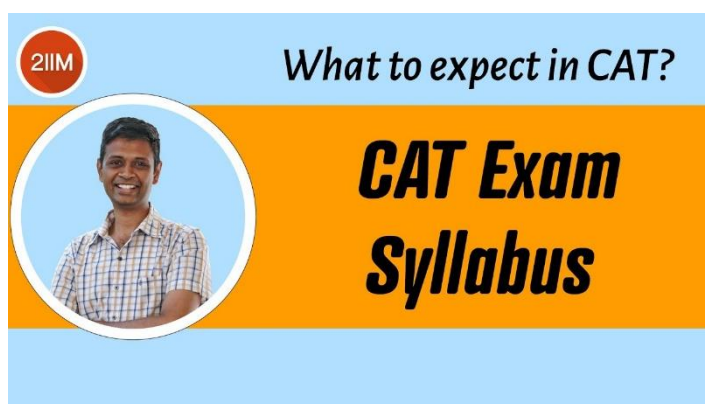


## CAT Exam Syllabus

CAT is a computer-based objective exam that has 3 sections – [Verbal Ability](#), [Data Interpretation & Logical Reasoning](#) and [Quantitative Ability](#). The sections have nearly equal weightage. For a long time, from 2010-2019 roughly it was a 3-hour exam. The pandemic has seen it transform into a 2-hour exam. Around 75% of the questions are MCQs (Multiple-Choice Questions) while the rest are TITA (Type in the Answer). The MCQs carry negative marks for incorrect answers, while TITA ones do not.

Broadly, the [CAT syllabus](#) covered comprises of math learnt in classes VI to X of schooling. Although the framework has been broadly constant throughout the past 15 years, there are some specific patterns that emerge if we scroll through the data. The video below gives a wonderful overview of what we can take away from the past few years' papers.



## CAT Exam Overview

Section	Duration	No of MCQ's	No of TITA (Non MCQ's)	Total
VARC	40 minutes	21	5	26
DILR	40 minutes	18	6	24
QA	40 minutes	18	8	26
<b>Total</b>	<b>120 minutes</b>	<b>57</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>76</b>

As we dive deeper into the sections and take them up one by one, we will take you through the CAT Syllabus followed by our analysis of the CAT previous year papers to give you a glimpse of what you can expect in the upcoming CAT exam.

## Overall CAT Syllabus and CAT Exam Pattern

Before we look into the CAT syllabus, here is a quick recap of key facts about the exam:

- CAT Exam is a 3-hour (180 min), computer-based exam. It is not held in offline mode. *One of many things that swayed away from normal in 2020 was the CAT exam duration. CAT 2020 was conducted in three slots of 2 hours each. The patterns continues in CAT 2021 as well.*
- The exam is held in two slots—morning and afternoon—on the same day. The papers are different in these sessions, but the scores are normalized to account for the differences.
- The exam comprises of 3 sections— Verbal Ability and Reading Comprehension (VARC), Data Interpretation and Logical Reasoning (DI/LR) and Quantitative Ability (QA).
- In the last few CATs, the order of the sections has been VARC first, followed by DILR, followed by QA. Switching between sections is not possible. There are no breaks between sections.
- There are 100 questions in all. Most questions are Multiple Choice Questions (MCQs), with 4 answer choices, one of which is right. About one-third of the paper, however, consists of objective but non-MCQ questions. These are of the Type-In-The-Answer (TITA) kind.
- MCQs carry 3 marks for a right answer and -1 mark for a wrong answer, but there is no negative marking for TITA questions.
- A simple, on-screen calculator is provided for the QA and DI/LR sections.
- Any Bachelor's degree holder (with 50% at least marks) and any candidate in the final year of their graduation can write CAT.
- The official website for CAT: [CAT Website](#)
- CAT 2020 had the following pattern:  
VARC: 26, DILR: 24, Quant: 26 (40 minute per section), and the entire exam is conducted in 3 slots instead of usual 2 slots. For CAT 2021 it has been announced that it will be a 2 hour exam across 3 sections.

