

JOSAA GUIDE 2026

IIT JOSAA COUNSELLING & CHOICE FILLING GUIDE 2026

A Step-by-Step Rank-Wise Analysis & Strategy Book for Class 12
Graduates

Based on Actual JoSAA Data

Category: OPEN, Gender-Neutral (Final Rounds)

Target Audience: Engineering Aspirants & Class 12 Passouts

Includes: 6 Rank-Range Master Data Tables & Strategy Walkthroughs

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This handbook is designed to guide you through the maze of IIT seat allocation using real data. Turn to the section that matches your CRL rank tier to begin planning your career choice.

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How to use this book:

All data presented is derived from official closing ranks for the **OPEN, Gender-Neutral** category. If you belong to a reserved category or qualify for female-only supernumerary seats, your effective choice-filling boundaries will look wider, but you can use this text as a benchmark for baseline institutional rankings.

1. Introduction to JoSAA 2026 Counselling

Congratulations on clearing the JEE Advanced examination! Securing a position among the top achievers in the nation is a historic feat. However, cracking the exam is only half the battle. The final hurdle is the Joint Seat Allocation Authority (JoSAA) counselling, where smart decision-making often beats out raw rank differences.

Many students with excellent ranks miss out on their dream branches or colleges because they do not understand how choice filling works. This guide will translate complex closing rank patterns into regular, readable advice to ensure you lock in the best combination of IIT and academic branch.

2. Step-by-Step JoSAA Choice Filling Process

The JoSAA portal operates on a fully automated system. It evaluates your preference list starting from Choice #1 down to your final choice. Once you qualify for a seat based on merit, the system assigns it immediately, ignoring any options listed below it.

The 5 Crucial Steps of JoSAA Portal

Step 1: Registration Online log-in on the official JoSAA portal using your JEE Advanced registration credentials to verify your profile details.

Step 2: Choice Filling Entering an unlimited list of IIT/NIT/IIIT programs in a descending, strict order of personal preference.

Step 3: Mock Seat Allotment A practice run conducted by JoSAA to show you what seat you might get based on current trend lines.

Step 4: Locking & Freezing Choices Final binding electronic submission of your preference list before the hard closing deadline.

Step 5: Seat Acceptance & Options Selecting *Freeze* (keep the seat permanently), *Slide* (accept the seat but look for a better branch in the same IIT), or *Float* (accept the seat but look for any better choice in any higher-ranked IIT).

The Golden Rule of Choice Filling

Always list your dream colleges at the top, even if your rank is lower than their past cutoffs. The algorithm checks sequentially. Placing a lower-preference option above a dream choice will permanently block you from your dream branch if you meet the cutoff for the lower option.



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3. Strategy Tier 1: Ranks Below 500 (The Elite Bracket)

If your Common Rank List (CRL) rank is under 500, you are among the topmost layer of minds in the country. The country's premier computer science departments are open to you. Your major decision lies between choosing the exact old IIT campus (Bombay vs. Delhi) vs. branch comfort.

Official Closing Ranks Data (Below 500 Range)

IIT Name	Course Name	Closing Rank (2025 Data)
Indian Institute of Technology Bombay	Computer Science and Engineering	66
Indian Institute of Technology Delhi	Computer Science and Engineering	126
Indian Institute of Technology Madras	Computer Science and Engineering	171
Indian Institute of Technology Kanpur	Computer Science and Engineering	271
Indian Institute of Technology Bombay	Electrical Engineering	433
Indian Institute of Technology Kharagpur	Computer Science and Engineering	466

How to Make Your Choice: Guide & Examples

In this top tier, your choices are dominated by Computer Science and Engineering (CSE) at the traditional top-five institutions. If your rank is below 66, IIT Bombay CSE stands as the definitive crown jewel. Between ranks 66 and 126, IIT Delhi CSE is the primary target.

