

Reasoning in 30 Days

Score 45+ out of 50 inside your 15-minute section

A simple day-by-day plan.
No coaching needed. No fancy words.
Just open page 1 and start today.

Who is this book for?

Any SSC CGL student — even if you have never solved a reasoning paper in your life. Everything here is written in easy English.

What will you get?

You will know exactly what to study on each of the next 30 days, which 4 tricks save the most marks, and how to attempt the section on exam day without losing marks to wrong answers.

INSIDE

4 Tricks

With solved examples for dice, signs, syllogism and timing

INSIDE

30 Days

Exactly what to study and practise on each day

INSIDE

Cheat Sheet

Two pages you can print and revise every morning

What is inside this book

Chapter	What it teaches you	Time to read
1. The paper	How many questions, how much time, how marks are cut	3 min
2. What changed	Five ways the new paper is different from old papers	4 min
3. Your level	Find out which stage you are in right now	2 min
4. Danger topics	The 15 topics, ranked by where students lose marks	5 min
5. The 4 tricks	Four shortcuts with solved examples	10 min
6. Exam day	The 2-round method for the locked 15-minute section	5 min
7. Daily routine	Your 2-hour plan (and a 1-hour plan if you are busy)	4 min
8. The 30 days	Day 1 to Day 30, written out for you	6 min
9. Cheat sheet	Everything you must remember by heart, on two pages	Keep it open daily

How to use this book

1. **Read it once, fully.** It will take about 40 minutes. Do not skip Chapter 5.
2. **Print the last two pages** (the cheat sheet) or keep them on your phone. Read them every morning.
3. **Follow Chapter 8 day by day.** Do not jump ahead. Tick the box after each day.
4. **Keep one notebook only for mistakes.** This one habit gives more marks than any trick.
5. **Practise with a timer from Day 1.** Reasoning is not a hard subject. It is a fast subject.

An honest word about the 45+ target

If you are starting from zero, do not chase 45 in the first week. Your order should be: first **learn the topic**, then **get it right**, then **get it fast**. Most students who follow these 30 days reach 35–40 by Day 20 and touch 45+ in the last week. Speed always comes after accuracy. Never the other way round.

What you need before Day 1

- One notebook for practice, one small notebook only for mistakes.
- A phone or watch with a stopwatch.
- Previous year questions from 2020 to 2025. The full CGL and CHSL archive is free on prepangel.com, sorted by year and topic.
- 2 hours a day. If you do not have 2 hours, see the 1-hour plan in Chapter 7.

First, understand the paper

Most students start solving questions before they understand the paper. That is why they panic in the exam hall. Read this page twice.

Point	What it means for you
Tier 1 has 100 questions	25 from Reasoning, 25 from General Awareness, 25 from Maths, 25 from English.
Sectional timing is now fixed	Each section gets its own 15 minutes . When those 15 minutes end, that section closes on its own. You cannot go back to it, and you cannot borrow time from it.
Reasoning = 25 questions = 50 marks	Every correct answer gives you +2 marks .
15 minutes for 25 questions	That is 36 seconds per question. This is exactly why the 2-round method in Chapter 6 matters more than any shortcut.
Every wrong answer costs 0.5 marks	Blank questions cost you nothing. Wrong answers cost you twice: you lose the 2 marks you could have got, and you give away 0.5 more.
Reasoning is the easiest section	No formula sheet, no current affairs, no grammar rules. Only patterns. This is where you build your lead over other students.

Why the 15-minute lock changes everything

Earlier, a slow reasoning section could be covered up by rushing English later. That is over. Now each section is locked to its own 15 minutes. This has two effects, and both are in your favour if you prepare for them:

What the lock does	What it means for you
You cannot borrow time	Taking 20 minutes in Reasoning is simply not possible any more. If you are slow, you will leave 6–8 questions unanswered and lose 12–16 marks.
You cannot go back	A question you leave for "later" is gone once the section ends. Round 2 must happen inside the same 15 minutes, not at the end of the paper.
Nobody can rush at the end	Students who used to attempt Reasoning in the last 5 spare minutes will now be crushed. Speed here is now a real advantage, not a small one.
Your target is 13–14 minutes	Finish the section in 13–14 minutes so you have 1–2 minutes left to re-check the questions you flagged. That buffer is worth 4–6 marks.

