

Magoosh

LSAT Study Guide PDF

What's included:

- ✔ Overview of the LSAT
- ✔ Study Strategies & Tips

Table of Contents - *This LSAT Study Guide was last updated on 5/11/2021*

Introduction

- 1) The Magoosh Team
- 2) Magoosh's LSAT Product

Meet the LSAT

- 1) Law School Admission Council (LSAC)
- 2) Law School Admission Test (LSAT)
- 3) The New Digital LSAT
- 4) The Remote LSAT
- 5) LSAT vs. GRE
- 6) Registering for the LSAT
- 7) LSAT Scoring
- 8) When to take the LSAT
- 9) LSAT Prep Timeline
- 10) LSAT Sections

LSAT Study Schedules

- 1) Three Month Study Schedule
- 2) Two Month Study Schedule
- 3) One Month Study Schedule
- 4) Two Week (16-Day) Study Schedule

LSAT Study Strategies

- 1) Full-length, Timed Practice Tests
- 2) Individual, Timed Practice Sections
- 3) Error Log
- 4) Untimed, Targeted Practice

Section Strategies

- 1) Logical Reasoning
- 2) Logic Games
- 3) Reading Comprehension
- 4) Writing Sample

Conclusion

Introduction

This eBook is meant to serve as a roadmap providing you with a comprehensive overview of the LSAT. Here we combine crucial information on test structure and question types with essential strategies and tips for doing your best on test day. The information in this eBook is a synthesis of some of the best content on the [Magoosh LSAT blog](#). No matter where you are in your studies, if you're preparing for the LSAT, this eBook is for you!

Reading this eBook as a PDF on a computer or tablet? Click on specific sections in the [Table of Contents](#) to go directly to that section.



The Magoosh Team

We're a team of passionate educators in Berkeley, California. We like word games, video games, and helping students do really well on standardized exams so that they can achieve their educational dreams! :)

You can learn more about us and what we do on [our team page](#). If you have any questions, feel free to contact us at help@magoosh.com!



Magoosh's LSAT Product

Magoosh offers an [online LSAT prep course](#) that includes:

- Real, official LSAT questions from past tests with video and written explanations for every question
- [90+ unique lessons](#) covering all aspects of the LSAT
- [Video explanations](#) of logic games from official LSAT PrepTests
- 24-hour access to online materials from any internet-connected device
- Email support from experienced LSAT tutors
- Study plans to accommodate different study plans and skills
- Customizable practice sessions and practice test experience
- Personalized statistics and recommendations based on your performance

Try our [free 7-day trial](#)!

Meet the LSAT



Law School Admission Council (LSAC)

LSAC is a nonprofit corporation that administers the LSAT. In order to register for the exam, you need to [create an account](#).

You'll also use your LSAC account to register for the Credential Assembly Service (CAS). The CAS allows you to submit all your law school application materials (letters of recommendation, scores, transcripts, etc.) to LSAC rather than submitting them separately with each application. Once LSAC has all your materials, they compile them into a report, which is sent to the law schools when you apply.

Law School Admission Test (LSAT)

The LSAT is the exam you have to take if you want to apply to J.D. programs at law schools in the U.S. or Canada, The University of Melbourne, Australia, and a growing list of other countries. The LSAT is designed to “specifically to assess key skills needed for success in law school, including reading comprehension, analytical reasoning, and logical reasoning” You'll demonstrate your ability to read and

understand complex texts, to make inferences based on provided information, and to analyze and evaluate others' reasoning and arguments.

The LSAT is only being offered a remote, online proctored exam at least through June 2022, and likely beyond.

Before August 2021, the LSAT consists of three 35-minute multiple choice sections, including one [reading comprehension](#), one [analytical reasoning](#) ("logic games"), and one [logical reasoning](#) section.

In and after August 2021, the LSAT will consist of four three 35-minute multiple choice sections, including one [reading comprehension](#), one [analytical reasoning](#) ("logic games"), one [logical reasoning](#) section, and one variable section, which could be any of the above types. The variable section is used to test out new questions and does not contribute to your scores.

The unscored section (typically referred to as the "variable" section), pretests new questions or evaluates the test form. Where this section occurs in the test also varies year to year, and you won't know that it's an unscored section until you receive your score report.

In both cases, in total, there are about 75-76 **scored** questions on the exam, but the exact number varies from test to test.

