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There are dozens, if not hundreds, of GRE books on the market. So how are you going to find what's best for you? In this guide, we will first go over what makes a good GRE preparation book. We will then provide recommendations for the top eight GRE preparation book options for a variety of skill levels and needs. Finally, we will close with some other recommended features for your GRE preparation. What makes a good preparatory book gre? At the most basic level, a good GRE preparation book will help you get a higher GRE score. However, there are some key features that make a GRE preparation book particularly likely to help you get that highest score you're aiming at: Realistic GRE-Like Good GRE Questions will have practical issues that are as similar to real GRE questions as possible. This will allow you to familiarize yourself with the GRE question style and practice the specific skills you need to develop for gre success. Of course, the ideal are real and real GRE questions—but you can only get them through ETS. With the exception of this, a good GRE preparatory book will have issues that actually resemble and test the same concepts as the gre issues. Comprehensive answer explanations Good practice questions in the world are only of limited use if they are not accompanied by solid explanations of how to get the right answer. Thus, the best preparation books will not only have answer keys, they will have complete and profound explanations of why particular answers are correct. This allows you to easily understand what you are fighting with and what skills and strategies to target in later practice. Sound Test Making Strategies A good GRE study book offers clear, consistent and actionable advice on how to navigate the test. It should give you strategies for time management by making educated guesses and quickly identifying correct answers. Ideally, there should be general and section-specific strategies. Improve your strategy as a poker player improves theirs. Clear and cogent content review The best and most comprehensive GRE study books will include clear and detailed content review sections to help you improve your skills for the different gre areas. This should include help with GRE vocabulary and GRE math. Guidance on creating a GRE study plan Ideally, a GRE preparatory book should help you make a study plan. It will offer solid strategies to plan and space your studies in a way that will help you use your time efficiently and maximize your score improvement. Complete practice tests GRE test preparation books should also have tests so you can practice getting the full testing experience. In a perfect world, these will be computer-based, since GRE is (usually) computer-based. Of course, all gre books can't be all things to all people. A good GRE preparatory book doesn't necessarily need to have all these qualities to be valuable, but but you need to fulfill one or more specific purposes in your high-quality form preparation plan. For example, you might have a prep book that is full of amazing practice questions, and another that has a particularly good conceptual review of mathematics. Both can fulfill a valuable and necessary role in your study plan! Make sure your plan includes snacks. The Best Gre Preparatory Books we have scoured the stack of GRE study books to give you the best GRE books out there. Each GRE book listed is best for a specific or public purpose—consider the one(s) that best align with your needs! More Like The Real GRE: Official GRE Super Power Pack The ETS Power Pack offers three GRE books: the Official Guide to the General Gre Test (3rd Edition), Official Gre Quantitative Reasoning Practice Questions (2nd Edition) and the Official GRE Verbal Reasoning Practice questions with Analytical Writing Practice (2nd Edition). All these books are made by ETS, the creators of the GRE test. Generally speaking, the Official Guide guides you to the general test and for each section, provides practical questions for Verbal and Quant, a mathematical content review, and two practical tests. The Official Practice Questions books for Verbal/Analytical Writing and Quant reprint some of the same guiding information, but give additional questions about the official practice. This set also comes with a CD with hands-on testing, but these tests are the same as the powerprep II tests, so save yourself the problem with the CD and just download powerprep II directly for free. Price of About \$40 for the whole package; about \$27 for the Official Guide, about \$13 for official quantitative reasoning practice questions, and about \$12 for official verbal reasoning practice questions. However, note that the latest editions are very similar to previous editions of all these books, so if you can find the previous editions for cheaper, you may want to go with these. PROS ETS preparation materials have a great advantage over all other preparation materials; they include real and real GRE issues. Other prep books and companies do their best to mimic gre format, content, and style — and sometimes they get too close. But only ETS can give you official GRE questions. This makes the Power Pack an extremely valuable practice resource because the use of ets questions gives you the most gre-like experience. And the closer your practice is to the real GRE, the more prepared you will be to