So do not aim to "just finish in 15". Aim to **finish in 13 and check for 2**. That is the whole reason this book pushes you on speed from Day 1.

The negative marking maths nobody explains

Guessing is not "free chance"

A reasoning question has 4 options. If you guess 8 questions blindly, you will get about 2 right and 6 wrong.

2 correct = +4 marks. 6 wrong = –3 marks. Net gain = **1 mark** for 8 risky attempts. Now compare: solving just **one** question properly gives you 2 marks with zero risk. Guessing is a bad trade. Leave it blank and move on.

When guessing IS allowed

Only when you have **removed two options for a solid reason**. Then it is a 50-50 guess, and the maths turns in your favour. "This option looks nice" is not a reason. "This option cannot be right because the division does not give a whole number" is a reason.

MOST STUDENTS

23 / 50

Attempt 11–16 questions and lose 6+ marks to wrong answers

YOUR TARGET

45+ / 50

Attempt 23–25 questions with very few mistakes

YOUR FINISH TIME

13–14 MIN

Leaves 1–2 minutes inside the section to re-check flagged questions

What changed in the new paper

The exam is now conducted by a new agency, and the question style has shifted. The topics are the same. The **twist inside each topic** is new. If you practise only 2018-style questions, you will be surprised on exam day. Here is what to expect.

Topic	Old style	New style	What you must do
Coding & Decoding	Simple letter shifts. Move each letter forward by 1, 2 or 3.	Letters shift in a criss-cross way. Vowels and consonants follow different rules. Reverse positions are used.	Learn reverse position (27 – number) and opposite pairs (A–Z, B–Y, C–X) by heart.
Syllogism	2 statements, simple "All" and "Some" conclusions.	3 or 4 statements together, with lines like "Only a few" and "At least some", plus possibility questions.	Always draw the diagram with the least overlap. Never use real-world knowledge.
Maths operations	One sign is changed. For example, + means –.	Two signs are swapped, and sometimes two numbers are swapped at the same time.	Use the Divide-First trick in Chapter 5. It kills 2–3 options in seconds.
Blood relations	"Pointing to a photo, a man said..."	Coded chains like $P + Q - R \times S$, and the relation is asked in reverse.	Draw a family tree every single time. Never solve it in your head.
Counting figures	Messy line diagrams. You had to count one by one.	Neat, regular figures: squares cut into parts, triangles with lines from corners.	Count in a fixed order: smallest shapes first, then pairs, then the whole figure. If the figure is irregular, skip it.

The one sentence to remember from this chapter

The new paper does not test **harder concepts**. It tests whether you read the question carefully. Most losses now come from reading "does NOT follow" as "follows", or missing that *two* signs were swapped instead of one. Slow down for 3 seconds on the question line. Then solve fast.

The 3 reading mistakes that cost the most marks

The trap	How it appears	Your habit
Negative wording	"Which conclusion does not follow?" or "Which one is not like the others?"	Underline the word "not" with your finger on the screen before answering.
Direction of the swap	" + and – are interchanged and 3 and 5 are interchanged."	Rewrite the full equation on rough paper first. Do not solve mentally.
Who is facing where	In direction questions, "he turns left" depends on the way he is facing, not on your left.	Rotate your rough sheet instead of rotating your brain.

Where are you today?

Before Day 1, give yourself one honest test: solve 25 reasoning questions from any past paper with a timer on. Note your score and your time. Then find yourself below.

STAGE 1 — You scored below 25

What is happening: You guess when you are unsure. You take more than 22 minutes. You lose 6 or more marks to wrong answers.

What to do: Stop guessing today. Fully. First learn the picture-based topics (mirror images, water images, paper folding, dice) because they need no calculation and give instant marks. Then learn family trees. Follow Days 1–15 of the plan without skipping.

STAGE 2 — You scored between 25 and 38

What is happening: You know the concepts, but you take 18–20 minutes and lose most of your marks in Syllogism, Dice and Order & Ranking.

What to do: This is where most students are. Learn the 4 tricks in Chapter 5 properly, and start using the 2-round exam method in Chapter 6 from your very next mock. Your problem is not knowledge. It is order of attempt.

STAGE 3 — You scored 40 or above

What is happening: Your accuracy is good, but one stubborn number series eats 90 seconds and your time crosses 18 minutes.

What to do: Use the 20-second rule strictly (Chapter 5, Trick 4). Push your finish time down to 13 minutes so the last 2 minutes are free for checking. Spend your practice time only on the topics in your mistake notebook.

