

How to prepare for IAT

IISER Aptitude Test. Run by The Joint Admissions Committee of the Indian Institutes of Science Education and Research (IISERs). IAT 2026 was organised by IISER Berhampur..

When

Early June. IAT 2026 was held on 7 June 2026; applications ran from 5 March to 13 April 2026 (IAT 2026 brochure).

The exam

A 3-hour computer-based test of 60 multiple-choice questions, 15 each in Biology, Chemistry, Mathematics and Physics, for 240 marks.

Your plan, step by step

- 1 Keep all four subjects alive Now to March 2027 (rest of Class 11)**
IAT gives Biology, Chemistry, Mathematics and Physics 15 questions each. A PCM student must still learn basic Biology from the NCERT books, and a PCB student must still do Class 11 Mathematics. Read NCERT in all four, and solve the NCERT exercises and NCERT Exemplar problems.
- 2 Fix your weakest subject April to June 2027 (summer before Class 12)**
Revise Class 11 and give most of the summer to the subject you are weakest in, because each subject is a quarter of the marks. Practise questions that need thinking, not just recall.
- 3 Class 12 NCERT and past papers July to December 2027 (Class 12)**
Study Class 12 with school. If you also prepare for JEE or NEET, most of that work counts for IAT; add the missing fourth subject. From October 2027, solve one past IAT paper or full mock a week under a 3-hour timer on a screen.
- 4 Boards first, IAT habit kept January to March 2028 (boards)**
You need 60 per cent in Class 12 (55 per cent for SC, ST, PwD) to be eligible, so do not risk your boards. Keep one IAT practice session a week.
- 5 Full mocks and the official mock April to early June 2028**
Take two full mocks a week, including the official mock on iiseradmission.in when it is posted. Practise with the on-screen calculator style. Learn when to skip: with minus 1 for a wrong answer, blind guessing does not pay.
- 6 Fill preferences carefully After the result**
The list of IISER programmes you prefer is filled only after the result. You are never offered a programme you did not list. If you also want IISc BS or IIT Madras BS, apply to them separately on their own sites.

What the exam tests

- Computer-based test (CBT) only, at centres across India. (IAT 2026 brochure)
- 60 questions: 15 Biology, 15 Chemistry, 15 Mathematics, 15 Physics. Each has one correct answer.
- Duration 180 minutes (3 hours).
- Marking: +4 for a correct answer, minus 1 for a wrong answer, 0 if left blank. Maximum 240.

Free and official material

IISER admission website (iiseradmission.in). The brochure, syllabus, dates, official mock test and every update. The only site to trust for IAT news.

IAT 2026 Information Brochure

(iiseradmission.in/assets/pdfs/IB_IAT_2026_ENG.pdf). The full pattern, eligibility, seat matrix and topic-wise syllabus in one PDF.

NCERT textbooks (ncert.nic.in/textbook.php). Free official Class 11 and 12 books in all four IAT subjects.

SATHEE (Ministry of Education and IIT Kanpur)

(sathee.iitk.ac.in). Free JEE and NEET material; between them they cover all four IAT subjects. SATHEE does not advertise an IAT course, so use it for subject practice.

IISc BS (Research) admissions

([bs-ug.iisc.ac.in/admissions](https://ug.iisc.ac.in/admissions)). Eligibility, selection process and past closing ranks for IISc's BS, which takes IAT scores.

Books students use

Commonly used, not endorsed.

NCERT Physics, Chemistry, Mathematics and Biology, Class 11 and 12, NCERT

Concepts of Physics (Vol 1 and 2), H.C. Verma

Understanding Physics series, D.C. Pandey

Concise Inorganic Chemistry, J.D. Lee

Inorganic Chemistry, O.P. Tandon

Problems in Calculus of One Variable, I.A. Maron

Objective Biology for NEET (Vol 1 and 2), Trueman's

Objective NCERT at your Fingertips, MTG Editorial Board

Coaching: do you need it?

Self-study with free material: Most students. IAT tests school-level science and maths, so steady NCERT work in all four subjects plus past papers is often enough.

JEE or NEET coaching you already attend, plus self-study for the fourth subject:

Students already in JEE or NEET coaching. That covers three of the four subjects; add Biology (for PCM) or Mathematics (for PCB) on your own.

IAT-focused online or classroom course: Students who want a course built around IAT, NEST and similar science tests. Helps least if you are already strong in all four subjects.

Red flags

- A promise of a guaranteed IISER seat or rank.
- Pressure to pay a full year upfront with no written refund policy.
- Very large batches with no way to ask doubts.
- Topper claims that do not say which course the topper took.
- Advice to drop a subject entirely. IAT marks all four equally.

The last months

- Take the official mock on iiseradmission.in as soon as it is posted, and use the same screen layout in your own practice.
- Do two full 3-hour mocks a week and spend as long again checking every mistake.
- Fix your weakest subject first: moving it from 20 to 40 marks is easier than moving your best from 50 to 60.
- Keep an error notebook and re-read it weekly.

