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The Official Guide For GMAT Verbal Review, 2nd Edition



Synopsis

The only official verbal review for the GMAT from the creators of the test. Anyone preparing for the Graduate Management Admission Test® (GMAT) knows it's important to study with the experts. With The Official GMAT Verbal Review, 2nd Edition, you'll get questions, answers, and explanations straight from the source. The only official verbal review for the GMAT Exam, this book targets your study and helps you improve your verbal skills by focusing on your ability to read and comprehend written material, to reason and evaluate arguments, and to correct written material to conform to standard English. Inside, you'll find 300 actual questions from past GMAT tests, including 75 questions new to this edition. Sections on Reading Comprehension, Critical Reasoning, Sentence Correction, and Analytical Writing Assessment Questions organized in order of difficulty to save study time. The Graduate Management Admission Council certifies all content so you can trust that you're getting expert guidance as you prepare for the GMAT Exam. The Graduate Management Admission Council® (GMAC) is the association of leading graduate business schools around the world. GMAC's mission is to meet the needs of business schools and students through a wide array of products, services, and programs. It is the owner and administrator of the Graduate Management Admissions Test® (GMAT), the first and only standardized test specifically designed for graduate business and management programs. Available in nearly 100 countries, it is the global standard for entry to the MBA degree course.

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Customer Reviews

The OG13 has flaws, as did its predecessors. Why five stars, then? Because, hands down, this latest incarnation of the OG is still the one book to get, if you can only get one book to prepare for the GMAT with. There's simply no better all-in-one source of retired GMAT problems. Could the explanations be better? Sure. Could the GMAT folks have replaced more than just 1 in 6 problems from the OG12? Absolutely. Why did some repeated problems illogically jump the line backwards or forwards, given that both OG12 and OG13 are supposed to be in order of difficulty? Who knows. All that said, the OG is still THE primary religious text of the GMAT. Everything else--including all that we write in print or in byte--is commentary. The 158 new problems in OG13 all exude that sweet, ineffable air of GMAT-ness. Even if you're taking the GMAT before the changeover (on June 5), in your shoes I'd buy this book for those new problems alone. In the grand scheme, I'd consider that a good investment. If you're taking the GMAT on June 5 or after, you also need to prepare for the new Integrated Reasoning section. This book gives you access to 50 IR practice problems on a separate site online. Another reason to purchase. Now, on to the analysis...

Analysis of the 13th Edition Official Guide (This analysis was originally published with additional content at [...])

The 13th Edition of the Official Guide for GMAT Review has finally been released publicly. Here at Manhattan GMAT, we've done an initial analysis of the OG13 book.

1. Not Radically Different

OG13 contains 907 practice problems for the "main" part of the GMAT (Quant & Verbal). Of those 907 problems, only 17% are new. Since you know your fraction equivalents, we don't have to tell you that 17% is about 1 out of 6. Out of 907 problems, 749 are repeats (yes, that's 5 out of 6). If you already have the 12th Edition, a good way to look at the 13th Edition is as a source of 158 great new practice problems. We've listed them by number at the end of this post.

Much of the book is unchanged from the 12th Edition:-

- For repeated problems, the explanations are identical, except for a few extremely minor edits (e.g., fixing an error in numbers chosen to test Statement 1 in DS #135).
- Various sections, such as the Diagnostic Exam (all 100 problems), Math Review, Test-Taking Strategies and Directions, are unchanged.
- Each of the 5 major types (PS, DS, RC, CR, and SC) has the same number of problems as before: 254 PS, 198 DS, 156 RC, 141 CR, and 158 SC.
- Excluding the Diagnostic Exam, practice questions are organized by difficulty, according to the GMAC--just as they are in the 12th edition--but with an asterisk we'll explain below.

We've done all the new problems, and they're just what you'd expect--good, clever GMAT problems. Each one has its own unique flavor, but they're all from the same big box of cookies. Given that only 1 in 6 are new, we don't ascribe too much meaning to the unavoidable micro-shifts in topical balance. Do not over-interpret changes from OG12 to OG13! Some variation is to be expected. Nothing suggests a shift in how you should prepare for the exam.

2. Transition If And When You're Comfortable

If you've been getting ready with

the 12th Edition, treat the 13th Edition as a source of additional practice. But you do not need to switch, especially if your exam is before June 5, when the new GMAT arrives. If you're taking an "old" GMAT, consider mining the 13th Edition for a few new problems. But your time may be better spent reviewing practice problems you've already encountered. Or you might just do online practice with GMATPrep, GMATFocus, or practice exams such as ours.

