

## FAQ

**Q1 I am an engineering graduate. From scoring point of view you suggest the suitable optional for my preparation.**

Ans There is an increasing trend that engineering graduates are shifting towards humanities. They preferably take one of the optionals as the science and the other from humanities. As far as popular trend is concerned large number of engineering students find it comfortable to opt either geography or public administration. Both these optionals are having small seep in time and can be comfortably picked up in a short span of time.

**Q2 In Main Examination is it essential that one should adhere to the word limit.**

Ans It is essential that one must adhere to the word limit. As the word limit is prescribed students are also being tested for their ability to provide all the information within the number of words specified. In case the student fails to do so, they are failing on such test. It is therefore advised that students under no circumstances should either exceed or write drastically short of the word limit. It requires practice and student must do so before going for the main examination.

**Q3 Is the weightage of marks different for different subjects?**

Ans The weightage of marks for preliminary and main examination is based on a thoroughly evolved technique by UPSC which is best known to it only. For the general reference such weightage of marks does not have much bearing on the success of the candidate and thereby it should be kept out of the mind. It is done for maintenance of objectivity and in no way disadvantages any candidate in terms of their chances of final performance.

**Q4 How much time is needed for the preparation of civil services examination?**

Ans How much time is needed for the preparation of civil services examination? There is no such fixed limit of time that is required for the preparation. There are instances when people start preparing for the examination right from the school days. However serious preparation can be taken up from the midcourse of the graduation and must essentially peak soon after graduation. However there are instances when students have decided to take up this examination after masters degree. It is normally found that it takes about one year of serious preparation towards the attainment of the goal.

**Q5 During the interview can the board be impressed by the candidate who is from urban background thereby disadvantaging the candidate from rural background.**

Ans The success trend suggests that nothing of this sort exists. Specially after 1980s the trend is increasingly tilted in favour of the rural candidates. The substance definitely is given precedence over technique. What you speak is more important than how you speak because such manner and presentation can easily be picked up in due course of time and training.

**Q6 How many hours of study is required regularly in order to qualify for Civil Services?**

Ans There is nothing as fixed quantity of time which can be specified for qualifying. It is actually the quality of time not the quantity of time. If a student is consistent and he is able to devote in six hours of valuable time on a daily basis consistently over one year it is normally considered good enough for the purpose. However, it is emphasized that more than management the quality of time must be given utmost importance.

**Q7 What are the important areas of newspaper from which notes can be made?**

Ans Reading newspaper is an art which need to be honed by the candidates. Newspaper has got information for all kinds of readers and for a candidate to use newspaper for its own requirement it must have a proper orientation of the kind of question being asked in General studies. As the breakup of general studies includes Indian Economy, Polity, Social Issues etc. accordingly the information from the newspaper be picked up. It is advised that the students should take up information by writing in short form and maintaining separate files for different segments which over a period of time is expected to grow to a substantial size which shall be very handy when the student is close to the examination. Apart from providing content for the above-mentioned themes, newspapers are the best first hand source for the current event updation.

**Q8 What is the weightage of factual and analytical questions in PT G.S.?**

Ans The factual informations have got more relevance in P.T. GS. However some analysis based question are also asked. It must also be kept in mind that there is a shift in trend with regards to the quiz kind of question which was asked in larger number earlier. Thus, while reading the books student should concentrate more on factual information.

**Q9 What type of questions should student practice for PT G.S.?**

Ans At different stages of preparation student should take up different types of questions for the sake of practice. The first stage of preparation should involve theme based questions. After having first read a part of G.S., segment question belonging to such a theme should be practiced. In the second stage of preparation mixed questions can be picked up for assessment. Here even the previous years questions can be used for the purpose. However, it must be kept in mind that the questions are not the right way of learning things, they are at best able to fathom the extent of preparation or organize the timing and fine tune further studies.

**Q10 What is the minimum age at which people should start preparing for the civil services examination?**

Ans Preferably the preparation should start in a focused manner around 20 years of age. This is the time student is able to focus the goal properly and is in a position to peak at the right time. Starting too early has a likelihood of tiring at the right time or starting very late will disadvantage in terms of competitive edge of early start.

**Q11 How much time should a student devote on reading question in main examination?**

Ans Proper understanding of the question is very vital for writing a correct answer. For this purpose careful reading of question is an absolute essential. The student should go for more than two readings if the question has got several sub parts. To be able to chalk out a proper frame of the answer it is essential that student has understood the question with their sub parts properly and then only start writing.

**Q12 One person who is 21 years of age and the other who is 29 years of age, who has better chance to qualify for civil services?**

Ans UPSC does not give any weightage for age. It is the quality of answer which is evaluated not age. The only difference between 21 and 29 years is that the person entering at 29 years of age shall retire eight years before the person entering at 21 years of age. Otherwise at the entry level there is no difference at all.