Your mistake notebook — how to actually write it

Do not write the full question. Write only three things. It takes 30 seconds per mistake and it is the single highest-return habit in this book.

Topic	What I did wrong	The rule I will follow next time
Syllogism	I assumed all mothers are women from real life	Only use what the statement says. Nothing else.
Order & Ranking	Counted position twice	Total = Left + Right – 1. Write it before solving.
Number series	Wasted 2 minutes, still got it wrong	20 seconds. Then flag and leave it.

Every Sunday, read only this notebook for 20 minutes. You will see the same 4–5 mistakes repeating. Those 4–5 mistakes are the entire gap between your score today and 45.

The 15 topics, ranked by danger

We checked how students perform topic by topic across thousands of past-paper questions. The topics at the **top** of this table are where marks disappear. The ones at the bottom are your safe bank. Read the last column carefully — that is where the marks are.

Topic	Type	Students get it right	Why students lose marks here
Counting figures	Picture	46%	Lowest accuracy in the whole section. Counting one by one eats time and you still miss shapes.
Venn diagrams	Logic	53%	Mixing up "one thing inside another" with "two separate things".
Syllogism	Logic	55%	Overthinking, and using real-world facts instead of only the given statements.
Paper folding & dice	Picture	56%	Trying to rotate the cube in your head instead of using the fixed rule.
Order & ranking	Logic	63%	Off-by-one errors. Counting the same person twice.
Direction sense	Logic	68%	Taking "left" from your own side instead of the person's facing side.
Mirror & water images	Picture	68%	Missing the flip on tricky characters like 5, 7 and 9.
Analogies	Pattern	73%	Word pairs that need general knowledge, or that have more than one possible link.
Word arrangement	Logic	73%	Rushing the 4th and 5th letters while arranging in dictionary order.
Odd one out	Pattern	75%	Missing prime numbers, or a vowel-consonant split hidden in the group.
Blood relations	Logic	78%	Good accuracy, but coded chains must be read from the back, not the front.
Missing number	Pattern	79%	Big time sink when the row or column relation is unusual.
Number & letter series	Pattern	83%	The most practised topic. The danger is spending 90 seconds on one stubborn question.
Maths operations	Pattern	84%	Accuracy is fine, but students solve all 4 options fully instead of eliminating.
Coding & decoding	Pattern	87%	Your safest topic. Never leave one of these unattempted.

How to read this table without panicking

A low percentage does **not** mean "skip the topic". It means "this is where practice pays double". Counting figures is only 1–2 questions in the paper, so learn the standard figures and skip the messy ones. But Syllogism and Venn diagrams appear almost every shift — those you must fix, not avoid.

Simple rule: fix the topics that appear often (Syllogism, Venn, Order & Ranking, Direction). Manage the topics that appear rarely and take long (irregular counting figures).

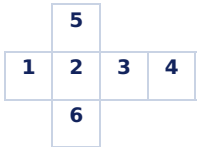
The 4 tricks that save the most marks

There are dozens of shortcuts on the internet. These four are the ones that actually change your score, because they attack the four places where students bleed marks: dice, sign questions, syllogism and time. Learn them with the examples. Do not just read them.

Trick 1 — The opposite face rule for open dice

When a cube is opened flat, you get a "net" — six squares joined together. The question shows this net and asks which face is opposite which.

The rule: take any straight line of squares in the net. **Skip one square, and those two faces are opposite each other.**



In this net, look at the middle row: 1, 2, 3, 4.

- From 1, skip 2 → **1 is opposite 3**
- From 2, skip 3 → **2 is opposite 4**
- The two squares sticking out (5 on top and 6 at the bottom) are the remaining pair → **5 is opposite 6**

Why this saves you 40 seconds

You never have to fold the cube in your mind. You just read the net like a row of boxes. Pair them up, match with the options, done. With practice this takes 5–10 seconds.

Where this rule does NOT apply

This rule is only for **open dice (net)** questions. If the question shows two or three closed dice with different faces up, it is a different type — there you use the common-face method (Day 7 of the plan). Do not mix the two.

Trick 2 — The Divide-First filter for sign questions

These are the questions where + and ÷ are interchanged, and you have to pick the equation that becomes correct. Most students solve all four options fully. That takes 90 seconds. Here is the faster way.