## Diving deeper into CAT VARC Syllabus

In terms of CAT Syllabus across the sections, the [VARC section](#) is the simplest to describe. Building a habit of reading is the closest to what one might call as Syllabus. If you are looking at a timeline north of 4 months, you have a great time window to build up the habit of reading. You should check out the video below for more information than just Reading, how to make the most of this etc.



VARC Sub-section	Description	Question Type	No. of Questions
CAT Reading Comprehension	This section comprises of 5 RC passages which are usually 600-700 words in length	4-5 MCQs based on each passage	24
CAT Verbal Ability	Paragraph Jumbles  Paragraph Summary  Sentence Elimination  Others	3-4 questions, usually TITA, involving rearrangement of sentences in the right order. 2-3 questions, MCQs, involving identification of the best summary for a given paragraph. 2-3 questions, involving identification of the odd sentence in a given set of sentences. Questions of these types are less common: • Paragraph Completion • Sentence Correction • Critical Reasoning • Fact Inference Judgement	10

Reading Comprehension	24
Para Jumble	4
Para Summary	3
Odd Sentence Out	3
	34

3 Hour Pattern

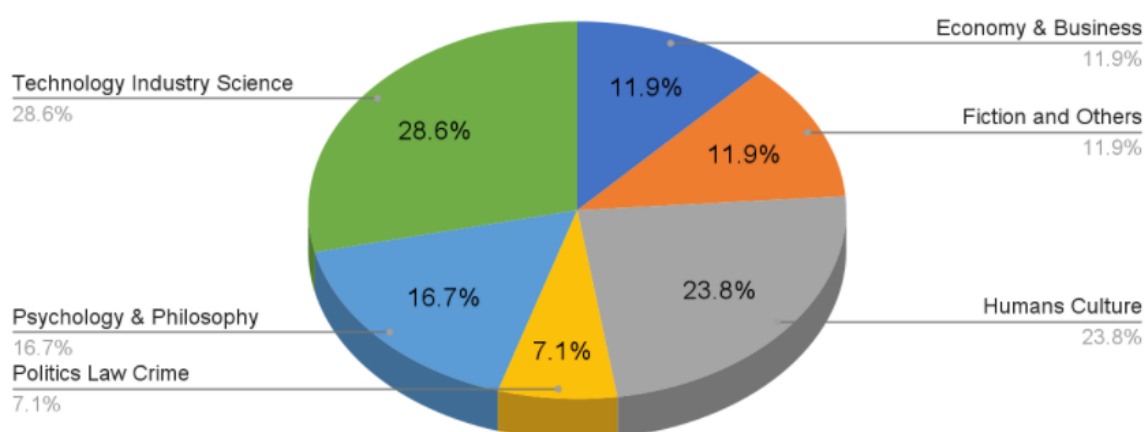
2017, 2018, 2019

Reading Comprehension	18
Para Jumble	3
Para Summary	3
Odd Sentence Out	2
	26

2 Hour Pattern

2020

## RC genres over the years



Success Factor	Key Resource	Big Takeaway
Reading Habit	<a href="#">Bharath's Reading List</a>	RC is the elephant in the room