Example Scenario (Student A - Rank 150): Student A wants Computer Science but cannot make the IIT Bombay or IIT Delhi cutoffs for CSE. They have two main paths:

- **Option X:** Choose CSE at IIT Madras (Closes at 171) or IIT Kanpur (Closes at 271). This prioritizes the branch.
- **Option Y:** Choose Electrical Engineering at IIT Bombay (Closes at 433) or IIT Delhi. This prioritizes the campus life, startup ecosystem, and geographical culture of Mumbai/Delhi, intending to code on the side.

Strategic Insight for Top 500

Do not look down on Electrical Engineering (EE) at IIT Bombay or Delhi. It is an extremely prestigious branch and opens identical corporate consulting, finance, and software engineering opportunities as CSE, while maintaining deep academic value in hardware and AI systems.

4. Strategy Tier 2: Ranks Between 500 – 1,000 (Top-Tier Balance)

This bracket offers an interesting strategic mix. While core CSE at the absolute top three IITs (Bombay, Delhi, Madras) is filled, you have premium access to CSE at the remaining traditional powerhouses alongside elite secondary branches at the primary campuses.

Official Closing Ranks Data (500 – 1,000 Range)

IIT Name	Course Name	Closing Rank (2025 Data)
Indian Institute of Technology Roorkee	Computer Science and Engineering	562
Indian Institute of Technology Delhi	Electrical Engineering	595
Indian Institute of Technology Hyderabad	Computer Science and Engineering	673
Indian Institute of Technology Guwahati	Computer Science and Engineering	792
Indian Institute of Technology Bombay	Electrical Engineering (Dual Degree)	841
Indian Institute of Technology Madras	Electrical Engineering	849
Indian Institute of Technology Kharagpur	Artificial Intelligence	953
Indian Institute of Technology Bombay	BS in Mathematics	957

How to Make Your Choice: Guide & Examples

This tier presents a classic dilemma: **Branch vs. College Brand value**. You can opt for Computer Science at high-performing institutions like IIT Roorkee (562), IIT Hyderabad (673), and IIT Guwahati (792). Alternatively, you can step into Electrical Engineering at IIT Delhi (595) or IIT Madras (849).

Example Scenario (Student B - Rank 700): Student B wants maximum exposure and a strong tech career line. Looking at the data:

- They narrowly missed IIT Roorkee CSE (562) and IIT Delhi Electrical (595).
- Their direct matches are **IIT Hyderabad CSE (673)** and **IIT Guwahati CSE (792)**.
- However, they can also pick the 5-Year Electrical Dual Degree at **IIT Bombay (841)**.
- **Recommendation:** If deep tech/coding is the exclusive goal, IIT Hyderabad's custom-built tech curriculum is fantastic. If they seek the alumni network of the country's most selective campus, IIT Bombay's Dual Degree provides massive leverage.

Rising Star Highlight: IIT Hyderabad & IIT Kharagpur AI

IIT Hyderabad CSE closing at 673 demonstrates its incredible prestige, rivaling older counterparts due to its research-heavy environment and proximity to Hyderabad's tech hub. Similarly, IIT Kharagpur's specialized Artificial Intelligence program (953) is a modern option tailored for future data scientists.



5. Strategy Tier 3: Ranks Between 1,000 – 2,000 (The Core Growth Tier)

Ranks in the 1,000 to 2,000 range put you in a sweet spot for specialized mathematical sciences, electrical fields at mature campuses, or flagship computer science lines at prestigious mid-tier entries.

