**What’s Your GRE Study Plan?**

**Structuring Each Practice Session**

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<http://www.kaptest.com/blog/grad-school-insider/2015/04/02/whats-your-gre-study-plan-structuring-each-practice-session/>

Add structure to get the most from your practice session. In the past, I’ve written about getting out of the house, turning off the phone, and finding a good spot for GRE studying. So, let’s imagine you’ve taken my advice. You’ve found a quiet library, coffee shop, or classroom in which to practice the GRE in a test-like environment. Now what? Well, now it’s time to form a GRE study plan specific to your practice session.

**Creating a GRE Study Plan**

Regardless of how much time you schedule for your GRE practice, remember that the important thing is what you actually learned during your session, not just how many questions you completed. If you schedule an hour-long practice session, then roughly half of that time should be devoted to review, reflection, and note-taking. As you work through problems, focus on understanding the concepts that are being tested and figuring out the patterns underlying the questions. The nature of standardized tests is that you will see the same types of questions testing the same types of concepts on test after test. Simply answering a bunch of GRE practice questions isn’t enough; understanding each question thoroughly so that you can spot similar questions in the future is a much more valuable approach. Whenever you set up a GRE practice session—and particularly when you take practice tests—always try to replicate your Test Day experience as faithfully as possible. Taking a GRE practice test at home, in your pajamas, at 11 o’clock at night is not preparing you for Test Day. Closing the browser in the middle of a section to take a lunch break for an hour is not preparing you for Test Day. Using your own calculator to work through math problems more quickly is not preparing you for Test Day. In fact, deviating from your Test Day routine isn’t just unhelpful—it might actually be hurting you. With those points in mind, here are some strategies for structuring your GRE study plan:

**One-Hour GRE Practice**: With one hour, it’s better to focus on just one section of the test. First five minutes: start by reviewing your GRE notebook to get yourself into a GRE mindset. If you’re going to be spending your time doing math problems, review your notes regarding whichever math concepts you’ve recently had trouble with or that you want to tackle during your session. If you’re doing verbal questions, review your Kaplan methods and briefly review vocab cards. Next ten minutes (roughly): four to five Quiz Bank questions. The idea here is to do only a handful of problems rather than a full section, thereby concentrating on a particular question type or concept. Next ten minutes (roughly): Completely review and reflect on your performance. If you answered questions incorrectly, rework them. It’s important to ingrain the right approach and method by solving every problem correctly. Next 15 minutes (roughly): six to seven Quiz Bank questions. Same as before, but a bit longer. Next 15 minutes (roughly): Complete review. Last five minutes: In your GRE notebook, jot down everything you learned during your session. Was there a formula you used that you want to remember? Write it down. Should you have utilized Picking Numbers but forgot? Write down what it was about the question that would alert you to that on a future question. Keep going until you’re satisfied you’ve written down everything you want to remember for future GRE practice sessions.

**Two-Hour GRE Practice**: With two hours, I’d suggest working on both the math and verbal sections of the test. First hour: follow the directions for a one-hour session, focusing on either math or verbal. Second hour: follow the directions for a one-hour session, focusing on the other section.

**Alternative Two-Hour Session**: If you’d like to focus on just one section of the test, follow the same structure as the one-hour session, but increase the number of Quiz Bank questions you’re working on. First five minutes: review your notes. Next 20 minutes (roughly): seven to ten Quiz Bank questions. Next 20 minutes (roughly): review. Take a ten-minute break. Next 30 minutes (roughly): 15 to 18 Quiz Bank questions. Next 30 minutes (roughly): review. Final five minutes: add notes to your GRE notebook.

**Three-Hour Session**: When you sit down for three hours of GRE practice, you’re essentially preparing for your experience on Test Day. As such, your practice will simulate the test by mimicking timing guidelines. First five minutes: review your notes. Next 30 minutes (timed): 20 Quiz Bank verbal questions. Next 35 minutes (timed): 20 Quiz Bank math questions. Take a five-minute break. Next 30 minutes (timed): 20 Quiz Bank verbal questions. Next 35 minutes (timed): 20 Quiz Bank math questions. Take another five-minute break. Next 30 minutes (roughly): review of all of the questions you just completed. Final five minutes: add notes to your GRE notebook. Compare these GRE study plans to the way you currently approach a practice session. By structuring your GRE practice in a specific way, focusing on review and reflection, you’ll see significant improvement. Importantly, you’ll be able correct mistakes and notice patterns much faster and with a lot more confidence. –

See more at: <http://www.kaptest.com/blog/grad-school-insider/2015/04/02/whats-your-gre-study-plan-structuring-each-practice-session/#sthash.SjDdAVOC.dpuf>