The rule: after the swap, look **only at the division** in each option. If that division does not give a whole number, and nothing next to it can cancel it, that option is dead. Cross it out in 2 seconds.

Question: If + and ÷ are interchanged, which equation is correct?

- (a) $9 + 4 \div 2 = 5$
- (b) $7 + 3 \div 2 = 5$
- (c) $24 + 6 \div 2 = 6$
- (d) $15 + 4 \div 3 = 7$

Solving it the fast way: after swapping, the first number gets divided by the second one.

- (a) $9 \div 4 \rightarrow$ not a whole number. **Dead.**
- (b) $7 \div 3 \rightarrow$ not a whole number. **Dead.**
- (c) $24 \div 6 = 4$, then $4 + 2 = 6$. Matches the right side. **Keep it.**
- (d) $15 \div 4 \rightarrow$ not a whole number. **Dead.**

Answer: (c) — found in about 10 seconds instead of 90.

One safety check

Before you cross out an option, check whether a multiplication next to the division can cancel it. For example, $3 \div 2 \times 4$ is fine — it gives 6. Only reject when the fraction has nothing to cancel with. This takes half a second and keeps the trick safe.

Trick 3 — The syllogism boundary rule

Syllogism is the topic where the smartest students lose the most marks, because they answer using common sense instead of the given statements.

The rule: a statement tells you about the things it mentions and **nothing else**. It says nothing about the things outside it.

Statement: All registered voters have a voter ID card.

Conclusion: No unregistered person has an ID card.

Does not follow.

The statement only spoke about registered voters. It said absolutely nothing about unregistered people. They may have cards, they may not — the statement does not say. So the conclusion fails.

The three lines you must memorise

If the statement says	You can safely conclude	You cannot conclude
All A are B	Some B are A	All B are A
No A is B	No B is A	Anything about things that are neither A nor B
Only a few A are B	Some A are B, and some A are not B	All A are B

How to actually solve it in the exam

1. Draw the circles with the **smallest possible overlap**. Never draw circles fully inside each other unless the word "All" forces it.
2. Test the conclusion on that diagram.
3. If you can draw even **one** valid diagram where the conclusion is false, then it does not follow.
4. If the question says "possibility", the answer is usually yes — unless a "No" statement blocks it.

The mindset that fixes syllogism forever

In syllogism, forget the world. If the statement says "All stones are birds", then in that question, stones **are** birds. Your job is not to judge the statement. Your job is to follow it.

Trick 4 — The 20-second drop rule

Number series and missing number questions are where good students destroy their own paper. Not because they cannot solve them, but because they refuse to leave them.

The rule: if the pattern has not shown itself in 20 seconds, flag the question and move on immediately. Come back in round 2 with a fresh mind.

Count the real cost

90 seconds on one stubborn series = 3 easy questions you never reached = **6 marks lost** to protect 2 marks. And in most cases you get that stubborn one wrong anyway. It is not about giving up. It is about the order in which you spend your minutes.

Your 20-second checklist for any series

1. Check the difference between terms. Then check the difference of those differences.
2. Check if terms are multiplied by a number and something added ($\times 2 + 1$, $\times 3 - 2$, and so on).
3. Check squares and cubes, with a small number added or subtracted.
4. Check alternate terms — two separate series may be mixed together.
5. Nothing yet? Flag it. Leave. No emotion.

Exam day: the 2-round method

You get 15 minutes and no more. Students who score 45+ never solve questions in order from 1 to 25. They go through the section in waves — easy marks first, thinking questions second — and both waves happen inside those 15 minutes. This one change is usually worth 8-10 marks.

Round	What you attempt	Rules you follow	What you should get
ROUND 1 0:00 to 9:00 Collect the easy marks	Mirror & water images (5-10 sec) Paper folding and open dice (10 sec) Coding & decoding (15 sec) Word arrangement (10 sec) Simple blood relations (15 sec)	Solve only what you can finish in 25 seconds. Skip every stubborn series. Do not touch messy counting figures. Flag as you skip. Do not think twice.	18-19 questions done 36-38 marks banked Zero wrong answers
ROUND 2 9:00 to 13:00 The thinking questions	Maths operations Syllogism and Venn diagrams The series you flagged Standard counting figures	Give each question 40 seconds, no more. Use the Divide-First filter. Check syllogism against a second diagram.	5-6 more solved Total 23-25 attempted Score 46-50
FINAL CHECK 13:00 to 15:00	Check for accidental clicks. Re-read any question with "not" in it.	No wild guessing at the end. Do not stare at the clock. If time is left, re-check, do not re-open new questions.	Whole section closed inside 15 minutes, with nothing left unanswered by mistake