Official Closing Ranks Data (1,000 – 2,000 Range)

IIT Name	Course Name	Closing Rank (2025 Data)
Indian Institute of Technology Guwahati	Data Science and Artificial Intelligence	1078
Indian Institute of Technology Kanpur	Mathematics and Computing	1129
Indian Institute of Technology Kanpur	Electrical Engineering	1166
Indian Institute of Technology Madras	Engineering Physics	1441
Indian Institute of Technology Kharagpur	Electronics and Communication Engineering	1485
Indian Institute of Technology Roorkee	Electronics and Communication Engineering	1486
Indian Institute of Technology (BHU) Varanasi	Computer Science and Engineering	1489
Indian Institute of Technology Bombay	Engineering Physics	1539
Indian Institute of Technology Indore	Computer Science and Engineering	1775
Indian Institute of Technology Bombay	Mechanical Engineering	1834
Indian Institute of Technology Delhi	Mechanical Engineering	1862
Indian Institute of Technology Hyderabad	Electrical Engineering	1900
Indian Institute of Technology Kharagpur	Electrical Engineering	1985

How to Make Your Choice: Guide & Examples

This bracket introduces **Mathematics & Computing (MnC)** and **Electronics & Communication (ECE)**. MnC is a heavily mathematically intensive domain that acts as a direct pathway into quantitative finance, algorithmic trading, and high-end machine learning roles.

Do Not Misinterpret Engineering Physics (EP)

Programs like IIT Madras EP (1441) and IIT Bombay EP (1539) are brilliant but theoretically dense. Do not pick them simply to step into a campus unless you have a genuine love for quantum mechanics, advanced optics, and mathematical physics. If your end goal is traditional corporate management or basic coding, look toward ECE or Mechanical options instead.

Choice Ordering Strategy (Rank 1450): A student standing at 1,450 should list options down to the single digit level of placement:

1. IIT Kanpur - Mathematics and Computing (Targeting a minor variance drop)
2. IIT Kanpur - Electrical Engineering
3. IIT Kharagpur - Electronics & Communication Engineering (Extremely high tech value)
4. IIT Roorkee - Electronics & Communication Engineering
5. IIT (BHU) Varanasi - Computer Science and Engineering (Direct CSE fallback)

6. Strategy Tier 4: Ranks Between 2,000 – 5,000 (Mid-IIT Matrix)

The 2,000 to 5,000 range is one of the widest clusters where students often get overwhelmed. This tier unlocks flagship mechanical lines at top-tier IITs, core aerospace studies, and top-billed computer engineering positions at rapidly developing regional IIT campuses.

Official Closing Ranks Data (2,000 – 5,000 Range)

IIT Name	Course Name	Closing Rank (2025 Data)
Indian Institute of Technology Bombay	Aerospace Engineering	2361
Indian Institute of Technology Madras	Mechanical Engineering	2468
Indian Institute of Technology Ropar	Computer Science and Engineering	2512
Indian Institute of Technology Delhi	Chemical Engineering	2548
Indian Institute of Technology Kanpur	Mechanical Engineering	2771
Indian Institute of Technology Jodhpur	Computer Science and Engineering	2918
Indian Institute of Technology Mandi	Computer Science and Engineering	3123
Indian Institute of Technology Patna	Computer Science and Engineering	3377
Indian Institute of Technology Roorkee	Mechanical Engineering	3857
Indian Institute of Technology Kharagpur	Mechanical Engineering	4016
Indian Institute of Technology Bombay	Civil Engineering	4250
Indian Institute of Technology Delhi	Civil Engineering	4302
Indian Institute of Technology Hyderabad	Mechanical Engineering	4443

How to Make Your Choice: Guide & Examples

In this window, you must choose between a highly demanding, specialized branch at a legacy campus or a top-tier core computer science branch at an established second-generation campus.

The Crossroad Evaluation (Rank 2600): Consider three student profiles at this rank:

- **Profile A (The Core Tech Specialist):** Selects *IIT Ropar CSE (2512)* or *IIT Jodhpur CSE (2918)*. They bypass the vintage tag of older colleges to gain immediate coding project environments and localized software tech placement support.
- **Profile B (The Corporate/Consulting Aspirational):** Chooses *IIT Delhi Chemical Engineering (2548)* or *IIT Kanpur Mechanical (2771)*. They are looking to leverage the massive alumni presence of Delhi/Kanpur to enter strategic operations, analytics, consulting, or tech management fields.
- **Profile C (The Aerospace Enthusiast):** Will explicitly place *IIT Bombay Aerospace (2361)* above all else, aiming for deep space-tech, fluid dynamics, and defense simulation careers.