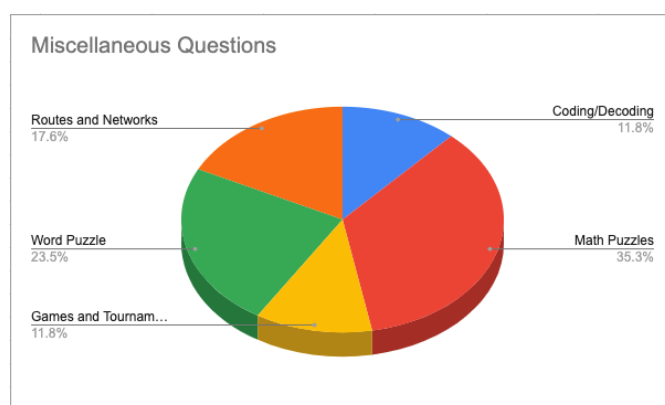
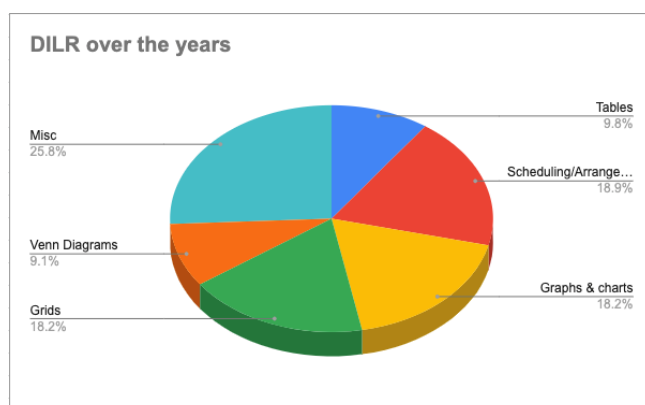
## Diving deeper into CAT LRDI Syllabus

The [DILR section](#) has been elusive in terms of giving us a definitive syllabus for this section. We can of course paint a broad picture with the information we have obtained through taking this exam over the years. In case you are looking to know how to prepare for this section, head out to the above link. But if you are keen to understand the section first, watch this video and then scroll down!

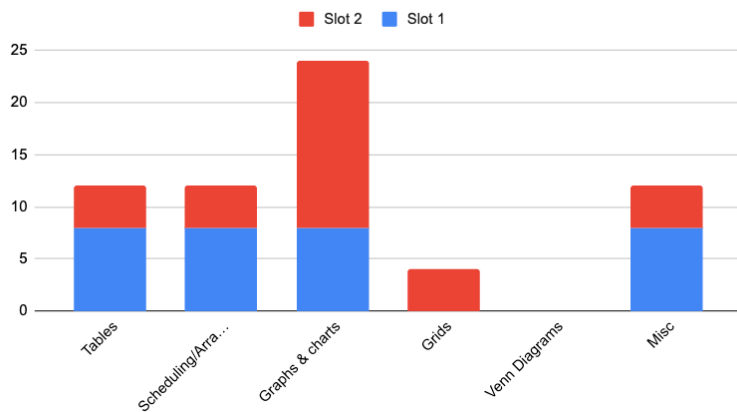


Data Interpretation	Bar graph, line graphs, pie charts, tables, Venn diagrams, word problems, combination of graphs
Logical Reasoning	Puzzles based on visualization, math puzzles, games and tournaments, calendar, sequencing, grid puzzles, seating arrangement, direction- based puzzles

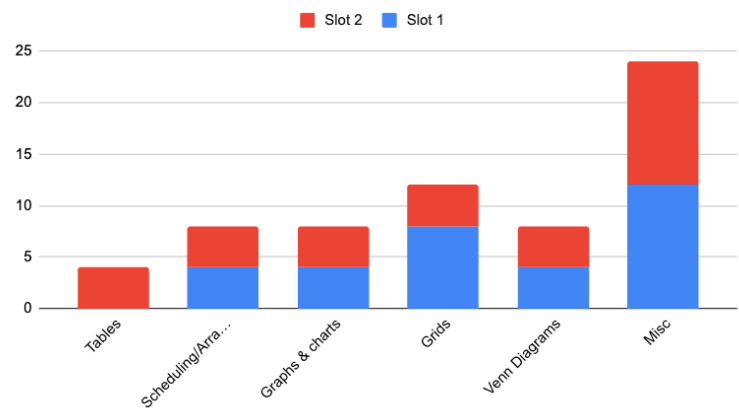
	2020				2019				2018				2017			
	Slot 1	Slot 2	Slot 3		Slot 1	Slot 2			Slot 1	Slot 2			Slot 1	Slot 2		
Tables	0	10	0	10	0	0	0		0	4	4		8	4	12	26
Scheduling/Arrangements	6	6	6	18	4	8	12		4	4	8		8	4	12	50
Graphs & charts	0	0	0	0	8	8	16		4	4	8		8	16	24	48
Grids	10	8	6	24	4	4	8		8	4	12		0	4	4	48
Venn Diagrams	8	0	4	12	0	4	4		4	4	8		0	0	0	24
Misc	0	0	8	8	16	8	24		12	12	24		8	4	12	68
	24	24	24	72	32	32	64		32	32	64		32	32	64	264



