

## GRE Preparation

In general, it is a good idea to prepare for the test in the summer and then take the general test at the end of summer or beginning of fall, and then take it again a month later if necessary (if the first score isn't good and you think you can improve it). You should know that if, for some reason, you have a major problem during the first test, you can choose to cancel your scores and not have them reported. This is rarely necessary. Scores are kept for five years, and if you take the test multiple times you can choose which scores to send to your schools (or show all the scores).

The advising center prepared the following web information for our students preparing for the GRE. It has a nice overview of how to prepare, so you might want to look at it. I will expand on some of its points below

<http://www.gvsu.edu/clasadvising/getting-ready-for-the-gre-65.htm> Be sure to take a look at the powerpoint show, which has a lot of good suggestions and information.

With regard to studying: There are several options. I will highlight them, and give my perspective and some options to consider.

- (1) On the computers in the computer labs, if you check the psychology folder, there are a few GRE practice tests there that can get you started. Take one, see what score you get, study using approaches below, and then make take another at the end of your studying (timed) to get an idea of how you are doing before the actual test.
- (2) On the GRE website they also offer some practice materials for free. If you look under the General test, they have lots of sample questions. They also gave HRE Powerprep software that you can download for free. It has a bunch of free practice materials and two full length computerized tests that are actual old tests that you can take. You might want to take one at the start, just to get an idea how your scores look before you begin studying and also to identify what your strengths and weaknesses so you can focus your studying. (It will give you the scores and I think show what you got right and wrong). I would start here.

Stanley Kaplan has courses for the GRE if you google it (or try [Kaptest.com/gre](http://Kaptest.com/gre)). They range from \$500-\$1,200 and include both classroom and on line options. They also have a "quiz bank" on line for \$199. This is a reputable organization and their courses are very good. They do have some free practice materials on line at this website that might be useful as well.

Personally, I wouldn't even consider the courses that are \$600 or \$1000—I don't think they could possibly be worth that. The Kaplan "crash course" (28 day on line course) or "quiz bank" are worth considering—particularly the crash course, if you are running out of time. However, I would check first to see what you can get cheaply and quickly as a book and then maybe add those options if needed. If you do decide just to go with the Kaplan on line study option (which would be the fastest to get your hands on), I would combine it with the GRE free materials, some sort of study book (maybe Kaplan—see below), and possibly the Kaplan quiz bank or least expensive course options to give more practice with the exam on computer or more practice questions if necessary. This probably is more than you need, but you could pick and choose from each resource as you study.

- (3) Kaplan makes books that you can buy that will help you study. They are very good, and they are much cheaper—around \$30 with the CDs and practice tests. I'm looking at the 2015 Premier program with the disk. For more options search "GRE prep Kaplan" on the Barnes and Noble website. The Kaplan website might also have other materials that would be useful (a few are free).
- (4) I think the books with practice CDs might offer the most for the money. Either books or in the "crash course" on line (above) they will offer general strategies for improving that could be very helpful. Those strategies are not available through the GRE website.

Generally, studying improves math scores more than vocabulary scores. If you want to use flash cards to learn vocabulary, you can Google "free flash cards" and find places to look to make your own flash cards. You can also go to the website <http://www.paigefiller.com/free-rice/> and I have heard it can help you build your vocabulary.

If you are rusty on Geometry formulas, Cliff notes Geometry books are a useful reference. Search "cliff notes geometry" at the Barnes and Noble website —the GRE is mostly basic math plus algebra and geometry (not trigonometry or higher level math).

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