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# Cracking The GRE With 4 Practice Tests, 2014 Edition (Graduate School Test Preparation)



## Synopsis

THE PRINCETON REVIEW GETS RESULTS. Get all the prep you need to ace the GRE with 4 full-length practice tests, thorough GRE topic reviews, and extra practice online. Inside the Book: All the Practice & Strategies You Need • 2 full-length practice tests with detailed answer explanations • Expert subject reviews for all GRE test topics • Drills for each test section • Verbal Reasoning, Quantitative Reasoning, and the Essays • Key strategies for tackling Text Completion, Numeric Entry, Quantitative Comparison, and other question types • Practical information & general GRE strategies • Exclusive Access to More Practice and Resources Online • 2 additional full-length practice exams • Instant score reports for online tests • Full answer explanations & free performance statistics • Step-by-step explanations for the toughest GRE questions • Downloadable study guides, grad school & program profiles, and searchable advice section, and more

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

PROS: • Straight to the point • Clear explanations of how to solve problems • They explain what might come in the GRE and try to teach you the ETS mindset • Easy to read, almost like a story • Practice exercises are challenging, unlike Kaplan Practice Tests  
CONS: • Has many spelling and numerical mistakes, WATCH OUT • Doesn't explain much theory, only some i.e. math principles. They just explain how to solve the problem. Their approach is that they will only explain what comes in the

GRE. For me it's better to have a solid theoretical explanation. Overall, very good for GRE. I think it's worth the money, but to have a well-rounded GRE preparation I would suggest flashcards and to review some old algebra and geometry textbooks. I bought the Manhattan Prep flashcards, and take them everywhere I go. Manhattan also has specialized textbooks for each section, it would be good to do this whole textbook and then strengthen your weak areas with Manhattan's.

Overall, I thought that this book explained the content clearly and covered all the bases. However, I was pretty surprised at how many errors there were (not just typos, incorrect answers) in the math sections, particularly the practice tests. I wrote to the folks who publish this text after I got done with taking my GRE and gave them a full breakdown of all the errors that I had found, and I didn't get so much as a Thank You For Your Comments. An errata insert should really be supplied with the text at all bookstores. Also, the online tests are really buggy, I had a hard time getting them to work and one of them just didn't. Their tech support by phone was completely incompetent. Mac users -- be warned, you'll probably run into problems with this feature as well.

After going through this entire book, I scored a 156 verbal (70%), 155 quant (61%). This is despite getting fantastic practice scores on Princeton Review's supposedly highly accurate practice GRE exams (including a 93% on quant!). The bottom line is, the questions in this book are highly simplistic and will not prepare you adequately if you are aiming for a good school. I'm not talking Harvard/Stanford scores here, but even 70-80 percentile average. My suggestion is to read through a book like this to get comfortable with the format of the GRE, but ultimately you need to pick up a book like Manhattan's 5 lb book of GRE practice problems. These problems are more in line with the actual GRE and I expect will yield a much higher score (TBD; I retake the GRE in two weeks. Thanks a lot Princeton Review for your horrendous book).

After a month of preparation, I picked up the Kindle version of this guide a week prior to my GRE exam. While I don't recommend a cram session, I did the quantitative chapters one day, the verbal reasoning chapters the next, the essays the day after that, then the practice exams. I found the tips in here to be hugely beneficial... much more so than anything I read the month before purchasing the guide. Suggesting to go through each section skipping questions I don't like and saving them for the end was obvious but, sadly, I never would have thought of that on my own. I was so rooted in my way of taking tests that, without being told to manage my time, I would have squandered my thirty minutes. The essay tips were crucial to my success, particularly writing my conclusion as I go

and not saving it for the end. That allowed me to have two minutes at the end to proof read my essays rather than smack out a conclusion that didn't match the rest of the text. The practice tests were illuminating as it revealed that I spend more time on some questions than I need to. It got me trained to know when I needed to skip a question. Yes, I could get the right answer if I work at it but what good is that if I now have little time left for the other questions? By the time I got to the actual test, I knew how to use my time in each section and was confident that this test wasn't going to beat me. In the end I had a 153 QR, a 162 VR, and a 5.0 AW as my scores. I credit this book with the majority of my success and HIGHLY recommend it to anyone who wishes to get some insight on the GRE. In the end I actually was quite calm and had fun taking the GRE. This book helped me to do that.

I have not yet taken the GRE, so I can't say how the practice tests relate to the actual test. I don't understand, however, how the editor of this book still has a job. I haven't taken a math course in over 10 years and was still able to pick out 5 obtusely wrong answers, some of which were easy because the answers had explanations involving equations that weren't even part of the initial problem. My favorite so far is a story problem on graphing in which they say that Karl, scuba diving, started  $X$  meters below the boat, swam due south 8 meters, due east 24 meters, and then returned directly to the boat (26 meters). Solve for  $X$ . When my answer was different from the book's, I discovered that the book defined "due south" as "down," so anyone interpreting "due south" as a direction would get the answer wrong. If you have the book, it's on page 295. Check it out. It's fun. My least favorite part of this is that I feel I've gotten many answers correct, but now I'm worried that some of these are glaring errors that I just haven't noticed. I have very little confidence in this book's ability to prepare me for an exam when someone as unfamiliar with math as me can find this many errors of this magnitude in only 2 days of studying.

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