Before August 2021, there is no break on the exam. **In and after August 2021**, there is one 10-minute break between sections 2 and 3. This makes the total duration of the LSAT 150 minutes, in other words, 2 hours and 30 minutes.

Additionally, the LSAT includes a [35-minute, unscored writing exam](#) that can be taken at a day and time of your choosing. The prompt will provide a decision or problem and you will choose between two positions, defending your choice in essay form. You will be assessed on your argumentative writing skills and law schools will look specifically at your reasoning, clarity, organization, language usage, and mechanics. Copies of your writing sample will be sent to the law schools to which you apply.

Taking the LSAT writing exam at your own convenience will shorten the duration of time you sit for the LSAT, but the test is still a marathon, assessing your endurance as much so as your critical thinking. Keep in mind that the only time you can eat or drink during the exam is on your 10 minute break, so make sure to fuel and hydrate adequately beforehand. You may, however, leave to use the restroom during a timed section.

The LSAT (with the writing test) costs \$200, but there are other [LSAT fees](#) involved as well. For example, there is a \$125 fee to change your test date or test center and a \$50 fee to request a refund.

Also, when you apply to law school, you will need to pay to use LSAC's Credential Assembly Service (CAS), which is required to apply to most law schools, including all law schools approved by the American Bar Association. The fee to create a CAS account is \$195, and there is an additional \$45 fee

for each report requested by a law school through the service. These reports are how LSAC communicates your LSAT score, academics, and professional background to the law schools.

The current exam is remote and requires certain materials, like a laptop and internet connection. If you have trouble accessing these, the LSAC can help! They have provided loaner devices, found quiet testing spaces, and otherwise helped thousands of test-takers access the remote LSAT exam over the past year.

The New Digital LSAT

As of the LSAT exam on July 15, 2019, the [LSAT is now digital!](#)

Here's the deal: absolutely nothing about the actual content of the test or the scoring of it will change. Same sections, same questions, same timing.

However, instead of taking the exam with a pen and paper, everyone sitting for the LSAT **in person** will take it using LSAT-specific software on a tablet provided to you (a [Microsoft Surface Go](#), if we're being precise). According to the LSAC website, "the tablet offers great features such as a timer with a five-minute warning, highlighting, and flagging to keep track of questions that a test taker may want to revisit in a section."

Now does this mean you'll need to go buy a tablet to practice for the exam? Nope. [These new LSAT practice tests](#) are formatted exactly like the test you'll take on a tablet. We recommend that you take a few of these practice tests (which is always a good idea) to familiarize yourself with the format.

So just to reiterate: the new digital LSAT is the same test as before, just administered digitally for ease and efficiency.

The Remote LSAT

Introduced during the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020, the at-home, remote LSAT is currently the only LSAT option available, and will be through at least June 2022.

Prior to August 2021, the remote LSAT will have three scored sections and no break.

In and after August 2021, the remote LSAT will have three scored sections and one unscored section, with a 10-minute break between the second and third sections.

You can find out more about [LSAT changes in 2021 and 2022 here](#), and [scoring on the remote LSAT here](#).

We've already updated a free practice test to reflect the new three scored section format and scoring--[click here to check out Magoosh's free LSAT practice test!](#)

GRE vs. LSAT

Since the University of Arizona announced in 2016 that it would accept GRE scores *or* LSAT scores for admission to its law school, many other colleges have followed suit. Harvard Law School began accepting GRE scores in 2017, Georgetown Law did so in 2018, and Northwestern did so this year, spurring many more schools to make the shift.

In fact, here's a comprehensive list of all the [law schools currently accepting the GRE](#), including:

- American University Washington College of Law
- Boston University School of Law
- Brigham Young University J. Reuben Clark Law School
- Brooklyn Law School
- California Western School of Law
- Chicago-Kent College of Law
- Columbia Law School
- Cornell Law School
- Florida International University College of Law
- Florida State University College of Law
- George Mason University Antonin Scalia Law School
- Georgetown University Law Center
- Harvard Law School
- John Marshall Law School
- Massachusetts School of Law at Andover
- New York University School of Law
- Northwestern University Pritzker School of Law
- Pace University Elisabeth Haub School of Law
- Pennsylvania State University — Penn State Law
- Pepperdine School of Law
- Seattle University School of Law
- Southern Methodist University Dedman School of Law
- St. John's University School of Law
- Suffolk University Law School
- Texas A&M University School of Law
- University at Buffalo School of Law
- University of Arizona James E. Rogers College of Law
- University of California, Davis, School of Law
- University of California, Irvine School of Law
- University of California, Los Angeles School of Law
- University of Chicago Law School
- University of Dayton School of Law
- University of Hawai'i at Manoa William S. Richardson School of Law
- University of Montana Alexander Blewett III School of Law
- University of New Hampshire School of Law
- University of Notre Dame Law School
- University of Pennsylvania Law School
- University of Southern California, Gould School of Law
- University of South Carolina School of Law
- University of Texas at Austin School of Law