How to practise this

From **Day 6 onwards**, do every sectional mock on a **15-minute timer that closes by itself** — not on a stopwatch you can pause. PrepAngel's sectional mocks run this exact timer. Do not wait for the real exam to feel what the lock does to you. The first two times it will feel uncomfortable, because leaving a question feels like losing. By the fifth mock it will feel natural, and your score will jump without any new concept being learnt.

If your mind goes blank in the exam

It happens to almost everyone in the first 60 seconds. Do not fight it. Go straight to a mirror image or dice question. They need no thinking, and solving two of them switches your brain on. Never start your paper with a syllogism.

Your daily routine

Two hours a day on reasoning, split into three blocks. Do not study reasoning for two hours in one long stretch — your speed drops after 40 minutes.

Block	What you do	Why it works
BLOCK 1 20 minutes Speed warm-up	Write A to Z with positions 1–26, then backwards 26–1. Say the opposite pairs out loud: A–Z, B–Y, C–X, D–W, E–V, F–U, G–T... Do 5 squares (up to 40) and 5 cubes (up to 25) mentally.	Cuts your time on coding and series questions by nearly half, because you stop counting on fingers.
BLOCK 2 60 minutes Topic practice	First 15 minutes: read the concept and the shortcut for today's topic. Next 45 minutes: solve 35–40 previous year questions of that topic only.	Solving one topic in bulk builds instinct. Your brain starts recognising the pattern before you finish reading.
BLOCK 3 40 minutes Mock and mistakes	15 minutes: one 25-question sectional mock with a 15-minute timer, exactly like the real section. 25 minutes: check every mistake and write it in your mistake notebook.	The 25 minutes of checking are worth more than the 15 minutes of solving. Never skip this half.

Only have 1 hour a day? Use this instead

Time	What to do
10 minutes	Alphabet positions, opposite pairs, squares and cubes. Never skip this.
30 minutes	25 previous year questions of the day's topic, with a timer.
20 minutes	Check answers and write mistakes. On mock days, do the mock instead and check it the next morning.

The rule for every practice session

Always solve with a stopwatch running, even for 10 questions. Practice without a timer builds knowledge but not exam skill. In the exam, you are not fighting the question. You are fighting the clock.

What "35–40 questions" really means

Do not chase the number. If you solved 20 questions and understood every mistake, that day was a success. If you solved 60 and checked nothing, that day was wasted. Quality of checking beats quantity of solving, every single time.

The 30-day plan: Day 1 to Day 15

Week 1-2 goal: finish all the picture-based topics and the basic logic topics. These give the fastest marks. Tick the box when the day is done.

Done	Day	Topic	The rule to learn today	Practice target
☐	Day 1	Alphabet & positions	A=1 to Z=26 forward, and reverse position = 27 – number. EJOY. Opposite pairs A-Z, B-Y, C-X.	40 questions + alphabet speed drill
☐	Day 2	Coding & decoding 1	Moving letters forward or backward by a fixed number. Criss-cross shifts. Different rules for vowels.	40 questions
☐	Day 3	Coding & decoding 2	Number coding, word-to-word coding ("sky is blue" type), and symbol coding.	40 questions
☐	Day 4	Mirror & water images	Mirror flips left and right. Water flips up and down. Use the odd-shaped letters to cancel wrong options fast.	40 questions
☐	Day 5	Paper folding & cutting	Trace the punch backwards, one fold at a time. Watch the fold line for symmetry.	35 questions
☐	Day 6	Cubes & open dice	The opposite face rule: in a straight line, skip one square to get the opposite face.	40 questions + timed mock 1
☐	Day 7	Dice with two views	When one face is common in both pictures, rotate the rest in the same direction. When two faces are common, the remaining two are opposite.	35 questions + week 1 review mock
☐	Day 8	Word arrangement	Dictionary order, letter by letter. Also logical order (seed → plant → flower → fruit).	40 questions
☐	Day 9	Direction sense 1	The 8 directions. Left and right are always from the person's facing side, not yours.	35 questions
☐	Day 10	Direction sense 2	Shortest distance using 3-4-5 and 5-12-13 triangles. Shadow rules at sunrise and sunset.	35 questions + timed mock 2
☐	Day 11	Blood relations 1	Draw a family tree with generations in rows. Use + for male and – for female.	40 questions
☐	Day 12	Blood relations 2	Coded relations (P + Q means P is the mother of Q). Always solve the chain from the last symbol backwards.	35 questions + timed mock 3
☐	Day 13	Order & ranking 1	Total = Left + Right – 1. Position from right = Total – Left + 1.	40 questions
☐	Day 14	Order & ranking 2	Two people swapping places. When the ranks overlap, the smallest possible total = Left + Right – (people in between + 2).	35 questions + week 2 review mock
☐	Day 15	Venn diagrams	Three overlapping circles. Learn the difference between "fully inside", "partly overlapping" and "completely separate".	40 questions

