

Best Books for MBA Exam Preparation

A Curated Guide for CAT, XAT, GMAT & GRE Aspirants

This guide lists the most widely recommended books for MBA entrance exam preparation, organized by exam and section. Books by authors such as Arun Sharma, Sarvesh Verma, and Nishit K. Sinha remain the most trusted resources for Indian MBA exams like CAT, while GMAT and GRE aspirants targeting global programs should rely on official guides from GMAC and ETS.

1. CAT & Other Indian MBA Exams (XAT, SNAP, NMAT, CMAT)

The Common Admission Test (CAT) is India's most popular MBA entrance exam, testing Quantitative Aptitude (QA), Verbal Ability & Reading Comprehension (VARC), and Data Interpretation & Logical Reasoning (DILR). The books below are consistently recommended by toppers and coaching institutes.

Quantitative Aptitude (QA)

Book	Author	Best For
How to Prepare for Quantitative Aptitude for CAT	Arun Sharma	Comprehensive concept building + huge question bank
Quantum CAT	Sarvesh Verma	Advanced problem-solving & shortcuts
Quantitative Aptitude for CAT	Nishit K. Sinha	Structured, exam-pattern aligned practice
Quantitative Aptitude for Competitive Examinations	R.S. Aggarwal	Building basic-to-intermediate fundamentals
NCERT Mathematics (Classes 8-10)	NCERT	Revisiting core concepts, ideal for non-engineering background

Verbal Ability & Reading Comprehension (VARC)

Book	Author	Best For
How to Prepare for Verbal Ability and Reading Comprehension for CAT	Arun Sharma & Meenakshi Upadhyay	All-round VARC preparation

Book	Author	Best For
Word Power Made Easy	Norman Lewis	Vocabulary building
High School English Grammar and Composition	Wren & Martin	Grammar fundamentals
30 Days to a More Powerful Vocabulary	Wilfred Funk & Norman Lewis	Quick vocabulary boost

Data Interpretation & Logical Reasoning (DILR)

Book	Author	Best For
How to Prepare for Data Interpretation for CAT	Arun Sharma	DI sets and caselets practice
Logical Reasoning and Data Interpretation for CAT	Nishit K. Sinha	Puzzle-based reasoning practice
A Modern Approach to Logical Reasoning	R.S. Aggarwal	Foundational reasoning concepts

Tip: You do not need every book on this list. One strong book per section, combined with a reliable mock test series and previous years' papers, is enough for focused preparation.

2. GMAT (Global MBA Programs)

The GMAT Focus Edition is widely accepted by international business schools. Official GMAC material should form the core of preparation, supplemented by third-party guides for practice.

Book	Publisher / Author	Best For
GMAT Official Guide (Focus Edition)	GMAC	Authentic questions straight from the test-maker
GMAT Official Advanced Questions	GMAC	Extra practice for 700+ scorers
Manhattan Prep GMAT All the Quant / All the Verbal	Manhattan Prep	Deep concept-wise strategy guides
Kaplan GMAT Complete Guide	Kaplan	Structured, beginner-friendly course-in-a-book
GMAT Critical Reasoning Bible	PowerScore	Mastering critical reasoning questions

3. GRE (Accepted by a Growing Number of MBA Programs)

Many business schools now accept GRE scores as an alternative to the GMAT, especially for dual-degree and international applicants.

Book	Publisher / Author	Best For
The Official Guide to the GRE General Test	ETS	Official practice questions and test overview
Manhattan Prep 5 lb. Book of GRE Practice Problems	Manhattan Prep	High-volume topic-wise practice
Barron's GRE	Barron's	Comprehensive review with practice tests
GRE Official Guide Verbal Reasoning & Quant. Reasoning (supplements)	ETS	Section-focused deep practice

4. General Preparation Tips

- Start with foundational books (NCERT / R.S. Aggarwal for CAT, Official Guides for GMAT/GRE) before moving to advanced material.
- Read newspaper editorials daily (The Hindu, The Guardian) to build reading speed and vocabulary for VARC/Verbal sections.
- Practice previous years' question papers under timed conditions to simulate real exam pressure.
- Prioritize a good mock test series over collecting too many books — consistency and analysis matter more than quantity.
- Keep a formula/vocabulary revision sheet for quick review in the final weeks before the exam.

Note: Book editions are updated frequently by publishers. Always check for the latest edition aligned with the current exam pattern before purchasing.