- University of Virginia School of Law
- Wake Forest University School of Law
- Washington University School of Law
- Yale Law School
- Yeshiva University Benjamin N. Cardozo School of Law

The GRE is gaining a lot of traction in law school admissions, so if you've already taken the GRE and earned a good score, there's no harm in using it to apply to the schools that accept it.

If law school is your primary goal, however, it's still a good idea to take the LSAT as well, to maximize your admissions prospects, *unless* your GRE score is substantially better than your LSAT score (or what you think you could achieve on the LSAT).

[Click here for a free 7-day trial of Magoosh's online LSAT prep product!](#)

Registering for the LSAT

The first thing you need to do is register for an LSAC account. [You can do that right here](#). Once you get your LSAC account, you'll be able to:

- Purchase test prep materials;
- Register for the law school forums;
- Register for the LSAT;
- Apply to law schools online.

Once you register with LSAC you'll need to choose your test date in order to complete your LSAT registration. Knowing the [upcoming test dates](#) is helpful, but picking a test date that's right for you is crucial (more on this shortly!).

After you choose a date, you'll be asked to pay the fee(s) ([here's a list of the fees](#)). You can pay with VISA, MasterCard, American Express, or DISCOVER.

LSAT Scoring

Both before and after the August 2021 changes, LSAT scoring is based on your performance on three multiple choice sections of the exam:

- (1) Reading Comprehension section
- (1) Analytical Reasoning section (Logic Games)
- (1) Logical Reasoning section

In and after August 2021, there will also be one unscored, experimental section that is used only for research purposes (to test new questions and to provide psychometric data on the test's consistency from year to year). The Writing Sample is unscored, so it does not factor into your final score.

Within the three scored sections, there are about 75-76 questions (give or take 1 or 2), and each question is worth one point. It doesn't matter whether the question comes from Reading Comprehension, Logical Reasoning, or Analytical Reasoning—each question is weighted equally.

If you answer the question correctly, you get a point. If you answer the question incorrectly, you get no points. There is no partial credit, and there is no penalty for wrong answers. Therefore, it is in your best interest to answer every single question, even if you're just guessing randomly on some questions.

Your raw score is simply the number of multiple choice questions you answered correctly. Once you know your raw score, you can determine your approximate scaled score by looking at a conversion table. Conversion tables are released by LSAC after every disclosed test date. While each test has its own, unique conversion table, the numbers are relatively consistent from one to another.

LSAC takes your raw score and plugs it into an extremely complicated algorithm. The algorithm takes into account the difficulty of the test compared to previous tests and the total number of questions. This process, for all of you stat nerds out there, is called equating.

The conversion table below was created by averaging the conversion tables of 10 of the most recently administered LSATs with the second Logical Reasoning section removed, so it should give you a pretty reliable estimate.

LSAT FLEX RAW SCORE	LSAT SCALED SCORE	LSAT PERCENTILE
75-76	180	99.9
74	177-180	99.8-99.9
73	177-180	99.8-99.9
72	175-179	99.6-99.9
71	173-178	99.0-99.9
70	172-176	98.6-99.7
69	170-175	97.4-99.6
68	169-174	96.6-99.3
67	168-173	95.5-99.0
66	167-172	94.3-98.6
65	166-170	92.9-97.4
64	166-169	92.9-96.6
63	165-169	91.4-96.6
62	165-168	91.4-95.5
61	163-167	97.1-94.3

60	162-166	84.9-92.9
59	162-165	84.9-91.4
58	161-164	92.4-89.4
57	160-163	79.4-87.1
56	159-162	76.5-84.9
55	159-161	76.5-82.4
54	158-161	73.6-82.4
53	157-160	70.0-79.4
52	157-159	70.0-76.5
51	156-158	66.4-73.6
50	155-157	62.8-70.0
49	154-157	59.0-70.0
48	154-156	59.0-66.4
47	153-155	55.1-62.8
46	152-155	51.1-62.8

