Master the Gmat Cat 2004 book, the Official GMAT Review book, and the Princeton review book (ok, I went a little crazy on the book buying). To be honest, I didn't even crack open the book and just used the CD. The CD was great, it has tutorials on anything and will create a custom study plan based on your diagnostic test. The CD tutorials are probably slower than using the book, but they provide a good overview and have the benefit of preventing you from missing some things that you might ignore in the book. Additionally, they perhaps make the process of studying a little more fun. You can view this as a negative or a positive, but I found the adaptive practice tests on the CD much harder than the PowerPrep tests provided by GMAT or those provided by the other books. On the quantitative section I found myself really pressed for time. Since so much of the GMAT is pacing, the difficulty of these tests can help you learn to work faster, on the downside, they might make you think you have to work faster than you actually do on the real test. My best score on a practice test using this CD was 680. My best score was 770 using the PowerPrep GMAT software, 720 using the Princeton software, and 750 on the actual GMAT. So, as long as you realize that you'll probably do a little better than the Kaplan tests indicate and you at least try the free PowerPrep tests to get a better feel for actual pacing, I think this book is a good bet. If you were only going to buy one book, I'd recommend the official GMAT review book, then the Kaplan, then the Princeton, and then the ARCO.

I bought this book because of the great reviews here. It has turned out to be a disappointment. I took the GMAT in 1997. I studied with the Princeton Review "Beating the GMAT" and got a 690. I don't remember liking that book all that much so I expected more from this one. After all, this book includes "proven test taking strategies" from their \$1,000 class... However I found very little of use in this book. Most of the book is either a) facts about the GMAT that are freely available or b) basic standardized test techniques that you should have learned for the SAT. Such memorable advice as "Make sure you understand the directions" and "Choose an answer"... I did find the 100 math tips to be very helpful, which means that I found 26 of the 352 pages to be helpful. I have not looked at the CD. Perhaps that is helpful? For now I will focus on the study guide from the ETS itself. That book provides actual test questions with explanations. So if a book costs \$37 and has 352 pages but only 26 pages are useful, what should the price P of the book be?

I am rather surprised at the low overall customer-review rating of this book. I used a combination of online sample tests, the Kaplan book, the Princeton Review and ETS study guides. Of these resources, I feel the Kaplan more closely replicated the questions on the actual GMAT. My score

from taking the Kaplan book's exams were consistently within 10 points of my actual score, proving there is incredible similarity between Kaplan's questions and ETS'. The Princeton Review book has reasonable sample questions as well, but explanation as how to arrive at an answer simply don't make a lot of sense. The study CD ETS mails out once you signed up for the test is just incredibly too easy. I steadily scored 700+ every time I took an ETS sample test... my actual was nearly 100 points less. :(The GMAT test knowledge you've built over the years; in reality there's little you can do to significantly increase your score, but you do stand a better chance of feeling prepared by using using these guides. In the end, the Kaplan book was the highest-quality study material on the market.

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