



How to Reach Your Dream GMAT® Score in Half the Normal Time



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WELCOME

When I first started studying for the GMAT a long time ago, I thought it would be no big deal. I had studied for plenty of exams in my life — in fact, I was working as a professional tutor at the time.

I had another thing coming haha — it took me more than twice as long as it should have to reach my goal. I'm human — I dealt with self doubt, fatigue, and just about every other internal and external struggle you can imagine.

But, here I am, one of the top experts in the field — what changed? A lot. But the most important 3 things that changed I'll share with you right now.

Ready? Let's go.

3 KEYS

There are 3 keys to reaching your goal score faster:

KEY #1

Understand how the GMAT is scored, and how that's different from a regular test

KEY #2

Understand how studying for the GMAT is different than studying for other tests

KEY #3

Understand the mental game of the GMAT

KEY #1

How is the GMAT scored and how is that different from a regular test?

What would happen if I tried to win a tennis match using the rules of basketball? An absurd question, right? Well, it's actually the most important question to ask when you're studying for the GMAT — here's why:

Most people assume the GMAT is scored just like a regular test — based on accuracy. If I get 90% of the questions correct, I get a good score right? And it doesn't matter where those rights vs wrongs are at all, either right?

Sadly, while that would make sense, it's not the way it works.

This was the biggest mistake I made when I originally studied for the GMAT years ago — I spent 6 months studying 20 hrs or more per week. And you know what? I learned a ton. And I got more questions right during the test. Not a big surprise — I studied insanely hard.

Want to know what happened to my score? It went down. By 20 points.

I don't want that to happen to you. Thousands of students make this exact same mistake every year. And they pay me thousands of dollars every year to help them figure out what they're doing wrong.

I've realized it's not really fair that only a few people get to learn this, so here's what you (and everyone else) should know in order to avoid this massive pitfall:

On the original computer-adaptive GMAT, we were all virtually guaranteed to miss almost half the questions, no matter what we did.

KEY #1 (CONTINUED)

The Scoring Key

The original GMAT was designed so that ~98% of test-takers would get exactly 60% right and 40% wrong, no matter what final score they got.

Imagine taking a school test and getting half the questions wrong — how would that feel? If you get 50% wrong on a school test it's game over — F, as in failure. But, if you recognize that is the way the GMAT is supposed to work, you can use the fact that you'll likely miss many questions to your advantage.

Here's the key: in the Quant and Verbal sections, your score is the difficulty level of the final question you see in the section. It's not based on how many questions you got right or wrong. It's not based on an average of the difficulty levels of questions you've seen. It's just how hard the last question you see is. In many cases, it doesn't even matter if you get that final question correct.

That piece of knowledge alone has the power to completely transform your approach, your score, and your psychological experience while taking the exam. It's the most valuable and critical piece of information you need to maximize your score while minimizing your effort.

And, the crazy thing is that once you understand how to strategize around it, you can get a higher score with less effort during the exam and while getting fewer questions correct.

If you know you're going to miss a lot of questions, you can concentrate on missing them quickly. That can buy you time to invest in questions you have a better chance of getting correct.

KEY #1 (CONTINUED)

The Takeaway

If you can train yourself to invest more time and energy in the questions that are likely to go well for you, and recognize the questions that aren't going well and let go, you'll be well on your way to forgetting about accuracy as the metric for success, and focused more on getting a high difficulty level problem as your final question.

If you want to try out your own way of capitalizing on this knowledge, by all means go for it — for a small number of folks, that's all they need to get to the next level with their strategy and approach.

But, if you want me to show you in even more detail how this all works, [watch this video](#) — it's 45 minutes long and will build on what I've just shared.

KEY #2

How is studying for the GMAT different than studying for any other test?

Most people work way, way too hard when they study for the GMAT — they do hundreds, sometimes thousands of practice problems. The sad part? A lot of times their score doesn't even move.

You can check almost any GMAT forum online — there will probably be hundreds of posts from folks who've been 'studying forever' and 'done every question in the official guides' or close, and the question is always the same: 'why is my score not moving?'

It's a horrible situation — one I suffered from for months when I was studying. I would love for you to avoid this.

Here's the simple but critical key: Doing practice problems doesn't move your score — learning from practice problems moves your score. And, perhaps obviously, retaining what you've learned so you can apply it on exam day.

I think a lot of us have some hidden metric in our mind that says 'well if I complete 30 practice questions today, I'll be 30 "units" better at the GMAT.' I wish this were true — this book would be a lot shorter. It would just say 'do a lot of practice problems' and everyone who did that would get great scores. That doesn't happen, unfortunately.