3. Integrated Reasoning is Integrated

If you are taking the "new" GMAT (on or after June 5), the OG13 has some relevant goodies for you: a short introduction to IR, plus access to 50 brand-new practice problems online. Even though the IR section won't count for much in the admissions process, you don't want to face it completely cold. Running through these 50 problems will help warm you up. In fact, you might catch fire and start freaking out about IR. If that happens, go dunk your head in water. IR is not that important. You just want to give it a decent shot. Save your strength for the main event of the GMAT.

4. Order Oddities

Both OG12 and OG13 claim to be laid out in order of difficulty (except for the 100 Diagnostics). Since all the problems are retired from the real exam, that order should never change--so you'd expect repeated problems to maintain their relative positions in the hierarchy. Weirdly, though, 25 repeated problems have jumped out of position. Here are the rebels:

Problem Solving: 13th Ed. | 12th Ed. | Change
 20 203 -18325 200 -17531 64 -3355 196 -14165
 28 3767 201 -13495 106 -11109 69 40126 228 -102132 93 39181 202 -21
Data Sufficiency: 13th Ed. | 12th Ed. | Change
 4 47 -4338 134 -9653 165 -11258 171 -11367 30 3778 137 -5981 58 23119
 173 -54120 147 -27125 107 18128 157 -29135 128 7143 161 -18166 132 34

While we've understood and agreed with the OG difficulty ordering in broad strokes, we've always wondered about some of the specific rankings. Is Marcia's Bucket (DS #174) truly the hardest DS problem on the planet, three editions running--11th, 12th, and 13th? That one has always bewildered us. The reshuffle is generally in the right direction, if we were doing the ranking of those 25 problems. For instance, we think that PS #69 in the 12th is harder than PS #196 in the 12th, not conceptually but in actual execution. Old #69 is tricky! Now the new numbering (#109 and #55, respectively, in OG13) reflects that opinion. However, the mystery is why this reshuffling is happening at all. If the problems were in relative order of difficulty in one edition, any repeats should stay in that order till the end of time--since the problems are most definitely retired! This weird reordering happened before on a smaller scale, when the supplemental Review OGs transitioned from 1st to 2nd Editions. One problem in each slipped out of position. That level of change could be chalked up to clerical error or to random genetic mutation caused by a stray cosmic ray or what have you. However, with 25 problems on the quant side (and none on the verbal side) acting illogically, we can only guess at something larger. It should be straightforward for the GMAT to measure

difficulty--it's a basic parameter for each question, a single number developed during the problem's experimental stage and then frozen. Perhaps, for a whole batch of questions, these parameters were recorded in a systematically erroneous way, and now GMAC is fixing the problem. Maybe the way GMAC measures difficulty has some quirks to it, and under an update to the algorithm these problems would somehow get a different ranking. Regardless, we don't think there's anything nefarious to all this--there's no reason that GMAC would deliberately mess with our heads. After all, the 10th Edition of the OG, for those of us who go back that far, was comfortably chaotic. It had no order whatsoever. The 11th Edition was the first one that the GMAT folks put in order of difficulty--and we all welcomed that change. It made studying so much more productive to know how hard a problem was to the GMAT, if only in relative terms. As we find out more on this matter, we'll let you all know.

5. Stay Tuned More generally, as we dig further into OG13, we'll keep you posted on any juicy discoveries. Again, we don't want to squint too hard at the tea leaves. We'll start seeing things that aren't really there: "Is there one more or one less Probability problem, and what signal is the GMAT sending...?" That road leads to madness. This OG is pretty much the same as the last one, just with some new good problems in it.

6. New Problems And now, what you've been waiting for... here are the new problem lists, all by number in the OG13. We're moving a couple of topics around ourselves, so these breakouts reflect the upcoming topical alignments.

Problem Solving: 12, 13, 14, 15, 37, 49, 56, 57, 60, 61, 69, 71, 75, 77, 78, 79, 80, 81, 91, 92, 108, 110, 112, 113, 114, 117, 118, 119, 127, 128, 129, 137, 158, 163, 166, 170, 177, 178, 182, 183, 196, 198, 199, 218, 229

PS Fractions, Decimals, & Percents: 15, 56, 57, 71, 80, 108, 113, 114, 163, 170, 177, 182, 198, 218