The Strategic Shift in Choice Filling

If you prefer an open career path (Civil/Chemical) at legacy institutions, ensure you review the college policy on **branch changes (depchange)** or check the flexibility of opting for **Open Electives / Minor Degrees** in Computer Science during your semesters. This lets you combine a top-tier college tag with tech skills.

7. Strategy Tier 5: Ranks Between 5,000 – 10,000 (The Diversified Fields)

Ranks between 5,000 and 10,000 allow you to explore a variety of choices across different campuses. You can opt for foundational civil engineering or applied sciences at top-tier legacy campuses, or secure high-demand tech seats at standard regional and newer IIT locations.

Official Closing Ranks Data (5,000 – 10,000 Range)

IIT Name	Course Name	Closing Rank (2025 Data)
Indian Institute of Technology Delhi	Textile Technology	5733
Indian Institute of Technology Palakkad	Computer Science and Engineering	5811
Indian Institute of Technology Madras	Civil Engineering	6112
Indian Institute of Technology Kanpur	Civil Engineering	6161
Indian Institute of Technology Goa	Computer Science and Engineering	6242
Indian Institute of Technology Jammu	Computer Science and Engineering	6651
Indian Institute of Technology Roorkee	Civil Engineering	6870
Indian Institute of Technology Bombay	Chemistry (4 Years, Bachelor of Science)	7228
Indian Institute of Technology (BHU) Varanasi	Mechanical Engineering	7286
Indian Institute of Technology Bhilai	Computer Science and Engineering	7382
Indian Institute of Technology Indore	Mechanical Engineering	7545
Indian Institute of Technology Patna	Electrical and Electronics Engineering	7582
Indian Institute of Technology Kharagpur	Civil Engineering	7774
Indian Institute of Technology Bombay	Applied Geophysics	8343
Indian Institute of Technology Guwahati	Civil Engineering	9021

How to Make Your Choice: Guide & Examples

At this stage, your choices open up significantly. For instance, you can choose to study **Civil Engineering** at premier institutions like IIT Madras (6112), IIT Kanpur (6161), or IIT Roorkee (6870). Alternatively, you can secure a **Computer Science (CSE)** seat at newer IIT campuses like Palakkad (5811), Goa (6242), Jammu (6651), or Bhilai (7382).

Evaluating New IITs for Computer Science

Newer IITs (like Palakkad, Jammu, or Bhilai) provide the coveted "IIT CSE" tag, but keep in mind they may still be developing their permanent campuses and have smaller alumni networks compared to the older generation. If you are highly self-motivated and focused on coding, these branches are excellent choices. However, if you are looking for a vibrant campus culture and established placement cells, opting for core engineering branches (like Mechanical or Civil) at older IITs may serve you better.

Example Scenario (Student D - Rank 6500): Student D wants a reliable, high-paying job in tech but also values campus infrastructure. Looking at the data:

- **Path 1:** List *IIT Palakkad CSE (5811)* or *IIT Goa CSE (6242)* as top priorities. This secures a direct tech track.
- **Path 2:** Select *IIT Madras Civil (6112)* or *IIT Kanpur Civil (6161)*. Here, they can learn programming independently while benefiting from the extensive resources and networks of a premier campus.
- **Path 3:** Look for a balanced middle ground, such as *IIT (BHU) Varanasi Mechanical (7286)* or *IIT Patna Electrical & Electronics (7582)*. This combines a solid branch with an established institutional setup.

8. Strategy Tier 6: Ranks Between 10,000 – 20,000 (Smart & Niche Selections)

Securing a rank between 10,000 and 20,000 in JEE Advanced is a notable achievement that keeps your dream of studying at an IIT very much alive. At this level, success comes down to exploring niche specialized courses or choosing core engineering tracks at second-generation institutions.