**Q13 What is the nature of question asked in the PT exam?**

Ans In PT exam, there are multiple choice of questions asked. For every question there are four possible answers given and students are required to identify the most appropriate answer. There is no negative marking thereby a candidate is advised to take only those questions which he/she thinks is 100% correct.

**Q14 What is the significance of groups discussion in civil services?**

Ans Group discussion is a doubled edged instrument, it has advantages as well as disadvantage. Group discussion with right kind of candidates is always found to be helpful. However group discussion should not be taken up during the early phase of preparation. The group should not be too large in number. Students may form a group and discuss on a theme which they would have individually learnt. Here it is cautioned that the group should be heterogeneous i.e. it should not belong to the same area because in such cases the research orientation start surfacing. During group discussion it should be formal and a definite time frame must be fixed for such discussion.

**Q15 For interview preparation is it prudent to take mock test without full preparation just to fathom the level of preparation?**

Ans The mock interviews should be conducted only by the experts in the field otherwise it may give wrong signal and suggestions to the candidate and the bearing on the candidate may become profound and the whole personality may get wrongly oriented. Mock interview is not a methodology for checking the level of preparation because in the event of not being able to answer the questions properly it may leave a depressing impact on the candidate and hence it should be avoided without full preparation.

**Q16 For counting words how one can be sure that the word count is correct?**

Ans The number of words specified for the GS questions is vital and must be respected. To be able to consider words one should count all words which have got denotation or connotation. In this process even the articles get counted.

**Q17 I am a graduate in economics but I don't want to keep economic as my optional. I have done my 10+2 from science stream. Kindly suggest if I can take any science subject as my optional.**

Ans Economics as you have mentioned is not in your list of probable optional considered for the purpose. It is also taken by lesser number of candidates. Science optional is seldom taken by candidates who have studied science upto 10+2 level. In your condition any of the humanities optionals can be suggested as the right optional for the purpose. Considering your background geography, sociology or Public administration can be recommended.

**Q18 Is there any tilt of favour for the candidates coming from different socio-economic background?**

Ans U.P.S.C has its system of the examination which is thoroughly evolved and objective to the core. Through various level of screening and testing it insure that favour of any sort is not present.

**Q19 Is it always advisable to prepare both G.S. and Optional simultaneously or it is better if a candidate prepares one optional at a time?**

Ans Considering the time frame within which student has to prepare for the examination it is not possible to take up one optional at a time. It has to be a simultaneous exercise. Student should however avoid too much of mix up. There must be a properly chalked out plan for different segments to be studied in conjunction. Towards the end of the preparation when the candidate is very close to the examination, time should be given to all the subjects in any single day. However, the last few days before the examination a dedicated preparation for G.S. or Optional is also recommended.

**Q20 Is a candidates who speaks good Hindi but is poor in English stand a chance to loose in Civil Services?**

Ans It is a misconception. There are candidates not only from Hindi but other languages also who qualify in large number every year. There are in-built mechanism of U.P.S.C. that a person who is not good in English is in no way disadvantaged due to this factor.

**Q21 Does one have to be strong in mental ability and reasoning to clear P.T. Examination?**

Ans As far as reasoning questions in P.T. in concerned, they can be answered by almost all of candidates who have been serious towards their goal. What is relevant here is the speed. It is thereby advised that students should go for the practice to increase the skill of handling such question in a shorts span of time rather than bother to improve the mental ability.

**Q22 Kindly elaborate how to make notes for P.T. and Main Examination?**

Ans Notes preparation for the P.T. is primarily based on facts. It is therefore recommended that students go for reading as many books as possible. As far as making the notes is concerned they should be making pointers of factual orientation that need to be memorised. For main examination notes should be made for every segment to the extent they have got enough information that can handle all past year's questions. Notes should also have a small list of pointers prepared alongside. It is also found that making notes in the flow chart form is a convenient method for gathering information in pictorial form as mind can take a picture easily and store them longer.

**Q23 It is assumed that people with superior I.Q. have edge over those having lower I.Q. How far it is true?**

Ans The basis for the calculation of I.Q. is long debated. There is no one opinion that I.Q. should be the right basis for assessing the individual capability of grey matter. Person with superior I.Q. are also not the greatest of achievers in life. While the very base for the calculation of the I.Q. is debated one should not be bothered about factoring such thing while preparing for its ultimate goal of Civil Service.

**Q24 Is it essential that the bureaucrats have to be always in formal dress?**

Ans No there is no such things that they should always be dressed in their formals. It is dressed to the occasion and if the occasion may demand so it has to be adhered to. However, the dress should not be the basis for one to decide writing this examination or not.

**Q25 Civil Services has been referred to as the mother of all examination? What tactics student should adopt to get the blessing of the mother?**

Ans A lot of grit, some grace and ability to stay focussed even under stress.