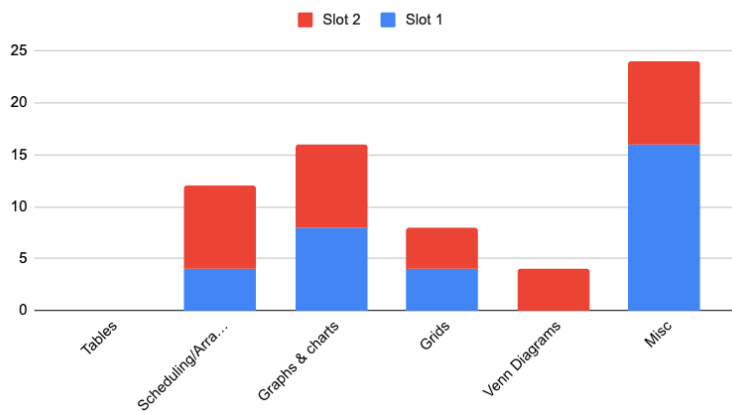
2017



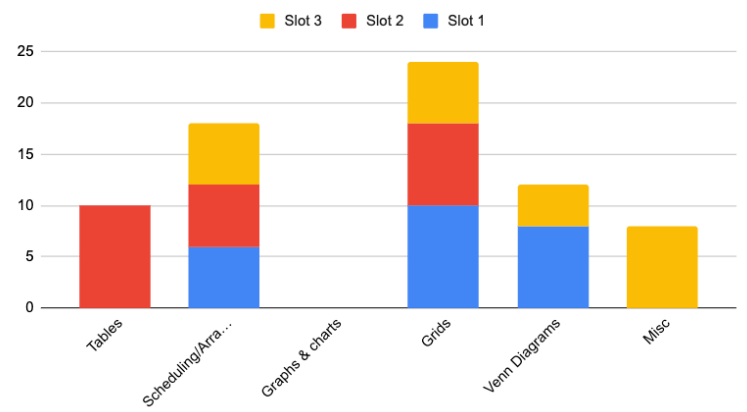
2018



2019



2020



Let's break it down even further...

2017				2018			
Topic	Slot 1	Slot 2		Topic	Slot 1	Slot 2	
Routes and Networks	8		8	Routes and Networks			0
Tables	8	4	12	Tables		4	4
Scheduling, Optimization and Allocation	8	4	12	Scheduling, Optimization and Allocation	4	4	8
Bar Graphs	4	4	8	Bar Graphs			0
Numbers	4		4	Numbers			0
Grids		8	8	Grids	8	4	12
Arrangements		4	4	Arrangements			0
Word Puzzle		4	4	Word Puzzle	4	4	8
Games and Tournaments			0	Games and Tournaments			0
Math Puzzles		4	4	Math Puzzles	8	4	12
Calendar			0	Calendar			0
Direction based puzzles			0	Direction based puzzles			0
Venn Diagrams			0	Venn Diagrams	4	4	8
Pie Charts / Doughnut charts			0	Pie Charts / Doughnut charts	4		4
Scatter plot			0	Scatter plot		4	4
Coding/Decoding			0	Coding/Decoding		4	4
			64				64