face real gre issues on test day. Cons Although ETS has a really huge professional, there are some disadvantages in its material to be aware of: Most information about testing strategies tips is available for free online on the GRE website. This is also true throughout the mathematical content review section. So don't expect you'll have something new here. This GRE book won't teach you much in the way of tricks and and need to use other features for this. ETS does not want to present GRE as a system that can be defeated because it is their test, and doing so would harm their self-styled image as the creators of a test that is highly predictive of graduate success. Some (but not all) of the practical issues can be found online. In addition, there are some (but not complete) overlaps in the practice of issues between books. Unfortunately, kindle editing is full of formatting errors—so get this as a print book. The answer explanations are not particularly complete; it is not always clear how the correct answer was achieved. Why take this preparation book from GRE? Despite its disadvantages, I recommend that most students at least receive the Official Guide. This will give you the two additional practice tests in addition to powerprep software. Official ETS testing is a large and scarce resource that makes the Official Guide worthwhile for that. If you feel you really need all the official ETS practice questions, you can get your hands on (which is totally reasonable!) the Powerpack at the way to go. Just be aware that most of the content review and guidance information is available for free online. The main value you will draw from these are the questions themselves. Only ETS questions receive the "official seal" of approval. Gre's Best Prep Book for Practice Problems: The 5-Pound Book of Practice Problems from Manhattan Prep The Manhattan Book of Practice Problems provides more than 1,000 pages of practice problems and comprehensive explanations. Buying the book also gives you access to an online bank of additional questions —bringing the total number of questions you have access to north of 1800. Note that this is not a practical test book. Although there are some sample gre sections that you can take in timed conditions, most of the book has practical questions segmented by section and skill. There is also no content review here, other than the revision inherent in response explanations. Price Around \$16 (Kindle and paperback) Pros Tons of GRE-like questions ranked specifically by different skills, section and difficulty level. This allows you to drill through very specific areas of weakness. Very complete and step-by-step answer explanations to help you know exactly how to get to the right choice. Access to online question banks will help you practice answering questions on a computer, which is how you'll take the real GRE. Ideas on how to approach the Analytical Writing example prompts. Cons Note that there are far more quantitative questions than Verbal or Analytical Writing questions. This is not necessarily a scam, but something be aware of. It is possible to get stuck in the large volume of questions here. Don't feel like you need to complete all the questions in the book. Some of the least difficult mathematical questions may be given how much GRE likes complicated questions. There is a vocabulary list on the back without definitions. This seems a bit out of scope, given that the book is actually intended to provide practice problems specifically. Why take that gre book? Get this book if you need targeted, GRE-style practice questions in addition to what ETS offers. I've got a pool of questions. Best GRE books for a comprehensive program: Manhattan Prep GRE Set of 8 Strategy Guides The set includes an impressive 8 GRE books on content review and preparation (most are quite thin, but still). Six of the eight books are in the main areas of mathematical content and question types: Algebra, fractions/decimals/percent, geometry, numerical properties, word problems, and a guide to the types of quantitative comparison and data interpretation questions. The other two books are about Verbal and Analytical Writing. One book is about reading comprehension and writing GRE essays, and one is about questions of text completion and sentence equivalence. Every book begins with the same chapter Introduction to GRE before reaching the main content. This is a bit repetitive within the context of the set, so I imagine that these introduction chapters are included so that those who buy GRE books individually can orient themselves to the test. If you don't need the whole set, you can also buy the books individually. However, getting the whole program is the best value. Purchasing this set (or any Book from Manhattan Prep) gives you 1-year access to six adaptive GRE practice tests from the online section. PPrice about \$96 for eight books; Individual books for \$12-15 Pros This is an extremely complete and in-depth GRE preparation program based on books. It is absolutely the most comprehensive preparation book system on the market, with robust content review, tons of practical questions and strategies for addressing each section. Practice problems have very comprehensive and in-depth response explanations. This set gives access to six online and adaptive section tests. This is a really amazing practice for the real GRE, which is also adaptable