60	162-166	84.9-92.9
59	162-165	84.9-91.4
58	161-164	92.4-89.4
57	160-163	79.4-87.1
56	159-162	76.5-84.9
55	159-161	76.5-82.4
54	158-161	73.6-82.4
53	157-160	70.0-79.4
52	157-159	70.0-76.5
51	156-158	66.4-73.6
50	155-157	62.8-70.0
49	154-157	59.0-70.0
48	154-156	59.0-66.4
47	153-155	55.1-62.8
46	152-155	51.1-62.8

45	152-154	51.1-59.0
44	151-153	47.6-55.1
43	150-153	43.9-55.1
42	150-152	43.9-51.1
41	149-151	40.1-47.6
40	148-150	36.3-43.9
39	147-150	32.6-43.9
38	146-149	29.7-40.1
37	146-148	29.7-36.3
36	145-147	26.0-32.6
35	144-146	23.0-29.7
34	143-146	20.5-29.7
33	142-145	17.7-26.0
32	141-144	15.5-23.0
31	141-143	15.5-20.5

30	140-142	13.3-17.7
29	139-141	11.3-15.5
28	138-140	9.6-13.3
27	137-139	8.1-11.3
26	136-138	6.8-9.6
25	135-138	5.5-9.6
24	134-137	4.7-8.1
23	133-136	3.9-6.8
22	132-135	3.2-5.5
21	131-134	2.6-4.7
20	129-133	1.7-3.9
19	127-132	1.1-3.2
18	125-131	0.7-2.6
17	123-130	0.5-2.0
16	121-129	0.3-1.7
15	120-127	0.0-1.1
14	120-125	0.0-0.7
13	120-123	0.0-0.5
12	120-122	0.0-0.4
11	120-121	0.0-0.3
0-10	120	0.0

When to Take the LSAT

The good news is you have many LSAT test dates to choose from—you just have to narrow down which option is best for you. You'll want to consider when you're planning to apply to law school, so you can

ensure your LSAT scores will be available in time to apply. If you're not sure when you want to start law school, you have a little more flexibility. LSAT scores are valid for up to five years, so you can take the test early and leave a cushion for retakes, work obligations, and other outside commitments.

The LSAT used to be offered only 4 times a year, but in 2018 it was offered 6 times and in 2019 it was offered 7. In 2020, it was offered 8 times.

Now, the LSAT is offered nine times per year, with LSAT dates occurring over the course of a week. You can [check the most current testing dates here](#).

If you're taking the LSAT outside of the United States, Canada, or the Caribbean, you can use the link above to search for all testing dates by region.

There is also one Spanish-only LSAT offered twice per year in Puerto Rico, only for students applying to to Puerto Rico's three Spanish-speaking law schools.

If you are a Saturday Sabbath observer and the only LSAT test date for the month you wish to take the test falls on a Saturday, you may [request an alternative testing date](#).

[You can read more about LSAT dates and deadlines here](#).

June is one of the most popular test dates among students. For test takers who are currently still in undergrad, it falls over summer break, so June represents a rare opportunity to be able to study and take the test with fewer class and club responsibilities in the way. Keep in mind, however, that you'll likely have final exams and course commitments to balance until just a few weeks before the test date.

June is early enough that you can take the test and get your scores back in time to apply early in the admissions cycle that same year. You'll have the rest of your summer to pull together letters of recommendation, personal statements, and resumes without burdening yourself with logic games. Even if you later decide your June score is too low and requires a retake, retaking the September/October test still puts you on the early end of the application cycle.

Since June is also the only test that the LSAC administers in the afternoon, it's the perfect choice for those of you who definitely aren't morning people. That's right: There's no need to fear oversleeping or killing your score with too much of a caffeine buzz.

One of the benefits of the September/October test date is that it gives you the entire summer to study, which is particularly advantageous for current undergraduates! However, remember that those pesky fall semester classes will have started up again by September, so if you're still in school, you'll have more commitments on your plate. If you're worried about getting rusty on the LSAT skills you picked up over the summer, keep up with your study schedule as much as you can, even in the midst of homework and other tests.

The downside to taking your first LSAT around this time is that you'll really want to nail this test if you plan to apply early in the admissions cycle. Getting a golden LSAT score from this test date is ideal because it will still allow you to apply about as early as all of the students who sat for the June LSAT. If you're not satisfied with your score in September/October, you'll have to wait until December to retake, which takes you out of the running for an early admissions review.

