

YOUR STEP-BY-STEP JOSAA GUIDE

# Freeze, Float, or Slide?

The JoSAA 2026 Decision Guide for Class 12 Students

**Mastering the Seat Allocation Process**

Clear, simple rules to help you lock your dream college

Edition: JoSAA 2026

## Introduction: Welcome to JoSAA 2026!

Congratulations on clearing your exams! Preparing for JEE Main and JEE Advanced was a tough journey. But now that your results are out, you are entering the most critical stage: **JoSAA Counseling (Joint Seat Allocation Authority)**.

Many students think that the hardest part is over once they get a rank. In reality, filling choices and making the right decisions during the counseling rounds is just as important. One wrong click can make you lose a seat you rightfully earned!

When JoSAA allots you a seat in any round, you cannot just sit back. You have to tell the system what you want to do with that seat. To do this, JoSAA gives you three simple but highly important options:

- **Freeze**
- **Float**
- **Slide**

This handbook is written in very simple language specifically for Class 12 students. We will break down exactly what these words mean, share real student stories, highlight common traps, and tell you the best strategy whether you want to go to an IIT, NIT, IIIT, or GFTI.

## 1. What Each Option Means

When you get a seat allocated in a JoSAA round, think of it as a temporary booking. To hold onto this booking, you must pay the seat acceptance fee and upload your documents. Along with that, you must choose one of the three options below to decide your future rounds.

### 1. FREEZE (Locking Your Seat)

Choosing "Freeze" means you are 100% satisfied with the college and the branch you have been given. You do not want to participate in any further rounds of counseling. You are saying: *"This is perfect. Stop looking. Lock my seat!"*

Once you Freeze, your counseling ends. You will download your provisional seat allotment letter and wait for the college to call you for physical reporting.

### 2. FLOAT (Upgrading College and Branch)

Choosing "Float" means you accept your current seat, but you want to check if you can get a better choice in future rounds. This "better choice" can be **any higher preference**

on your choice-filling list—whether it is a completely different college or a better branch in the same college.

If you get a higher choice in the next round, your old seat is automatically cancelled and given to someone else. If you do not get a higher choice, you keep your current seat. You are saying: *"I like this seat, but keep checking my higher choices across all colleges!"*

### 3. SLIDE (Upgrading Branch within the Same College)

Choosing "Slide" is very similar to Float, but with one big restriction. You accept your current seat, but you only want an upgrade

**within the exact same college**

. You do not want to change your college under any circumstances.

You are saying: *"I absolutely love this college, but I want a better branch if a vacancy opens up right here!"*

## Quick Summary Table

| Option        | Do you keep the current seat?       | Can your college change?      | Can your branch change?       |
|---------------|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| <b>Freeze</b> | Yes (Permanently Fixed)             | No                            | No                            |
| <b>Float</b>  | Yes (Until you get a higher choice) | Yes (Only to a higher choice) | Yes (Only to a higher choice) |
| <b>Slide</b>  | Yes (Until you get a higher choice) | No (Stays the same college)   | Yes (Only to a higher branch) |

## 2. Real Student Scenarios

Let's look at real-life stories of students to understand exactly when to use each option. Meet Rahul, Priya, and Amit.

### Scenario A: When to choose FREEZE (Rahul's Story)

#### Rahul's Choice List:

1. IIT Bombay - Computer Science
2. IIT Delhi - Computer Science
3. IIT Kharagpur - Computer Science

In Round 1, Rahul gets allocated his **Choice Number 2: IIT Delhi - Computer Science**. Rahul is thrilled! He lives in Delhi, his parents want him to stay nearby, and Computer Science at IIT Delhi has been his dream since Class 11. He doesn't care about IIT Bombay anymore.

**What should he do?** Rahul should choose **Freeze**. He has no reason to wait for further rounds because he got exactly what he wanted. By freezing, he secures his admission and can relax.

### Scenario B: When to choose FLOAT (Priya's Story)

#### Priya's Choice List:

5. NIT Trichy - Electronics & Communication (ECE)
6. VNIT Nagpur - Computer Science (CSE)
7. NIT Rourkela - Mechanical Engineering

In Round 1, Priya gets allocated her **Choice Number 7: NIT Rourkela - Mechanical**. She is happy to secure an NIT, but her real dream is to study CSE or ECE at a top-tier NIT like Trichy or Nagpur, which are listed higher up as choices 5 and 6.