section. Once you run out of ETS practice tests, these are a valuable resource. Test-making strategies (and section-specific strategies) are useful in the test approach. As you can tell from the difference in pages dedicated to the various topics, this set is more comprehensive for Quant than for the other two sections. That's something to keep in mind if you anticipate particularly struggling with Verbal. There are some typos in math practice problems. This review can be really very comprehensive; it is possible to be by the large volume of content. You really have to be aware of where you spend your time to make the most of every hour of preparation. Some of the test strategies may be overly specific. You should try out the strategies they suggest to find out what works best for you and adjust your overall strategy as needed. Why take that gre book? If you have a lot of time to devote yourself to a comprehensive preparation program and you want it to come virtually pre-signed, this Manhattan Prep GRE set is a great investment. If the test is in three weeks, don't worry—you'll be overwhelmed with all the content. You may also want to purchase a subset of the books to reach a specific content area or section. For example, if you're good at Quant but want to dig into Verbal, you could buy the two verbally focused books. This will also give you access to the six adaptive online tests of the section. If you want a full and balanced meal of gre preparation, Manhattan Prep may be the way to go. Best gre preparatory book for verbal and analytical writing: Princeton Review: Cracking the GRE The Princeton Review preparatory book GRE has five parts. The first section provides general guidance for testing and general strategies. The second part passes over the Verbal section, the third part passes over the Quantitative section, and the fourth part goes over the Analytical Writing. The fifth part of the book has additional practice problems and two practical tests. The regular edition of the book comes with access to two additional online practice tests, and the premium edition gives you access to four online tests. Keep reading to think if it's worth it for the premium version. Price About \$16 for the standard, and about \$22 for Premium Professionals This GRE prep book has some of the best overall content reviews for the verbal and analytical writing sections I've ever seen. This book is great for preparing for these particular sections. Similarly, this preparatory book does a great job with verbal practice questions that look and feel like real verbal gre questions, and provides complete explanations of response to the Verbal section. Students liked the testing strategies offered in this book, and found the overall approach to testing as something that can be addressed with techniques to be encouraging and helpful. The purchase of this book gives access to complete online practice tests through the Princeton Review portal (2 for the regular version and 4 for the deluxe version). These online practice tests give detailed scoring reports—including for the essay section. Many COns students were very frustrated with the math section, and the math practice questions in particular. While some liked the content review, almost everyone felt that the questions were written in a frustrating and confusing way. In addition, there are some typos and errors in math questions and math answer keys. There seems to be intermittent difficulty in accessing content which can be frustrating if you want to be able to do practical tests on the computer. Why take this preparation book from GRE? Get this book for review of verbal content and Questions of verbal practice and analytical writing strategy. Don't worry about the practice problems of the math section. If you think you'll need many practical tests, it might be worth it for the deluxe version, especially if you're nervous about doing a computer-based test. But most students should be fine with the standard version. Unfortunately, medieval-style lighting is not part of the verbal section of gre. Best gre prep book if you struggle with mathematics: McGraw-Hill's Conquering GRE Math This guide offers a fairly comprehensive description of the GRE Quantitative section, focusing on the most basic mathematical skills you need to know. The book provides general guidance for the section, in details of the different types of questions, and a content review section to help you review and learn the math concepts you need to know for GRE. Price About \$10 digital, \$13 paperback PROs Offers clear and simple explanations of gre mathematical concepts. Provides solid, easy-to-follow strategies for attacking the QUANTITATIVE GRE section and its various question styles. It gives tons of GRE-style practice problems targeted at specific question types and concepts. It has robust response explanations. Cons This book won't take you up to 170-level punctuation on its own; mathematics in practice problems is simply not difficult enough, although the questions mimic the appearance and feel of gre problems. This was the most common complaint among reviewers. Sometimes the formatting of practical issues is a bit odd. McGraw-Hill offers a percentage breakdown of how many of certain types of questions you can expect to see in the test that doesn't seem completely accurate, so take this with a grain of salt. Why take this