The November/December LSAT will be the last chance you'll have to take the LSAT and still be considered for the current admissions cycle by top law schools. You'll be applying late in the cycle with a score from a December test, but you'll still be on time if you make sure other parts of your application (like your resume and personal statement) are ready to go. Keep this point in mind, especially if you're flip-flopping about how ready you are for the September/October test.

Some students intentionally impose a September/October test date on themselves, even if that's unrealistic for them to achieve a good score. Remember that every single law school will accept your December score. Be sure to give yourself enough time to do your best!

The January/February LSAT is great for eager students applying in the following application cycle—it can take a lot of stress off your mind to know that you have many opportunities to retake and many more months to study and prepare your applications, if needed.

However, the January/February LSAT would be less than ideal for students interested in matriculating that same year. A number of schools won't consider a student with a January or February LSAT score in an applicant pool for that same year. And while it's true that many schools will still consider such a student, you'd still be applying on the very late end of the application timeline.

The first March LSAT was offered in March 2018. Like the February LSAT, the March LSAT is a great choice for students who are looking to get the LSAT out of the way early and have time to focus on other parts of the law school application. However, it's not a good choice if you're hoping to start law school the same year, because you'll get the results back too late to apply to most schools. So, only consider the March LSAT if you're hoping to get the LSAT done early in the application process and have time to retest if needed.

The most important thing is to choose a date that you will be best prepared for. It's stressful to be rounding the corner of your test date only to realize that you're 10 points from where you want to be scoring. While there are pros and cons to each of the test dates on the calendar, no consideration outweighs a fantastic score (even if that score means applying later in the application cycle).

LSAT Prep Timeline

Deciding how long to study for the LSAT can be tricky. The LSAT is not the kind of test that you want to walk into without sufficient preparation. But what does “sufficient prep” look like? How long should you study for the LSAT realistically? The amount of time that you put into LSAT prep often reflects in your score. [Click here to try Magoosh's LSAT product for free!](#)

The time periods given here assume that you'll be studying for about 10–15 hours per week. That might seem like a lot of time to add onto your already demanding schedule, but it's necessary to get a great LSAT score.

Studying for the LSAT should really take at least two months (or about 100 total hours of studying). Any less than that, and you probably won't get the practice you'll need to get through the concepts tested. “Getting through” the concepts doesn't necessarily mean full understanding—eight or nine weeks is not a long time, so while you'll be able to familiarize yourself with the content, you won't necessarily become an LSAT expert.

Keep in mind that the minimum is exactly that—if you only put in the minimum amount of time, you can only anticipate seeing minimum returns on your investment. For those of you looking for serious score increases, you'll want to free up more time in your schedule to commit to the test.

We recommend that you study anywhere from [3 to 6 months for the LSAT](#) (150–300 total hours of studying). This amount of time really gives your brain the chance to make all of the connections needed for optimal LSAT performance. Most college classes don't teach you how to solve logical reasoning questions or logic games, so this will all be new material. Focusing on the LSAT over a sustained period of several months will unlock the tips and tricks to higher test-day performance on your LSAT test date.

LSAT Sections

There are three types of scored, multiple choice LSAT sections, along with an unscored writing sample. The multiple choice sections are called Reading Comprehension, Logical Reasoning, and Analytical Reasoning.

LSAT Reading Comprehension is similar to the reading sections of other tests, including the SAT, ACT, GRE, and GMAT. You'll be given a passage that's about half a page long, and then you'll have a handful of questions to answer about that passage. There are three individual passages and one pair of passages (two shorter passages with a single set of questions asking you to compare the two) on each test. There are typically 27 questions on this section. Since there are roughly 75-76 scored questions on the entire exam, Reading Comprehension is worth about 36% of your total score. [Click here to learn more about LSAT Reading Comprehension.](#)

Logical Reasoning is probably something new for you unless you've taken the GMAT and remember the Critical Reasoning component. In this section, you'll be given a short paragraph that poses an argument or lays out some facts, and then you'll be asked a single question about that paragraph. For example, you might be asked which answer choice strengthens the argument, weakens the argument, or provides

an explanation of facts in the paragraph that seem to contradict each other. Though there used to be two LR sections on the in-person LSAT, **there is now only one Logical Reasoning section on the exam**, containing roughly 25 questions, meaning it's worth about 33% of your score. [Click here for more information about LSAT Logical Reasoning.](#)