Digits & Decimals: 163, 170, 218

Fractions: 15, 80, 108

Percents: 57, 71, 114, 177, 182, 198

Ratios: 56, 113

PS Algebra: 14, 37, 117, 129, 196, 199

Linear Equations: 14

Exponents & Roots: 196

Quadratic Equations: 37, 117, 199

Formulas: 129

PS Word Problems: 12, 49, 60, 79, 81, 91, 112, 119, 137, 158, 178, 183

Algebraic Translations: 60, 137

Rates & Work: 49, 79, 81

Statistics: 12, 91, 112, 119, 183

Consecutive Integers: 158

Overlapping Sets: 178

PS Geometry: 13, 61, 69, 75, 78, 92, 166

Polygons: 13, 78, 166

Triangles & Diagonals: 75, 92

Circles & Cylinders: 69

Coordinate Plane: 61

PS Number Properties: 77, 110, 118, 127, 128, 229

Divisibility: 77, 110, 118, 127

Positives & Negatives: 229

Combinatorics: 128

Data Sufficiency: 11, 15, 18, 20, 22, 23, 24, 25, 29, 32, 33, 34, 37, 39, 41, 42, 52, 57, 65, 70, 74, 75, 79, 80, 83, 85, 92, 96, 97, 99, 102, 109, 123, 131, 133, 141

DS Fractions, Decimals, & Percents: 23, 25, 29, 75, 80, 92, 131, 133

Digits & Decimals: 75, 80, 133

Fractions: 29, 92, 131

Percents: 25

Ratios: 23

DS Algebra: 15, 24, 33, 41, 52, 85, 96, 99

Exponents & Roots: 15, 41

Quadratic Equations: 99

Formulas: 24, 96

Inequalities: 33, 52, 85

DS Word Problems: 18, 20, 22, 34, 37, 57, 65, 70, 109, 123, 141

Algebraic Translations:

57, 65, 141- Rates & Work: 22- Statistics: 20, 37, 70, 109, 123- Consecutive Integers: 18- Overlapping Sets: 34DS Geometry: 11, 42, 74, 79, 102- Polygons: 42- Triangles & Diagonals: 79- Circles & Cylinders: 102- Coordinate Plane: 11, 74DS Number Properties: 32, 39, 83, 97- Divisibility & Primes: 83- Positives & Negatives: 97- Odds & Evens: 32- Probability: 39Reading Comprehension: 1, 2, 3, 4; 11, 12, 13; 14, 15, 16, 17; 37, 38, 39, 40, 41; 52, 53, 54, 55; 84, 85, 86; 111, 112, 113, 114 (passages separated by semicolons)7 new passages- Length: 2 long, 5 short (3 of the shorts are just 1 big paragraph, though!)- Themes: 2 biological science, 2 business, 2 social science, and 1 physical scienceQuestion types:7 General questions (4 Main Idea, 3 Structure) - roughly 1 per new passage20 Specific questions (8 Detail, 12 Inference) - roughly 3 per new passageSince you'd never do all the questions of 1 type at once (you always do RC by passage), there's little point in breaking them out by number.Critical Reasoning: 1, 3, 6, 8, 9, 11, 12, 17, 19, 22, 29, 33, 39, 49, 59, 65, 69, 74, 81, 86, 94, 100, 106, 114, 124- Assumption: 106- Evaluate the Argument: 114, 124- Flaw: 8, 100- Strengthen: 1, 11, 19, 29- Explain the Discrepancy: 3, 6, 9, 17, 22, 49, 86, 94- Complete the Argument: 12, 33, 39, 59, 65, 69, 74, 81Sentence Correction: 1, 2, 4, 7, 9, 15, 19, 26, 35, 38, 40, 48, 56, 65, 68, 71, 74, 79, 87, 97, 107, 111, 114, 132, 138- Subject-Verb Agreement: 7- Parallelism: 4, 15, 38, 56, 74, 79, 87, 138- Pronouns: 111, 114- Modifiers: 1, 19, 35, 48, 65, 68, 132- Verbs: 40, 71- Comparisons: 9, 107- Connecting Punctuation: 2, 26, 97

I started GMAT Club - online MBA community; my GMAT score is 750 (49, 42), and here are my thoughts about this book:~~~ Strengths ~~~1. 907 real GMAT questions retired from past tests (158 new questions in this edition). The total has not changed2. Practice questions are organized by level of difficulty3. Practice questions follow actual GMAT test patterns (it's great to have one's ear trained, esp. in verbal)4. Contains a 100-question diagnostic test5. Overview of the Integrated Reasoning section (50 questions)~~~ Weaknesses ~~~1. Does not include any test-taking strategies2. Though it has a few short review sections for each area, they are weak and very unfriendly3. Questions are predominantly low to medium in difficulty which is often not representative of questions one encounters on the test4. There is an 83% overlap with the previous edition (12th edition). Compared to 66% overlap between OG 12 and OG 11~~~ Contents (number of questions per section)~~~1. Diagnostic Test - 100 questions2. Problem Solving - 230 questions3. Data Sufficiency - 174 questions4. Reading Comprehension - 139 questions5. Critical Reasoning - 124 questions6. Sentence Correction - 140 questions7. Integrated Reasoning - 50 questions (not included in the 907 count)~~~ What Questions Are New? ~~~* Problem Solving12, 13, 14, 15, 37, 49, 56, 57, 60, 61, 69, 71, 75, 77, 78, 79, 80, 81, 91, 92, 108, 110, 112, 113, 114, 117, 118, 119,