If you fall behind

Do not restart the plan and do not try to do two days in one. Just continue from where you are and cut the practice target in half for the days you missed. Finishing 25 days properly beats abandoning a 30-day plan on Day 9.

The 30-day plan: Day 16 to Day 30

Week 3 goal: finish the calculation-based topics. **Week 4 goal:** stop learning new things and start simulating the exam.

Done	Day	Topic	The rule to learn today	Practice target
☐	Day 16	Syllogism 1	Draw the least possible overlap. "All A are B" gives you "Some B are A". Ignore real-world knowledge completely.	40 questions
☐	Day 17	Syllogism 2	Either-or cases, and "possibility" questions. Test the conclusion on a second diagram before answering.	40 questions + timed mock 4
☐	Day 18	Maths operations 1	Replace the signs first, then apply BODMAS. Rewrite the equation on paper. Never solve mentally.	40 questions
☐	Day 19	Maths operations 2	The Divide-First filter. Kill every option where the division does not give a whole number.	40 questions
☐	Day 20	Number series 1	First differences and second differences. Two series mixed alternately.	45 questions
☐	Day 21	Number series 2	Multiply and add patterns ($\times 2+1$, $\times 3-2$). Squares and cubes with a small number added or subtracted.	45 questions + week 3 review mock
☐	Day 22	Missing numbers	Check row totals, then column totals, then the relation with the middle number.	40 questions
☐	Day 23	Counting figures	Count in a fixed order: single shapes, then two joined, then three, then the whole figure. Learn the 4-5 standard figures that repeat.	35 questions
☐	Day 24	Analogies & odd one out	Number pairs (squares, cubes, prime numbers), word pairs, and country-capital-currency links.	50 questions + timed mock 5
☐	Day 25	All picture topics together	Mixed practice of images, folding, dice and embedded figures. Decide fast, do not stare at the screen.	40 questions + full mock (15 min)
☐	Day 26	Full mock + full check	Use the 2-round method strictly. Then write every mistake in the notebook and re-solve each one.	25-question mock + full review
☐	Day 27	Weak topic repair	Solve nothing new. Re-solve only the questions you got wrong in the last three weeks.	50 weak questions + full mock
☐	Day 28	Speed test	25 questions in 14 minutes. Practise leaving a question within 15 seconds without feeling bad.	25-question mock + review
☐	Day 29	Revision only	Read the cheat sheet, the dice net rule and the syllogism rules. Nothing new today.	1 confidence mock
☐	Day 30	Light warm-up	Solve 15 easy questions to keep your hand moving. Sleep early. You are ready.	15 easy questions

The single most important day

Day 27. Re-solving your own wrong questions feels boring and gives no dopamine, which is exactly why almost nobody does it. It is also the day that adds the most marks to your score.

Cheat sheet — page 1 of 2

Print these two pages. Read them every morning for 5 minutes. By Day 10 they should be in your head.