**Q26 What is the role of guidance in the form of coaching institute towards the preparation for the examination?**

Ans Coaching institute plays a very vital role in preparing for the examination because they help in providing the right orientation for the students and save valuable time in the process. They also provide information on such themes which are not easily accessible to the students. The most important role is the utility of "just in time" management and help the reorganisation of information hitherto gathered by the students (i.e. "just in case" collection of information). However, it must be borne in mind that if the guidance is not proper and is given by the people who have no expertise in the field it may have reverse impact.

**Q27 Is there any fixed method preparation for the Civil Services or it varies with the individual?**

Ans There is no fixed method for the preparation as different candidates chalk out their own course of preparation. However, some common strategy can be identified and that is where one must concentrate primarily on the accumulation of large base of information and skill to use them depending on the questions asked. As far as methodology to do this (i.e. by making notes, reading directly from the books, making graphics or for that matter flow charting etc) all depends on individual training for the purpose of learning the information.

**Q28 Can a person use guides available in the market as they seem to be saving lots of time?**

Ans Guides are good as far as collection of information at one place is concerned. However, they seem to be making sense to the person who has an appreciation for such information. They cannot be used as a base book. Students are advised to make thorough reading of the text book and then only pick up guides for revision purpose. Guides can never be substitute for a text book.

**Q29 In the present world of IT how civil services fares as a career option?**

Ans These are two fields and have got their own share of advantages and disadvantages. It also depends on the personal liking. However the trend suggests that a large number of people having their initial training in IT have gone in for civil services as career option, though the reverse is seldom heard of. This fact itself explains the relative relevance of both as career option.

**Q30 Should one go for IAS right after graduation without any job or should one first settle down with a job and then go for writing this examination?**

Ans Civil Services preparation in majority of the cases is seen to be a full time exercise and it merits at least one year of thorough preparation after graduation then it may be clubbed for the subsequent preparation with any job or a professional course. However, it is the quality time spent towards this goal is important not the presence of a job alongside or the absence there of.

**Q31 Which type of question, conceptual or analytical should be attempted in the main examination in order to get good marks?**

Ans It is not the question which fetches marks it is the answer. A student should decide about writing a question not by the nature of the question but by the level of comfort and information base available for a particular question. There is no such thing that writing conceptual question will always get more marks or writing analytical question will get more marks.

**Q32 While answering a question should the candidate adopt simple language or go for decorated one?**

Ans Examiner cannot be impressed by the skill of the language but by the content thereof. It is the content which gets more importance than the way it is presented. Thereby it should be kept in mind that if the content is in place and it is also having a veneer of good language it works great.

**Q33 What is the role of notes in the preparation for the examination?**

Ans Notes play an important role but it also depends on the candidates individual habits of learning things. There are students who are comfortable reading from the books directly and make no note. However, it is advised that making short note is always very helpful for being able to revise the reading in a short span of time.

**Q34 What is the role of etiquette in the interview?**

Ans Etiquette with regards to the protocol play a significant role as they cast the first impression on the minds of the interviewer before the person speaks and then even after the candidate has left the room leave some image in the mind of the interviewer while they are scoring him. Thereby it is recommended that basic etiquette suited to such occasion must be picked up and adhere to which will be not only vital for such interview but any formal attendance of this nature.

**Q35 How the time management should be taken up for the PT inside the examination hall?**

Ans The time management is a crucial component of the final performance of a student. It is generally found that the candidates have shortage of time while answering the question. It is primarily due to the fact that enough practice has not been done towards this end. Student should first ensure that they have got all the answers to which they are sure to their credit. Thereby in more than one round the whole question should be gone by and not taking chances for the questions they are not sure of at the cost of such questions which they are sure.

**Q36 How one should start preparing for civil services examination?**

Ans The best way to start for this examination is by knowing the nature of examination. After having decided for the optionals one should develop a keen interest in looking at the past years questions to get an idea as to what one should be preparing for. One should also get a proper guidance for the channelization of its time, energy and resources. Planning is very crucial. One must plan and work the plan in a disciplined manner. There should be time frame and small targets fixed to work in this direction.

**Q37 I am doing my graduation from commerce. What options should I choose for my civil services examination?**

Ans The best way to start for this examination is by knowing the nature of examination. After having decided for the optionals one should develop a keen interest in looking at the past years questions to get an idea as to what one should be preparing for. One should also get a proper guidance for the channelization of its time, energy and resources. Planning is very crucial. One must plan and work the plan in a disciplined manner. There should be time frame and small targets fixed to work in this direction.