preparation book from GRE? This book is best aimed at those who anticipate actually struggling with the Quantitative section. So take this book if you need a lot of help with basic GRE math. Once you feel you've mastered the material in the book, you have two options: Take the test confident in your ability to at least block a mid-range score, aware that you won't be fully prepared for the toughest questions. This will probably be good for those who go to humanities-focused programs. Move on to another more robust gre preparation book after that, like Manhattan Prep. Is math like that for you? You might want McGraw-Hill. Best gre preparatory book if you are a math gunner: the gre math prep course of nova this GRE book is primarily a conceptual review of the math concepts that underpin the GRE, with practice problems for these concepts. It offers progressively arranged chapters on the that are built from each other. Each chapter has practice problems related to this concept, classified as easy, medium, hard and very difficult. There is also an index of mathematical concepts and a diagnostic test in End. Kindle Price edition about \$8, paperback about \$26 Pros There are a large number of practical questions, closely targeted to specific math skills based on concepts. The difficulty level of the questions is marked as easy, medium, hard and very difficult, which will help students get a point of where they are struggling. The strong mathematics students will find the conceptual explanations and answer explanations in this book clear, direct and intuitive. Cons This book is a bit of the old side and still describes the GRE sections as being out of 800 points. The consensus among test candidates was that the most difficult questions in this gre preparatory book are much, much more difficult than what you will find in GRE. While asking questions that are a little more difficult than GRE can help you win those 170, there's probably not much use in working on the Very Difficult questions. Not all questions do a good job approaching the gre question style. However, these questions still provide a practice of valuable skills that will help you succeed in the test. Both conceptual and question explanations are somewhat brief—very brief for those without a strong mathematical basis. They also assume an underlying level of mathematical knowledge that not all students taking GRE have. This GRE study book doesn't really provide much in the way of strategy, so look elsewhere for that. Why take this preparation book from GRE? Take this book if you are already very good at mathematics and are just tuning in to a score in the 90th percentile and above. In this case, this book will help you quickly review concepts and provide you with tons of practice problems to help you adjust your skills. However, if you still don't have that strong math base, you'll find this book frustrating. Time to end the abacus and get to work! Best GRE Book One-Stop Shop: Barron's GRE, Barron's 22nd Edition GRE is a five-part preparatory book that aims to be a complete guide to all parts of the test. The first part goes beyond the GRE format and provides general test-making strategies. Parts 2-4 go over the Verbal, Analytical and Quantitative Writing sections, respectively. The fifth section has two practice tests with response keys. The Verbal section includes an extensive vocabulary section, and the Quantitative section includes a very robust mathematical content review. Buying the GRE preparatory book also gives you access to some online content, including video lessons and additional practice issues. Price The Paperback version costs about \$18. Pros Barron really shines in the department of practical questions. The questions do a great job imitating the GRE style and thematic areas that GRE really addresses. In general, content review is clearly written and comprehensive. There is an extremely robust vocabulary section with 3000 words and their definitions. Settings. It also offers some very useful strategies for addressing the test and its sections. Cons Barron's questions may not reach the maximum level of gre difficulty, so if you're waiting for the 165+ score range in each section, this may not be the best choice of preparation book for you. Some of the test strategies are somewhat self-conditive or confusing. Select what makes sense to you and make sure you test any strategies for some practice sessions before using them for GRE! The math section is formatted in a somewhat clumsy way, making this section a little difficult to navigate. Why take this preparation book from GRE? If you don't have much time and expect to make some score improvement points on your overall score, Barron is a good choice. It's a well rounded preparation book with good questions and decent content review. However, the content is probably not advanced enough for those who anticipate or want high scores (165+ in each section). It is also very brief for people who need a lot of help. But for people in the average score range who just want a bump, this is a great affordable option. Barron's is GRE's general preparatory book store. BEST GRE Vocab Feature: Vocab Flash Cards from Manhattan Prep I know, I know — flash cards are not a prep book! But flashcards are a much better way to study vocabulary than a book. The Holy Grail of the gre flashcard world is definitely the GRE flashcard sets