2019				2020				
Topic	Slot 1	Slot 2		Topic	Slot 1	Slot 2	Slot 3	
Routes and Networks	4		4	Routes and Networks				0
Tables			0	Tables		10		10
Scheduling, Optimization and Allocation		8	8	Scheduling, Optimization and Allocation	6	6	6	18
Bar Graphs	4		4	Bar Graphs				0
Numbers			0	Numbers				0
Grids	4	4	8	Grids	10	8	6	24
Arrangements	4		4	Arrangements				0
Word Puzzle			0	Word Puzzle			4	4
Games and Tournaments	4	4	8	Games and Tournaments				0
Math Puzzles	4	4	8	Math Puzzles			4	4
Calendar			0	Calendar				0
Direction based puzzles			0	Direction based puzzles				0
Venn Diagrams		4	4	Venn Diagrams	8		4	12
Pie Charts / Doughnut charts			0	Pie Charts / Doughnut charts				0
Scatter plot		4	4	Scatter plot				0
Coding/Decoding	4		4	Coding/Decoding				0
Radar Chart	4	4	8					72
			64					

Success Factor	Key Resource	Big Focus Area
1. Variety in puzzles 2. Detailed solutions	<a href="#">2IIM Free Question Bank</a>	Previous year Papers

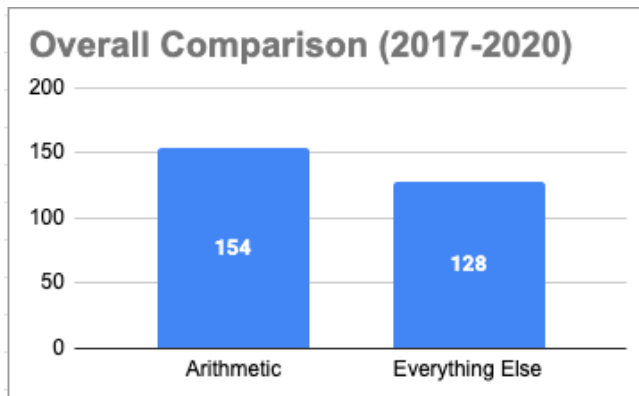
## Diving deeper into CAT Quant Syllabus

The [Quantitative Aptitude section](#) is the most robust section in terms of something that can give you a definitive syllabus. Do not fret looking at the enormous list of topics listed below. Following the Pareto principle, a collection of a few key topics can help you get upto 90+ percentile. Watch the video below to get more clarity on the CAT syllabus for the Quantitative Aptitude section of the CAT exam.

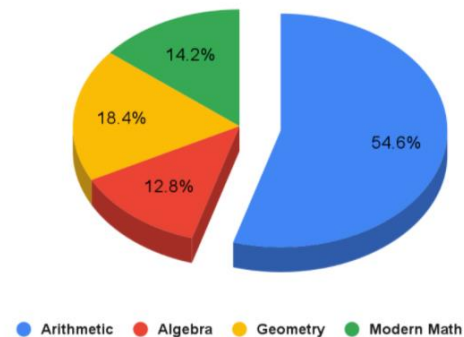


QA Topic	Key Concepts	Approx. No. of Questions
Arithmetic	Percentages Time Speed Distance Pipe Cisterns, Work Time Profit and Loss Mixtures Averages Ratios and Proportion Simple Interest Compound Interest	11 - 12
Geometry	Triangles, Circles, Quadrilaterals Mensuration Coordinate Geometry Trigonometry	7 - 8
Algebra	Linear and Quadratic Equations Functions Polynomials Inequalities Arithmetic and Geometric Progressions	6 - 8
Number Theory and Modern Math	HCF LCM Factors and Multiples Factorials, Remainders Set Theory Permutation Combination, Probability Logarithms	6 - 8