How do you make sure you learn and retain what you've learned from practice problems? Do three things:

KEY #2 (CONTINUED)

Three Things

- 1 For Quant questions, always research all possible solutions (a web search can help) and note which strategy is best and why. For Verbal, make sure you take the time to articulate why each wrong answer is wrong, and why each right answer is right. Write all of this down.
- 2 Use Official Guide problems as much as possible — if you haven't 'mastered' every question in the Official Guide (Quant — you know the optimal strategy and potential pitfalls for every question; Verbal — you can explain why every right answer is right and why every wrong answer is wrong) then you don't need 3rd party sourced questions. The Official Guide questions will keep you more efficient because they're written by the same people who will write your GMAT — plenty of 3rd party providers do a great job replicating these questions, but they're still replicas, not the real thing.
- 3 Keep a list of questions that were hard for you because you didn't know the strategy, or picked the wrong strategy — resolve 1-10 of these every time you study (I recommend right at the start of the study session so you don't forget). Super simple tactic — works wonders for your speed, retention, and confidence.

KEY #2 (CONTINUED)

The Payoff

That's it. If you do those three things, you can get away with doing half the number of practice questions that most people do, with a higher result to show for it.

Yes, each question will take you longer if you do all these things. But you'll reach your goal about 2x faster overall.

I wish I had known this when I was starting out.

You can read what some of my former students have to say about this approach here if you want to: ([here](#))

KEY #3

What is the mental game of the GMAT and why is it important?

Have you ever heard the phrase 'perfect is the enemy of great'? It matters on the GMAT. Here's why:

I first heard this phrase as a young software engineer — our projects were constantly being bogged down by perfectionism. Every day, we'd get our products working, fix bugs, be right about to ship it out to folks to help them, and then one of my teammates would say 'wait. We can do this better.' and then we would keep working, and working, and working...and working. Until the client complained it was taking too long, and we would have to ship or lose the account.

At the time, making things better sounded awesome. That was of course our job: build better things and make those things better over time. But what was the outcome? We lost clients. Our competitors were worse than us — they weren't as skilled, they had worse sense of design, and they weren't great communicators. But guess what? They solved problems and made their clients money faster than we did.

Want to guess what happened to our team of star engineers? They got laid off. Want to know what happened to the business? Bankruptcy — not fun.

What was the takeaway? Clients didn't care about how well-engineered our product was — they cared about results.

They were also competing with people. And they were relying on us to help them do that better, and we let them down. As much as it hurt at the time, they did the right thing by switching to our competitors.

So I learned that while it may not always be true, in many, many cases, 'perfect is the enemy of great'.

KEY #3 (CONTINUED)

Strategic Guessing

How does this apply to taking the GMAT? Well...what if I told you you can get a higher GMAT score by answering fewer questions during the exam?

Remember a few pages ago when I told you the key to understanding how the GMAT is scored? Now would be a great time to re-read that if you don't recall — it'll make what I'm about to tell you make way more sense.

I told you almost everyone misses a ton of questions (these days it's usually between 30% and 40% of all the questions they see, regardless of what their final score is) — I missed about 30% of the questions on my GMAT and I still ended in the 99th percentile.

But, like I also said, missing that many questions doesn't have to be a bad thing — in fact if you strategize correctly, it can actually help you.

Here's the key: accept that you will almost certainly miss at least 30% of the questions. If you accept it, you can stop fighting the reality of it. This will help you avoid the emotional drama of thinking 'I suck at this' every time you review a practice exam — you don't suck; you're just taking a test that's designed to make you miss a lot of questions.

KEY #3 (CONTINUED)

Be Wrong Strategically

Second, you can start to be wrong strategically — aka 'not perfect, but great.'

If you accept you're going to miss 30% of the questions, you can start to be more selective about which questions you miss — that means, you can pick a few questions and not even attempt them. That's right — make a random guess within 20 seconds and you're on to the next problem.

The deal is, and I'm not trying to be mean when I say this: you're probably getting those questions wrong anyway. Whether you spend 10 seconds being wrong or 4 minutes being wrong, the test is designed to make you miss some problems. So why not take advantage of this?

Go ahead and try it on your next exam — commit to a few types of problems you don't like, are not very good at, or usually take a lot of time on before you even take the test. Commit to randomly guessing on 3 or 4 of these types of problems ahead of time and it will be easier to do in the moment. See what happens if you just don't do them — it'll give you a bit of extra time on the questions you do know, and probably help you achieve a better result.

Heck, even if you got the same score with less effort, would that still be a win? For me, it would.

WHAT'S NEXT

Put It Into Practice

Just put all this into practice right now. If you're just starting, you're way ahead of the game. If you've been studying for a while, hopefully now you can see some or all of what you've been missing.

Want to be done with this entire process even faster? If so, we do offer help to a few students every year. If you're interested in working with us directly, please tell us a little more about your situation in this quick form, and book a call to speak with us live:

[Book a Free Strategy Call →](#)

We'll talk through what's been holding you back, what's been going well for you, and what you can do to improve your approach. If it seems like we're a good fit to work together, we'll explain what that looks like, and you can decide to become a part of it or not.

Thanks for reading. It's been my pleasure to show you how you can become the person you want to be faster, something very near and dear to my heart. I hope you're already imagining what your world will look like very soon — I am.

Let me know how it all goes,

Isaac

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