The Analytical Reasoning section—better known as Logic Games—is the most notorious section of the exam. It intimidates test takers because it's unlike what they're used to seeing on other standardized tests, but it's still quite learnable. It consists of four separate “games,” in which you'll be given a scenario and a set of rules, and you have to answer questions about possible outcomes. For example, you might be asked to arrange the order in which seven planes land at an airport terminal, but you'll only be given basics like, “If Plane P arrives before Plane S or Plane T, then it must also arrive after Plane X.” Once you familiarize yourself with the most common game types, these can actually be kind of fun! In any case, there is only one Logic Games section and it usually only has about 23 questions, so it's only worth about 30% of your score. [Click here for more information about LSAT Analytical Reasoning.](#)

Finally, there's the writing sample. The writing sample is the final stage of the exam, and it's unscored. However, your entire writing sample will be sent with your score when you apply to law school, so you don't want to forget about this section. **You also won't be able to get your LSAT scores until you've submitted it!** You'll be given a scenario and asked to make a choice between two courses of action. There will be a few criteria provided to help you make your decision, and all you have to do is make a strong argument in support of your course of action. No prior knowledge of the topic is required or expected, and there is no right or wrong answer. Basically, this is your chance to show off your ability to argue a point, and since you'll be doing a lot of that in law school, this is also a great way to test the waters! [Click here to learn more about the LSAT Writing Sample.](#)

LSAT Study Schedules



Three Month Study Schedule

Studying for the LSAT is a huge undertaking, and most students need 3 to 6 months of preparation. If you only have 3 months left until the LSAT, you need to get started now! Magoosh's [Three Month LSAT Study Plan](#) tells you exactly what you'll need, including official LSAT PrepTests and Magoosh's online video lessons. This study plan will prepare you for all facets of the LSAT.

Two Month Study Schedule

The LSAT is a very difficult exam, and most students need 3 to 6 months of study to perform well. But some students hope to prep in less time, and although we think it's best not to rush, we know that busy lives demand aggressive goals. Take a look at Magoosh's [Two Month LSAT Study Plan](#) to learn how to

improve your score quickly. This plan tells you exactly what you'll need, including official LSAT PrepTests and Magoosh's online video lessons.

One Month Study Schedule

We certainly don't advise our students to take the LSAT after prepping for only one month. But we understand that life happens, and many students find themselves a month away from the test without an effective study plan. Magoosh has your back! Our [One Month Study Plan](#) tells you exactly what you'll need, including official LSAT PrepTests and Magoosh's online video lessons. With the right plan and a lot of hard work, you can substantially improve your LSAT score in one month.

Two-Week (16-Day) Study Schedule

Two weeks is not enough time to fully prep for the LSAT. But if you're scheduled to take the LSAT in two weeks and you're completely unprepared, you must get organized now! Perhaps you encountered some unforeseen circumstances, or maybe you purchased some test prep materials that turned out to be unhelpful. Whatever the case, Magoosh is here to help with our most aggressive study plan: the [Two-Week \(16-Day\) LSAT Crash Course](#). If you're serious about improving your score in two weeks, read this plan and buckle up!

LSAT Study Strategies



Ultimately, LSAT prep is about building new habits, and that doesn't happen quickly. If you're doing things right, you'll feel off-balance in the first phase of prep because you're learning entirely new approaches to the exam. As you move into the second phase, you'll feel more comfortable with the process, but you might feel impatient with the results. This is because you've *learned* a good approach to the test, but you haven't *mastered* it yet. It's like playing a game in which you know all the rules and you're always exactly where you should be, but you keep dropping the ball. In the third phase, you finally start to master the test. This is where you focus on small adjustments to your technique, each of which may take time to perfect and might only result in one or two more correct answers.

Regardless of the phase you're currently in, progress may feel slow. Don't focus on how you're scoring today vs. last week. Instead, try to focus on where you started, how far you've come, and what you can do next to get closer to your goal.

[Click here for a free trial of Magoosh's online LSAT prep program!](#)

There are four components to an effective LSAT study program: (1) full-length, timed practice tests; (2) individual, timed practice sections; (3) an error log; and (4) untimed, targeted practice.

Full-Length, Timed Practice Tests

This is a great starting point for your [LSAT prep](#). In fact, I recommend taking a full-length practice test before you even crack open a prep book, watch an online lesson, or attend your first prep class. That way, you get a realistic idea of where you're starting out, and you can set reasonable goals for how far you'll progress.