127, 128, 129, 137, 158, 163, 166, 170, 177, 178, 182, 183, 196, 198, 199, 218, 229.* Data Sufficiency 11, 15, 18, 20, 23, 24, 25, 29, 32, 33, 34, 37, 39, 41, 42, 52, 57, 65, 70, 74, 75, 79, 80, 83, 85, 92, 96, 97, 99, 102, 109, 123, 131, 133, 141.* Critical Reasoning 1, 3, 6, 8, 9, 11, 12, 17, 19, 22, 29, 33, 39, 49, 59, 65, 69, 74, 81, 86, 94, 100, 106, 114, 124* Reading Comprehension Passage 1 (Questions 1-4), Passages 4&5 (Questions 11-17), Passage 9 (Questions 37-41), Passage 12 (Questions 52-55), Passage 17 (Questions 84-86), Passage 22 (Questions 111-114)* Sentence Correction 1, 2, 4, 7, 9, 15, 19, 26, 35, 38, 40, 48, 56, 65, 68, 71, 74, 79, 87, 97, 107, 111, 114, 132, 138*** Why is this book valuable/must-have? The Official Guide is published by the creators of the GMAT and therefore it is the only source of actual GMAT questions representative of what you will see on the test.*** Why is the book not sufficient by itself? This Guide contains only questions and lacks insightful information about the test, a math/verbal concept review section, or any test-taking strategies. To get up to speed, you will need to get a study guide such as Kaplan Premier Program or Manhattan GMAT's 8 guides.*** How should this book be used? This book should NOT be used as a study-guide. It is a collection of questions - think of it as a way to practice your test-taking strategies but not a way to learn them.*** What if I own a previous edition of this book? If you have the 12th edition, the only differences between the two are 157 new questions and IR section overview (there is an online companion for IR). Most test-takers agree that 157 new questions is not a compelling enough reason to own both editions, as the 12th edition offers enough practice. However, if you are taking the test after June 5th, you do want this book for the IR section.*** What is a recommended study plan using The Official Guide? There are a number of approaches that work - here is one that most find reasonable: Step 1: Buy a GMAT Guide from Kaplan (will take about a month to cover it). Get familiar with the test and brush up on fundamentals (math and grammar); also these books will give you a good base for test-taking and timing strategies. This is enough for a 600-level score. I would also recommend to everyone to get GMAT Roadmap by MGMAT. It is a great book packed with common sense and student wisdom on how to best approach the GMAT. Step 2: Take a GMAT Prep (2 free tests downloadable from MBA.com) - but don't waste these; these are free but very valuable tests. Take 1 after you go through the Guidebooks and save the second one for later. These tests will be representative of your GMAT score (plus/minus 40 points). Step 3: (Optional - if you want a 650+ score) Get a specialized Math and/or Verbal workbook from Kaplan, the 8-book set from Manhattan GMAT, or Veritas Prep Guides and do a deep dive into the fundamentals - this is what will help you crack the test - solid knowledge of Math and Grammar. You should also look into the MGMAT Foundations of GMAT Verbal and MGMAT Foundations of GMAT Math. Step 4: By now you should have a good understanding of

question patterns, strategies, and timing. Start working on the Official Guide and honing your skills - this is especially important for Critical Reasoning questions that have certain unspoken patterns and rules that only the Official Guide offers - work through the questions to train your ear. Keep in mind that these questions are on the easier side if you are aiming for 650+.^{***} What are some of the good study suggestions?- Start with a practice test (diagnostic test)- You need quality time. It is really the quality time (morning for some and evening for others) that provides the most retention and results- Don't skip or move past a section until you're able to solve 90% of the questions correctly (timed of course). That is if you want 700+- Never solve questions without timing yourself (unless it is quick drills)- Don't jump into the hardest areas first - build confidence instead with what you know and can demonstrate progress at- Start every new day with the review of what you have learned the day before- Make notes for everything you cover - it helps tremendously to retain what you have learned even though you may never read them. The process of making notes is a very helpful learning experience. If nothing else works - use it- Finally, your practice tests are a usually a very good indicator of your performance. If you are getting 600 on your practice tests, there is about a 2% chance that you will get a 700 score. Do not be surprised when you score on real test a 600Any questions, please ask away - I reply to comments!Good luck on your test,BB, GMAT 750 (49, 42)

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