Official Closing Ranks Data (10,000 – 20,000 Range)

IIT Name	Course Name	Closing Rank (2025 Data)
Indian Institute of Technology Tirupati	Mechanical Engineering	11023
Indian Institute of Technology Indore	Metallurgical Engineering and Materials Science	11274
Indian Institute of Technology Palakkad	Mechanical Engineering	12606
Indian Institute of Technology Goa	Mechanical Engineering	13451
Indian Institute of Technology Kharagpur	Applied Geology (4 Years, BS)	13685
Indian Institute of Technology Mandi	Civil Engineering	14274
Indian Institute of Technology (BHU) Varanasi	Pharmaceutical Engineering & Technology	14447
Indian Institute of Technology Jammu	Mechanical Engineering	14453
Indian Institute of Technology Bhilai	Mechanical Engineering	14788
Indian Institute of Technology Jodhpur	Materials Engineering	15034
Indian Institute of Technology Patna	Civil Engineering	15400
Indian Institute of Technology (ISM) Dhanbad	Mining Engineering	15455
Indian Institute of Technology Roorkee	Architecture (5 Years, B.Arch)	17665
Indian Institute of Technology Kharagpur	Architecture (5 Years, B.Arch)	19141

How to Make Your Choice: Guide & Examples

In this rank range, your strategy should focus on uncovering hidden gems. For example, **IIT Indore Metallurgical Engineering (11274)** offers an excellent research facilities on a well-developed campus. Similarly, specialized programs like **IIT (BHU) Varanasi Pharmaceutical Engineering (14447)** provide access to the vast alumni network and resources of a top legacy institution.

Important Note on Architecture (B.Arch) Courses

Courses like IIT Roorkee Architecture (17665) and IIT Kharagpur Architecture (19141) require you to pass the **Architecture Aptitude Test (AAT)**. Do not add these choices to your list unless you have cleared the AAT and have a genuine interest in structural design and architectural theory, as these are rigorous 5-year professional tracks.

Example Scenario (Student E - Rank 14,000): Student E wants to study at an IIT but needs a practical choice list. A smart preference layout might look like this:

1. IIT Indore - Metallurgical Engineering & Materials Science (Ambitious top choice)
2. IIT Tirupati - Mechanical Engineering
3. IIT Palakkad - Mechanical Engineering
4. IIT Kharagpur - Applied Geology (Prioritizing the brand name of a premier campus)
5. IIT (BHU) Varanasi - Pharmaceutical Engineering
6. IIT (ISM) Dhanbad - Mining Engineering (A strong, reliable option with excellent placement opportunities in the core sector)

9. Summary and Crucial Advisory Note

As you prepare your final choice-filling list, keep in mind that the trends from 2025 serve as a helpful guide, but cutoffs can shift based on student preferences each year.

Ranks Beyond 20,000

According to the official data, **no OPEN, Gender-Neutral academic programs closed above the 20,000 rank tier**. Programs extending into the 20,000+ rank bracket are reserved for specific categories and Female-only supernumerary seats. If you are an open category student with a rank beyond 20,000, your focus should shift toward premium options within the NIT+, IIIT, and GFTI systems via JoSAA and CSAB rounds.

Final Checklists Before Locking Options

- **Verify the Duration:** Pay close attention to whether a program is a 4-year B.Tech or a 5-year Integrated Dual Degree (B.Tech + M.Tech). Ensure you are comfortable with the timeline before committing.
- **Avoid Blanks:** Fill out as many reasonable choices as possible. Leaving your list too short carries the risk of receiving no allotment at all by the end of the final rounds.
- **Trust Your Interests:** If you love coding, choose a second-generation IIT CSE over a legacy campus field you may not enjoy. Your four years at college will shape your path ahead—make them count!

All the best for your JoSAA 2026 Choice Filling!