



Setting a Score Target

By now, you already know that your GRE score is an important component of your graduate school applications.

This leads most people to this important question: **how high does your GRE score need to be?**

Having a concrete target GRE score is really important. It gives us a goal to aim for and helps us track our progress during our study time.

Your score target needs to be different from everyone else's, because you have different goals from them. You need your own score target to aim for, based on data.

In this guide, we'll teach you how to research what your score target needs to be.

Instructions

Your GRE score target really depends on what schools **you** want to apply to. We've created a worksheet to guide you through the process. I highly recommend you print out the next page before going further.



GRE Score Target Worksheet

School Name	What They Say	Verbal Score	Quant Score
Goal Score	Highest Number In Each Column +2		

My GRE Score Target

Verbal: _____ Quant: _____



Step 1: List Your Schools

The first thing to do is list your programs of interest along the left side of the chart.

Step 2: Find Information

Next, we'll look up all of the available GRE score information available for your programs of interest. If this information is available, you can usually find this somewhere in the web page for prospective program applicants—either right in the section about test scores or in the FAQ (questions like “What’s the minimum GRE score for admission?” often provide this information).

We'll work our way down the list of programs and note down the information we can find online in the second column. Then in the third and fourth columns we'll note what GRE score that information corresponds to. So if a school says “The minimum for acceptance is 60th percentile in Quantitative and 25th percentile in Verbal,” we'd write that down in the second column. Then, after looking up what scores those percentiles correspond to, we'd note down “145+” for Verbal and “155+” for Quant in the third and fourth columns.

Step 3: Determine Your Goal Score

Once you have all of your information from your programs noted down in your chart, look to find the highest scores in each column. Then **aim for 2 points higher than that score**—this is high enough to put you squarely in the acceptable score range for that school (even if the number given is a minimum), but not so high that you'll be wasting energy trying to get an unnecessarily high score when you could use that energy on other parts of your application. (Remember, a GRE score is mostly to get you in the door—a super-high score won't necessarily be a huge additional boost to your application).

This is what we consider **your Good GRE Score**. This is the score YOU need to get into the schools of your choice. That's why everyone has a different good GRE score target!