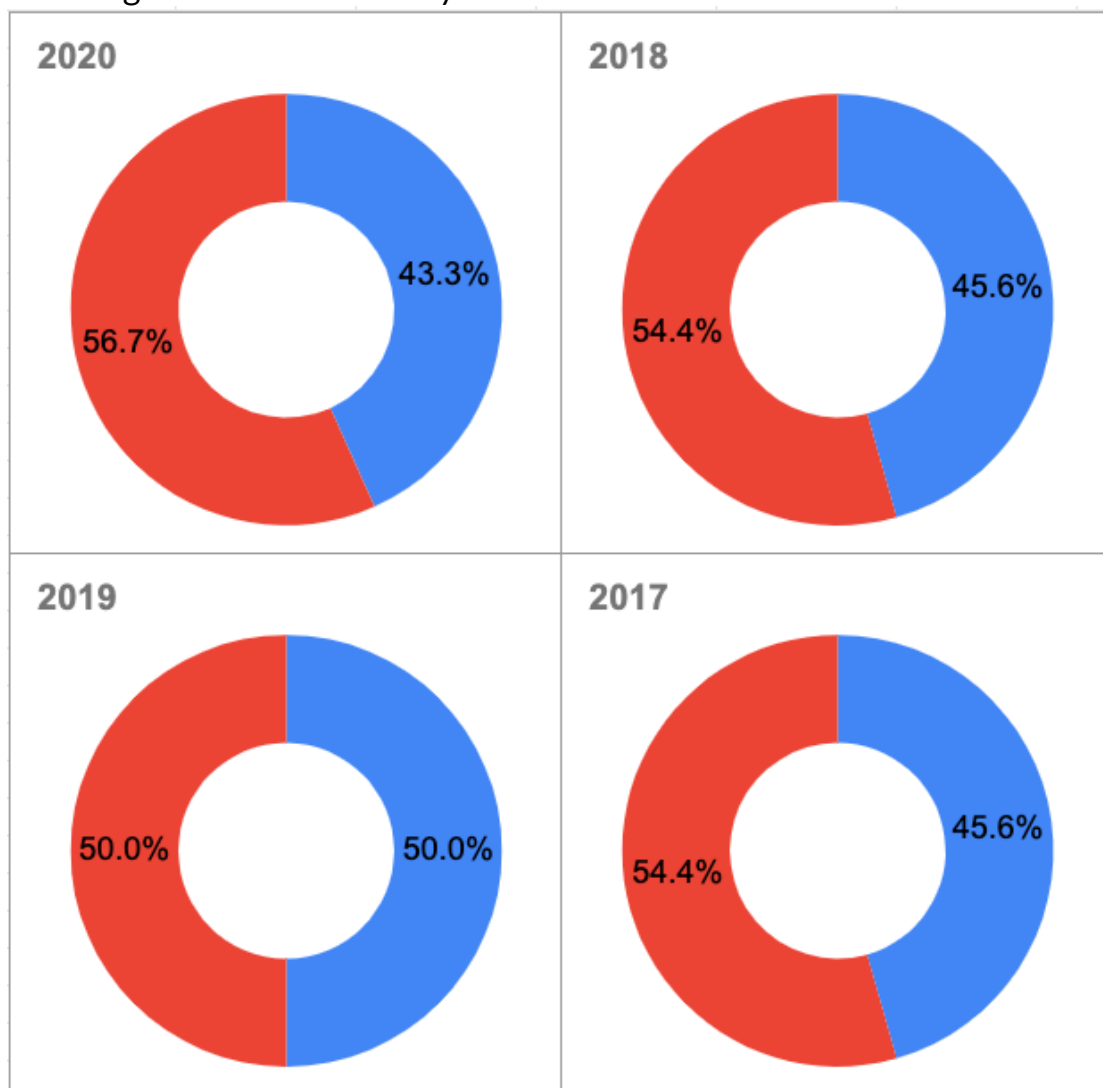




2017 - 2020



Breaking down these charts year-wise...