Read [How to Take a Practice LSAT](#) and [What are the Best LSAT Practice Tests?](#) for more details on where to find quality practice tests and how to create an authentic testing environment.

After your first practice test, strike a balance between further practice tests and the other three elements of effective LSAT test prep. Taking weekly practice tests is probably overkill, but avoiding them entirely is also unwise. Over-testing can exhaust you while reinforcing bad habits and taking up time that could be spent learning. It's like endless scrimmaging without any practice or coaching in between. On the other hand, under-testing leaves you vulnerable to test day surprises like fatigue or poor planning (timing bathroom breaks, packing good quality snacks, etc...). In other words, it's like playing catch every day, and then thinking you're ready for your first baseball game.

Instead, aim to complete one full-length, timed practice test after every 2-4 tests' worth of material you complete as either individual, timed sections or untimed, targeted practice. If you work on LSAT prep 3-4 days per week for 30-60 minutes per day, you'll be ready for a practice test every 2-3 weeks.

Individual, Timed Practice Sections

This just means sitting down, setting a timer for 35 minutes, and completing one section of an LSAT from start to finish.

I recommend doing this about 3 times per week (one for each LSAT section type). Just make sure to leave room for regular untimed, targeted practice. For example, don't do 4 or 5 Logic Games practice sections in a row without doing some targeted Logic Games practice in between to analyze your progress.

The key to doing timed practice sections is making them as authentic as possible. Even though you're only completing one section, treat it like the real thing. Find a quiet space where you'll be undisturbed. Use a pencil. You can even download and print out a bubble sheet from the back of [LSAC's free online practice test](#). If you finish early, use the remaining time to double check your answers. If you're running out of time, guess on the remaining questions and circle them to keep track of where you guessed. Apply your pacing strategies accurately, and don't cheat by stopping the clock for a break.

When you're done with a section, score it, record any mistakes in your error log, and put it away. You'll look at it again during your untimed, targeted practice.

Error Log

Any time you take a full-length practice test or complete a timed practice section, score it right away and enter it into your error log. It's important to do this immediately afterward because the questions are still fresh in your mind and you'll remember more of the reasoning behind your answers.

For each question you missed, record the following in your error log.

1. The PrepTest, section, and question number (so you can find it again later)
2. The question type (for example, Inference, Assumption, Parallel Reasoning, etc.)
3. The correct answer choice
4. The incorrect answer choice that you selected
5. Your best description of the mistake you made (misinterpreted something, picked an answer choice that was too extreme, confused the premise and the conclusion, etc.)

Once you've completed your error log, put away your LSAT prep for the day and relax. You've recorded what you need to know for the future, so it won't be forgotten.

Untimed, Targeted Practice

Follow up on every timed practice test or practice section with some untimed, targeted practice. That doesn't mean you have to do targeted practice after *every, single* practice section you complete. Instead, you could target [Logical Reasoning \(LR\)](#) one day by reviewing the last 2 or 3 timed LR sections you completed and doing a few new LR questions untimed.

To make the most of your targeted practice:

- Focus on just one section type each time you do targeted practice.
- Look at your most recent error log entries. Is there a question type or mistake you've been struggling with a lot lately?
- If it's a question type, review lessons on that question type and then search for a handful of them to complete slowly and methodically. Don't answer until you feel very confident that you understand the question and all the answer choices.
- If it's a particular mistake you're making frequently, or if your errors vary a lot, try an untimed practice section in which you focus on identifying and avoiding that mistake or other trap answer choices.

Section Strategies



Logical Reasoning

Each question in the Logical Reasoning section is paired with a short stimulus (an argument or a set of facts). There are many question types within this section, but each revolves around one of a few basic skills: identifying unstated assumptions in arguments, making valid inferences based on facts provided, or accurately analyzing the structure of an argument.

This section contains about 25 questions. There is rarely more than one question per stimulus, but now and then you'll see two questions in a row that relate to the same stimulus. Questions tend to get more difficult as the section progresses, but it's not a straight progression; there are usually a few tougher questions early in the section and a few easier questions toward the end.

The Logical Reasoning section is worth about 33% of your score.

[Click here to view a free introductory lesson on LSAT Logical Reasoning.](#)

[Click here to read Magoosh's Logical Reasoning blog posts.](#)

Analytical Reasoning (Logic Games)

The Analytical Reasoning section is commonly referred to as Logic Games, and it is the most notorious section of the LSAT. It has gained its reputation mainly because it's unlike any section on other standardized tests, so many people are unsure of how to handle it. However, that doesn't mean it's the most difficult section. In fact, it's the most learnable section on the exam, and it's where the largest score gains are typically made.