**What should she do?** Priya must choose **Float**. This ensures that her Mechanical seat at NIT Rourkela is safe. If a seat opens up in Nagpur CSE or Trichy ECE in Round 2, she will get it automatically. If not, she still has her Rourkela seat.

## Scenario C: When to choose SLIDE (Amit's Story)

### Amit's Choice List:

10. IIT Roorkee - Data Science
11. IIT Roorkee - Electrical Engineering
12. IIT Roorkee - Mechanical Engineering
13. IIT Guwahati - Civil Engineering

In Round 1, Amit is allotted **Choice Number 12: IIT Roorkee - Mechanical Engineering**. Amit's family has a legacy at IIT Roorkee, and he absolutely refuses to go anywhere else. He loves the campus. However, he would prefer Electrical or Data Science over Mechanical if given a choice.

**What should he do?** Amit should choose **Slide**. Since choices 10 and 11 are in the same college (IIT Roorkee), choosing Slide tells JoSAA: *"Keep me at IIT Roorkee, but move me up to Electrical or Data Science if a seat opens up!"*. It completely avoids any risk of him being moved to another college.

### 3. Common Mistakes to Avoid

Every year, thousands of students lose their hard-earned seats because of tiny, careless mistakes. Pay close attention to these rules!

#### **Mistake 1: Not performing online reporting after Round 1**

If you get a seat in Round 1, you **MUST** log in, upload documents, and pay the seat acceptance fee, even if you hate the seat and plan to Float. If you do not report online, JoSAA assumes you are not interested, throws you out of the entire counseling process, and your seat is gone forever!

#### **Mistake 2: Poor choice filling before Float/Slide**

Remember, Float and Slide can only move you **UPWARDS** on your choice list. They can never move you down. If you accidentally put a bad college or an unwanted branch above your current allotment, a Float choice could force you into that bad college. You cannot say, *"Go back to my previous round seat."* The older seat is gone immediately when a higher option hits.

#### **Mistake 3: Forgetting the difference between Float and Slide**

If you choose Slide, you lock your college. If you choose Float, you keep your options open across all colleges. Do not choose Slide if you are open to going to a better branch in a different, higher-ranked college.

#### **Pro-Tip for 2026 Aspirants**

Treat your choices like a strict ladder. Every step up must be a step better. Never fill a choice just to fill up the form. If you wouldn't pack your bags and go to that college, do not put it on your list!

## 4. Best Choice for IIT, NIT, IIIT and GFTI Candidates

Your strategy should change based on what type of college you are targeted for and what your goals are. Let's look at the best practices:

### IIT Candidates (Indian Institutes of Technology)

- **Brand vs. Branch:** If you get a lower branch in top IITs (like IIT Bombay, Delhi, or Madras) and your goal is purely the "IIT Brand", you should choose **Slide** to try for a better branch within that same premium college.
- **Float for Multi-IIT options:** If you are flexible between colleges (e.g., happy with both IIT Kanpur and IIT Kharagpur), use **Float** to see where you get the best combination of branch and campus.

### NIT and IIIT Candidates (National Institutes of Technology / Indian Institutes of Information Technology)

- **The Branch is King:** In IIITs and NITs, placement packages depend heavily on your branch (CSE/ECE vs lower core branches). If you have got an ordinary branch in a top NIT, it is almost always smarter to **Float** to catch a computer science or electronics seat in another good NIT/IIIT.
- **Location Factors:** If you want to stay in your home state and scored an NIT seat through the Home State quota, use **Slide** to advance your branch while staying close to home.

### GFTI Candidates (Government Funded Technical Institutes)

- **Always Keep Floating:** GFTI cutoffs change drastically during later rounds. If you get a GFTI in early rounds, always choose **Float**. There is a high probability that you might upgrade to a good IIIT or a core branch in an NIT by the final rounds. Do not freeze a GFTI seat early unless it is your absolute last resort or your exact dream profile.

#### Final Words of Advice:

Take a deep breath, discuss options with your parents, and double-check your preference list numbers before choosing Freeze, Float, or Slide. Your hard work deserves the perfect landing. Good luck with your JoSAA 2026 seat allocation!