from Manhattan Prep. Price About \$12 each for 500 Essential Words and 500 Advanced Words Pros Word selection is excellent, with vocabulary words from a variety of disciplines and at a variety of difficulty levels. Each letter has a ton of information about each word: definition, a great example phrase, related words, and a more information section with interesting facts. All of this information really helps you learn vocabulary holistically and not just memorize words—you'll be better equipped to think about how to approach unknown words in GRE after actually spending time with these GRE flashcards. Cons Honestly, I have nothing bad to say about it, except that you have to spend money on them. Plus, you definitely get the print version —there's not much sense for Kindle flashcards. Why take this feature? If you have money to spend on flash cards, take these! Start with the essential set and then move on to advanced. You can also supplement with our 357 GRE flash cards. Also, see our guide to our preferred flashcard study method, the waterfall method! Flashcards: much better for learning vocabulary than a Other study tools to consider in addition to gre test preparatory books, what other study features and strategies should you consider? ETS Powerprep II Software (Free!) This is an essential resource for those who are taking the GRE. Offers two adaptive and timed complete GRE tests, as well as some timed untimed practice to help you get used to the format and feel of doing a computer-based test. This is the closest GRE experience to the real gre experience you can get - you'll still get a projected score at the end! So this is really an essential feature for all test takers. The ETS Analytical Writing Question Bank (free!) ETS has published all possible topics for the Analyze a Problem and Analyze an Argument tasks. While it doesn't make sense to necessarily look at each of these in depth, looking through them to notice patterns and common themes will help you a lot on test day. It also means that whenever you want to practice the Analytical Writing section, you have access to real GRE topics to do so! Free online practice testing We've discussed that there are free resources and practice issues available online through ETS. When you exhaust them, there are a few other places you can look for unofficial practice problems and tests. However, most are not of the highest quality, that the possible exception of Manhattan Prep. GRE Practical Tests of Varsity Tutors: Although these tests don't really mimic the GRE style of questions, they will help you drill the skills you need for the VERBAL and Quantitative GRE sections. Consider these best to test your core skills instead of getting good at confronting GRE-style questions. McGraw-Hill GRE Practice Tests: McGraw-Hill offers various GRE practice tests (with Verbal and Quant, but without Analytical Writing) for free on their website. There are also some videos explaining concepts covered in the test. Manhattan Prep Practice Test: Even without buying any material from Manhattan Prep, you can take a free practice test through Manhattan Prep. Especially since this is a computer-based test, it's a great feature besides powerprep testing. We also feel wonderful with gre's free features. Additional vocabo features Even if you receive the Manhattan Prep flash cards, you'll probably still want to complement your study vocab with some additional tools. Here are some of the best: NYTimes Word of the Day: This rhytmes blog gives you a word, an excerpt from an article and a mini-quiz about everyday use! A fun and manageable way to expose yourself to some new words. We offer our own free set of 357 GRE word flash cards that you need to know for GRE! If you're an auditory learner, try the VocabAhead vocabulary videos. Additional reading of online resources! One of the best things you can do for your own VERBAL GRE performance is to read— a lot. But not just anything—read a wide variety of difficult material in many disciplines. News from sources are great. But also try philosophy, academic articles in different disciplines, challenging essays, classical essays and literature, and so on. This will help you a lot with learning how to analyze a variety variety difficult and dense writing styles quickly. Teddy Bear knows how to improve his score. 8 GRE's Best Preparatory Books: Overview With so many GRE books on the market, how can you know which ones are worth it? We have compiled the best GRE books for different study purposes. Recap: More like the real GRE — the Official GRE Power Pack Best for Practice Problems — Manhattan Prep's 5-Pound Book of Practical Problems for a Comprehensive Program — Manhattan Prep's Set of 8 Books from GRE Strategy Guides Best for Gre Verbal and Analytical Writing — Princeton Review's Cracking the GRE Best If You Fight Math — McGraw-Hill's Conquering GRE Math Best for The Best Math Punscores — News's GRE's Math Best Course single — Barron's GRE, 22nd Edition Best Vocabulary Feature — Manhattan Prep GRE's Vocab Flashcards We've also listed some other features you might consider. Happy study! What's next? Confused about GRE scores? Check out our guides on how GRE scores and percentiles work. Looking forward to it? Make the plan to take the exam with our guides for gre test dates and gre registration. Registration.

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