The section consists of a number of "games." Each game will revolve around a fairly common task (picking teams, scheduling classes, matching clothes, etc.) and a set of rules limiting the ways in which the task can be performed (for example, your team must include two males, or you can't take Chemistry before Algebra). There will be a set of 5–7 accompanying questions, all of which will essentially ask you to determine various outcomes, both possible and impossible.

There is one Analytical Reasoning section on the test, and it always contains four different games. In recent years, the section has consistently contained 23 questions. There is no predictable order of difficulty to the questions or games. However, you can be sure that the four games will not be equal in terms of difficulty. There is usually at least one very difficult game and one fairly easy game.

The Analytical Reasoning section is worth about 30% of your score.

[Click here to view a free introductory lesson on LSAT Analytical Reasoning.](#)

[Click here to view a free lesson on LSAT Logic Game Types.](#)
[Click here to view a free strategy lesson on LSAT Logic Games](#)
[Click here to read Magoosh's Analytical Reasoning blog posts.](#)

Reading Comprehension

The Reading Comprehension section presents a number of passages (usually excerpts from essays, articles, books, etc.) and a set of multiple choice questions for each passage. The questions typically ask you to assess the passage's purpose, main idea, structure, or tone. They also might require you to analyze and compare the perspectives of various voices within the passage.

There is one Reading Comprehension section on the LSAT, and it usually contains around 27 questions. It is divided into three individual passages (each with their own set of questions) and one pair of passages (with one set of questions for both passages). The paired passages are similar to the single passages, but the accompanying questions demand that you compare the two passages and find points of agreement and points of divergence.

This section is worth about 36% of your total score.

[Click here to view a free introductory lesson on LSAT Reading Comprehension.](#)
[Click here to read Magoosh's Reading Comprehension blog posts.](#)

Writing Sample

The writing sample on the LSAT is taken separately from the multiple-choice sections. It begins with an argument prompt, presenting you with some background facts about a decision that needs to be made. There are always two options to choose from, and you will be provided with some criteria on which to base your decision. Your task is to state and defend your decision using the facts presented and any outside knowledge or independent reasoning.

The writing sample is not scored. Instead, your essay is included in your LSAC law school report and sent in its entirety to any schools to which you apply. Law schools vary in the weight they give the writing sample in their admission decisions, but it can almost certainly tip the scales when two applicants are otherwise evenly matched.

In other words, don't ignore it just because it isn't scored (you'll need it to get your scores, anyway!). It can make the difference for some applicants.

[Click here to read Magoosh's Writing Sample blog posts.](#)

Ready to try out these strategies? [Click here for access to Magoosh's free LSAT practice test!](#)

Conclusion

Studying for the LSAT may be one of the hardest things you do. But it's also one of the most rewarding.

The LSAT is extremely well designed, and the test makers go to great lengths to ensure that the test cannot be gamed with gimmicks. There are no shortcuts when it comes to LSAT prep. In order to improve your score, you actually have to become smarter! You have to become a better reader. You have to become a better thinker. And you have to build those skills over time.

You shouldn't think of the LSAT as a hoop that law schools make you jump through. It's true that this is an essential component of your application. But it's also an important learning process. The skills tested on the LSAT are the same skills that will carry you through law school and through a successful career as an attorney.

Reading is one of the most fundamental skills you need in law school. The reading material is dense and voluminous, and you must be able to complete it efficiently. In addition, a successful law student must have a mastery of argumentation and persuasion. These are the primary tools an attorney uses in his practice. And finally, no attorney can dispense with a keen sense of logic. Legal rules, especially procedural ones, are technical, and they must be understood precisely.

As you begin your journey into LSAT prep, I encourage you to enjoy the ride. This isn't just a hoop. It's a journey. And those who take it seriously are rewarded with scholarships and admission offers to top law schools. Those who rush the LSAT prep process do themselves a disservice. Not only do they limit their admissions and scholarship prospects, but they also fail to improve the skills that will be tested in law school and on the bar exam.

We at Magoosh would love to help you get the LSAT score you need for your dream school. Please let us know how we can help you achieve your professional goals!

[Click here for a free trial of Magoosh's online LSAT prep program!](#)