**Q38 How should one make use of text books?**

Ans After having identified text books one must also earmark the portions to be read. It is not essential that every text book need to be read from cover to cover. It is advised that students should have their own copy of text books so that they can liberally underlined or highlight, make markings and the books are available with them all the time. Text book should be personalized with ones own small comments here and there and one can also have small flags attached to them which may save some valuable time while locating certain minor content. It is also found that while preparing for the PT index root to study a text book is also helpful.

**Q39 What is the dress code for the interview?**

Ans The dress code for the ladies and gentleman should be such that gives importance to the occasion. While the interviews are conducted during day time light colour dress is recommended. There should be no casual wear. Full sleeves shirt, leather belt, leather shoes and matching tie is recommended. However, one may wear a summer suit as well. For the ladies saree is recommended but if they are not comfortable in saree even salwar suit can be recommended with minimum jewelry and make-up.

**Q40 What are the major areas of GS PT and GS Mains?**

Ans Major areas actually depend on the marks contained in each one of those segments. The major area for PT is science, history and geography while for the Mains major areas include Indian polity, history, economy, science & technology etc.

**Q41 How to identify ones own weak spots?**

Ans The best way to identify ones weaker spot is by attempting past year questions. However, it may not be as simple as it has to be relative. It is relative to the participation of such portion of the segment in the total distribution of mark vis-a-vis the comparison with the other candidates for the same segment.

For example if a person has got a weaker segment in history which has got more than 30 questions asked it is a point to worry but. For the same portion of history other student are worst of then reason to worry is less. And this is what is meant by relative assessment of performance.

**Q42 What are the criteria to select the good books?**

Ans Books are vital towards the preparation, however, selection of wrong books may create more problem and they may not only waste valuable time but also misguide in the process. The selection of books has to be done by more than one process such as taking opinion of the experts of the field, taking idea from the successful candidates and also by reading small part of the book oneself.

**Q43 What is the role of magazine in the preparation for the examination?**

Ans Magazine play one of the most crucial role towards the preparation because they not only are written by the experts in the field but also constantly keeps the students posted about the changes

in the trends. Newspapers are vital but it may not be possible for students to read too many newspapers and thereby magazines emerge to play a vital role here.

**Q44 What is the role of radio and television in preparing for this examination?**

Ans Radio and TV both traditionally have been vital source of information for the current events. But in the recent phase of increasing commercialization on both these channels their role is decreasing as compared to newspaper or magazine. You cannot simply overlook an advertisement and commercials on T.V. Thereby the newspaper and magazine may be more direct source of information than TV and radio.

**Q45 What should be the basis for choosing coaching institutions?**

Ans Coaching institutions while they help in more than one way, landing with a wrong institution make more harm than the good. It is therefore very vital that utmost care is taken for the selection of a coaching institute. Track record of a coaching institute in terms of its success rate composition of faculty, cumulative experience of the institute, accessibility as well as consultation with the students who have studied in the institution are some of the vital bases that can be adopted for deciding to join a coaching institute.

**Q46 What is the role of essay writing and how it should be acquired?**

Ans Essay has acquired a significant place in the overall performance of a candidate in the main examination. Essay writing is different from answer writing of general studies or for that matter optionals. Essay writing is a skill that can be learnt gradually over a period of time. It is normally advised that after having gone through the grammar of essay writing one should also give importance to the practice. It can be suggested that if one is able to write one essay a week and also make broad outline of four essays a month it should be good enough practice to make the candidate comfortable in examination. For practice the titles can be picked up from the past year questions.

**Q47 How the time between the preliminary examination and the result can be best utilized?**

Ans Soon after the PT examination one must give a small break of a few days and after that pick up the second optional that is the optional for the main examination and read that carefully with a target that before the result is out one has gone through it properly. It is expected that a candidate has not read the second optional in the last five months or so while preparing for the PT examination. Alongside student should also give some time to general studies and maintain a touch with the first optional as well.

**Q48 What is the role of practicing the previous year main examination questions?**

Ans The previous year questions are vital in more than one way, while there is a very bleak chance that they will be repeated, yet it is the root to learn the time management, understanding the structure of the question and also being able to answer within the specified number of words.

Normally in the course of preparation student concentrate on collection of information without bothering to know how to use them. This can only be learnt through the proper practice of the previous year questions.

**Q49 How one should go on deciding about the optionals?**

Ans It is very important that the correct optionals are taken up and it is advised that students should take up optionals for which the success rate in the recent past has been good. It should also be seen that if such optional can possibly help in getting some advantage in general studies as well. And the most vital factor is the candidate is willingness to spend 100s of hours with the chosen option.

**Q50 Does the family background of civil services give added advantage during interview?**

Ans There was a time when it was seen that larger number of successful candidates were from such families which had history of civil services. Such social reproduction is not so common these days. Being a son or daughter of a civil servant these days is no way giving additional advantage or disadvantage towards the success. It is the performance not the family history which is the reference point for the interviewer while giving marks to a candidate.