Alphabet

Item	What to remember
Forward positions	A=1, B=2, C=3, D=4, E=5, F=6, G=7, H=8, I=9, J=10, K=11, L=12, M=13, N=14, O=15, P=16, Q=17, R=18, S=19, T=20, U=21, V=22, W=23, X=24, Y=25, Z=26
Reverse position	27 – forward position. Example: M is 13th, so from the back it is $27 - 13 = 14$ th.
EJOTY	E=5, J=10, O=15, T=20, Y=25. Use these five as landmarks and count 1-2 steps from them.
Opposite pairs	A-Z, B-Y, C-X, D-W, E-V, F-U, G-T, H-S, I-R, J-Q, K-P, L-O, M-N

Numbers you should never calculate

Squares 11-20	121, 144, 169, 196, 225, 256, 289, 324, 361, 400
Squares 21-30	441, 484, 529, 576, 625, 676, 729, 784, 841, 900
Cubes 1-10	1, 8, 27, 64, 125, 216, 343, 512, 729, 1000
Cubes 11-15	1331, 1728, 2197, 2744, 3375
Prime numbers to 50	2, 3, 5, 7, 11, 13, 17, 19, 23, 29, 31, 37, 41, 43, 47

Order & ranking formulas

Total number of people	Position from left + Position from right – 1
Position from right	Total – Position from left + 1
Two people, ranks overlap	Smallest possible total = Left + Right – (people in between + 2)
Two people, no overlap	Total = Left + Right + people in between

Directions

The 8 directions	North, North-East, East, South-East, South, South-West, West, North-West
Turning right	Clockwise, 90 degrees. Turning left is anticlockwise, 90 degrees.
Shortest distance	Use 3-4-5 and 5-12-13 triangles. Distance is the straight line from start to end.
Shadows	Morning sun is in the east, so the shadow falls to the west. Evening sun is in the west, so the shadow falls to the east. At noon there is no shadow worth counting.

Cheat sheet — page 2 of 2

Blood relations

Symbols to use	+ for male, – for female. Draw one row for each generation.
Same generation	Join with a single line: brother, sister, husband, wife, cousin.
Different generation	Draw a line downwards: father, mother, son, daughter, uncle, aunt.
Coded chains	Solve from the last symbol backwards to the first. Never guess the direction of the relation.

Syllogism

All A are B	You may conclude: Some B are A. You may not conclude: All B are A.
No A is B	You may conclude: No B is A.
Some A are B	You may conclude: Some B are A. Nothing about the rest.
Only a few A are B	Some A are B, and some A are not B.
Golden habit	Draw the least overlap. If one valid diagram makes the conclusion false, it does not follow.

Mirror and water images

Mirror image	Left and right swap. Top and bottom stay the same.
Letters unchanged in a mirror	A, H, I, M, O, T, U, V, W, X, Y
Water image	Top and bottom swap. Left and right stay the same.
Letters unchanged in water	B, C, D, E, H, I, K, O, X
Fast method	Look at only the first and last character of the option. That usually removes 3 options straight away.

Dice

Open dice (flat net)	In a straight line of squares, skip one square — those two faces are opposite.
Two dice, one face common	Move the other faces in the same rotation direction to find the pairs.
Two dice, two faces common	The two remaining faces are opposite each other.
Standard dice	Opposite faces add up to 7 (1-6, 2-5, 3-4) — but only if the question says "standard dice".

Number series — check in this order

Step 1	Difference between terms. Then the difference of those differences.
Step 2	Multiply and add: $\times 2 + 1$, $\times 3 - 2$, $\times 2 - 3$ and so on.
Step 3	Squares or cubes, with a small number added or subtracted.
Step 4	Alternate terms — two different series mixed together.
Step 5	Still nothing? 20 seconds are over. Flag it and move on.

The 5 rules for exam day

- 1** **Twenty seconds, then leave.** If a series does not click in 20 seconds, flag it and move on. Come back in round 2.
- 2** **No wild guessing.** Four blind guesses cost you about 2 marks. Blank costs you nothing. Guess only after you have removed two options for a real reason.
- 3** **Divide first.** In sign-change questions, check the division. Non-whole number means that option is dead.
- 4** **Skip one square.** On an open dice net, skip a square in any straight line to get the opposite face. No mental rotation.
- 5** **Easy marks first.** Round 1 for the fast questions, round 2 for the thinking ones. Never solve from question 1 to 25 in order.

What to do after Day 30

Reasoning does not need daily study once you finish this plan. It needs maintenance:

- **30 minutes, three times a week.** One sectional mock plus a mistake check.
- **5 minutes every morning** on the cheat sheet. Keep the alphabet positions sharp.
- **Use the extra hours for Maths.** That is where your remaining marks are.

One last thing

This section does not reward the cleverest student. It rewards the calmest one. On exam day you do not need any new trick. You only need to do the boring things you already know, quickly and in the right order. That is the whole game.

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