

UPSC SYLLABUS 2021

Welcome to BYJU'S!

Here, you will find a complete list of subjects for the Civil Services Examination conducted by the Union Public Service Commission (UPSC)

The Civil Services Examination is widely considered as one of the toughest and the most prestigious examinations conducted in India.

To understand the exam, one needs to understand the syllabus. This helps eliminate wasteful efforts like reading unnecessary topics leading to a loss of time, and keeps one strictly aligned to the expectations of the UPSC from day one.

The UPSC prescribes a common syllabus pattern for services such as the Indian Administrative Service, Indian Foreign Service, Indian Police Service, Indian Revenue Service (Customs and Central Excise) to name a few.

The Civil service exam is conducted in three phases:

Phase 1: Civil Services (Preliminary) Examination (Objective Type)

Phase 2: Civil Services (Mains) Examination (Descriptive Type)

Phase 3: Personal Interview (Personality Test)

PHASE 1: CIVIL SERVICES (PRELIMINARY) EXAMINATION

The Preliminary Examination is composed of two components:

1) General Studies I

2) General Studies II [also known as Civil Services Aptitude Test (CSAT)]

Paper	Subjects	Total Marks	Duration
I	General Studies (GS) I	200	2 hours
II	General Studies (GS) II	200	2 hours

- Broadly, the Civil Services (Preliminary) Examination consists of two papers of objective type, each of 200 marks (hence totaling 400 marks) and of two hours duration. To qualify for the Civil Services Mains, a candidate must attempt both the papers.
- Further, the UPSC General Studies (GS) paper 1 consists of 100 questions, while the CSAT paper consists of 80 questions. Both papers have negative marks for wrong answers marked to the tune of 1/3rd of the total marks assigned to that question.
 - To further illustrate this, each correctly answered GS I question will be awarded 2 marks. So, 0.66 marks would be deducted from the total for every question that is wrongly marked.
 - Similarly, in the CSAT paper, since we have 80 questions for 200 marks, correctly answered CSAT question would attract 2.5 marks each, while every wrongly marked question would attract a penalty of 0.833 for each such wrong answer, which will be deducted from the total.
- Questions that are not attempted will not attract any negative marks.

The two papers of the IAS prelims are discussed in detail below:

1. General Studies I (Generally conducted between 9:30 AM to 11:30 AM)

The General Studies Paper I of Prelims exam is the first paper of the preliminary examination. This test is intended to test the general awareness of a candidate in a wide range of subjects that include: **Indian Polity, Geography, History, Indian Economy, Science and Technology, Environment and Ecology, International Relations and associated UPSC current affairs.**

2. General Studies II or CSAT (Generally conducted between 2:30 PM to 04:30 PM)
 - This UPSC Prelims syllabus for CSAT intends to assess the aptitude of the candidate in solving 'Reasoning and Analytical' questions, apart from 'Reading Comprehension' and the occasionally asked 'Decision Making' questions.
 - The 'Decision Making' based questions are generally exempt from negative marks.
 - The preliminary examination is only meant for screening a candidate for the subsequent stages of the exam.
 - The marks obtained in the Prelims will not be added up while arriving at the final rank list.

UPSC Prelims Syllabus

- **Syllabus for GS Paper I (Prelims Paper I)**
 - Current events of national and international importance.
 - History of India and Indian National Movement.
 - Indian and World Geography-Physical, Social, Economic Geography of India and the World.
 - Indian Polity and Governance – Constitution, Political System, Panchayati Raj, Public Policy, Rights Issues, etc.
 - Economic and Social Development – Sustainable Development, Poverty, Inclusion, Demographics, Social Sector initiatives, etc.
 - General issues on Environmental Ecology, Biodiversity and Climate Change – that do not require subject specialisation.
 - General Science
- **Syllabus for GS Paper II or CSAT Paper (Prelims Paper II)**
 - Comprehension
 - Interpersonal skills including communication skills
 - Logical reasoning and analytical ability
 - Decision-making and problem solving
 - General mental ability
 - Basic numeracy (numbers and their relations, orders of magnitude, etc.) (Class X level), Data interpretation (charts, graphs, tables, data sufficiency etc. – Class X level)

PHASE 2: CIVIL SERVICES (MAINS) EXAMINATION

- The Mains examination constitutes the 2nd phase of the Civil Services Examination. Only after successfully qualifying in the prelims exam would the candidates be allowed to write the IAS Mains.
- The Mains exam tests the candidate's academic talent in depth and his/her ability to present his/her understanding according to the requirements of the question in a time-bound manner.
- The UPSC Mains exam consists of 9 papers, out of which two are qualifying papers of 300 marks each.
- The two qualifying papers are:
 - Any Indian Language
 - English Language Paper

The papers on Essay, General Studies and Optional Subject of only such candidates who attain 25% marks in both the language papers as a minimum qualifying standard in these qualifying papers, will be taken cognizance of, for evaluation.

In case a candidate does not qualify in these language papers, then the marks obtained by such candidates will not be considered or counted.

Structure of the language papers:

The types of questions asked are –

1. Essay – 100 marks
2. Reading comprehension – 60 marks
3. Precis Writing – 60 marks
4. Translation:
 - a. English to compulsory language (e.g. Hindi) – 20 marks
 - b. Compulsory language to English – 20 marks
5. Grammar and basic language usage – 40 marks

The rest of the seven papers can be written in any of the languages mentioned under the Eighth Schedule of the Constitution of India or in English.

UPSC Mains Syllabus

Paper	Subject	Marks
Paper I	Essay (can be written in the medium of the candidate's choice)	250
Paper II	General Studies – I (Indian Heritage & Culture, History & Geography of the World & Society)	250
Paper III	General Studies – II (Governance, Constitution, Polity, Social Justice & International Relations)	250
Paper IV	General Studies – III (Technology, Economic Development, Biodiversity, Security & Disaster Management)	250
Paper V	General Studies – IV (Ethics, Integrity & Aptitude)	250
Paper VI	Optional Subject – Paper I	250
Paper VII	Optional Subject – Paper II	250

Please check the detailed [UPSC Mains General Studies Syllabus here](#).

The UPSC Mains syllabus gives a list of 48 Optional Subjects which include Literature of different languages. Candidates need to choose any one of the 'Optional Subjects' from the list of subjects given below:

Civil Services Exam Syllabus for IAS Mains Optional Subjects: Click the link below:

[UPSC Mains Syllabus for Optionals](#)

Candidates can check the [success rate of optional subjects](#) at the linked article.

Phase 3: IAS Interview/UPSC Personality Test (275 Marks)

- Candidates who qualify the UPSC Mains Exam will be called for the 'Personality Test/Interview'. These candidates will be interviewed by a Board appointed by the UPSC.
- The objective of the interview is to assess the personal suitability of the candidate for a career in the civil services by a board of competent and unbiased observers.
- The interview is more of a purposive conversation intended to explore the mental qualities and analytical ability of the candidate.
- The Interview test will be of 275 marks and the total marks for written examination is 1750. This sums up to a Grand Total of 2025 Marks, based on which the final merit list will be prepared.