● Arithmetic ● Everything Else

Further breaking down the doughnut's topic-wise:

2017				2018			
Topics	No. of Questions			Topics	No. of Questions		
	SLOT 1	SLOT 2			SLOT 1	SLOT 2	
NUMBER THEORY	1	3	4	NUMBER THEORY	3	4	7
RATIOS, MIXTURES; AVERAGES	4	4	8	RATIOS, MIXTURES; AVERAGES	6	5	11
PERCENTS, PROFITS, SICI	6	4	10	PERCENTS, PROFITS, SICI	2	1	3
SPEED, TIME, DISTANCE; RACES	2	3	5	SPEED, TIME, DISTANCE; RACES	3	3	6
LOGARITHMS AND EXPONENTS	3	3	6	LOGARITHMS AND EXPONENTS	4	2	6
PIPES, CISTERNS; WORK, TIME	1	2	3	PIPES, CISTERNS; WORK, TIME	3	3	6
LINEAR & QUADRATIC	2	1	3	LINEAR & QUADRATIC	1		1
FUNCTIONS	2	3	5	FUNCTIONS	2	1	3
INEQUALITIES	1		1	INEQUALITIES		2	2
POLYNOMIALS			0	POLYNOMIALS			0
PROGRESSIONS	2	3	5	PROGRESSIONS	1	4	5
COMBINATORICS	3	2	5	COMBINATORICS		1	1
TRIGONOMETRY			0	TRIGONOMETRY			0
CO-GEO	2	1	3	CO-GEO		1	1
MENSURATION	2		2	MENSURATION	2	3	5
GEOMETRY	3	5	8	GEOMETRY	5	2	7
SET THEORY			0	SET THEORY	2	2	4
	34	34	68		34	34	68

2019				2020				
Topics	No. of Questions			Topics	No. of Questions			
	SLOT 1	SLOT 2			SLOT 1	SLOT 2	SLOT 3	Total
NUMBER THEORY	1	4	5	NUMBER THEORY	4	2	5	11
RATIOS, MIXTURES; AVERAGES	3	4	7	RATIOS, MIXTURES; AVERAGES	3	2	2	7
PERCENTS, PROFITS, SICI	5	5	10	PERCENTS, PROFITS, SICI	3	3	3	9
SPEED, TIME, DISTANCE; RACES	4	3	7	SPEED, TIME, DISTANCE; RACES	4	4	3	11
LOGARITHMS AND EXPONENTS	3	3	6	LOGARITHMS AND EXPONENTS	4	1	4	9
PIPES, CISTERNS; WORK, TIME	2	2	4	PIPES, CISTERNS; WORK, TIME		1	1	2
LINEAR & QUADRATIC	2	3	5	LINEAR & QUADRATIC	2	4	2	8
FUNCTIONS	2	1	3	FUNCTIONS	1	1	1	3
INEQUALITIES			0	INEQUALITIES		1		1
POLYNOMIALS			0	POLYNOMIALS		1		1
PROGRESSIONS	3	3	6	PROGRESSIONS	1	1		2
COMBINATORICS			0	COMBINATORICS			1	1
TRIGONOMETRY	1		1	TRIGONOMETRY				0
CO-GEO	3		3	CO-GEO	1		3	4
MENSURATION	2	2	4	MENSURATION	2	1		3
GEOMETRY	2	4	6	GEOMETRY	1	3	1	5
SET THEORY	1		1	SET THEORY		1		1
	34	34	68		26	26	26	78

Success Factor	Key Resource	Big Takeaway
1. Strong Fundamentals 2. Excellent Drill	1. <a href="#">2IIM Free Question Bank</a> 2. <a href="#">2IIM YouTube Channel</a>	Arithmetic alone can take you to 90th percentile



Useful Links:

[Best CAT Online Coaching!](#)

[Best IPMAT Coaching](#)

[All about CAT Exam](#)

[CAT Syllabus](#)

[How to Prepare for CAT](#)

[How to Prepare for CAT Quantitative Aptitude](#)

[How to Prepare for CAT Verbal Ability and Reading Comprehension](#)

[How to Prepare for CAT Data Interpretation and Logical Reasoning](#)

[Bharath's Reading List](#)

[Best CAT Online Coaching](#)

