

Civil service -Tryst with Destiny

Your journey to becoming an IAS officer let us reintroduce you to this prestigious Institution.

The Macaulay Committee

The Macaulay Committee which gave India its first modern civil service in 1854 recommended that the patronage-based system of the East India Company should be replaced by a permanent civil service based on a merit-based system through competitive entrance examinations. As Macaulay's Report said,

"Henceforth, an appointment to the civil service of the Company will not be a matter of favour but a matter of right. He/She who obtains such an appointment will owe it solely to his own abilities and industry".

The Report made it clear that only the best and the brightest would do for the Indian Civil Service (ICS). Hence it was insisted that the civil servants of the Company should have taken the first degree in arts at Oxford or Cambridge Universities. Initially, the ICS sought its recruits from Oxford and Cambridge. It was thus an elite service.

Subsequently, it opened its doors to Indians and from 1922 onwards the Indian Civil Service Examination began to be held in India.

What it takes to be an IAS Officer.

- The balance of judgment.
- Diplomacy to handle critical situations.
- Ability to persuade others, to stabilize the crisis situation and settle the agreement between the parties.
- Quick decision-making capacity.
- Variety and depth of interest.
- The ability for social cohesion.
- Ability to hold and delegate authority.
- The art of inspiring loyalty and stimulating and channelizing enthusiasm.
- Tact for dealing with a wide cross-section of society, both bureaucratic and otherwise.
- Intellectual and moral integrity and enjoyment of responsibility.
- Physical and mental stability.
- Sound leadership qualities and sharp memory.

Duties of an IAS Officer.

An IAS Officer is responsible for the law and order and general administration in the area under his work. Typically the functions of an IAS officer are as follows:

- To handle the daily affairs of the government, including framing and implementation of policy in consultation with the minister-in-charge of the concerned ministry.
 - Implementation of policy requires supervision.

- Implementation requires travelling to places where the policies are being implemented.
- The implementation also includes the expenditure of public funds which again requires personal supervision as the officers are answerable to the Parliament and State Legislature for any irregularities that may occur.
- In the process of policy formulation and decision-making, officers at higher levels like Joint Secretary and Deputy Secretary contribute to the final shape of the policy and/or take a final decision with the concurrence of the minister concerned or the cabinet (depending on the gravity of the issue).
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Pay Structure, Rank, and perks.

The basic per month salary of an IAS officer starts at Rs.56,100(TA, DA and HRA are extra) and can go on to reach Rs.2,500,00 for a Cabinet Secretary.

A career in the Indian Administrative Service is one of the most sought-after professions in India. Every year, lakhs of people take the UPSC Civil Services Examination, but only a handful clear the exam and an even smaller number make the cut as Indian Administrative Service officers.

There are a lot of things that attract youngsters in the country towards a life in the civil service. Apart from the pride and honour that comes with being a career civil servant or diplomat, the IAS salary and benefits that come along with the responsibilities and powers are also a factor.

Salary Structure of IAS Officers and IAS Career Path – 7th Pay Commission

The new pay structure has dispensed with the system of Pay Grades for Civil Services and introduced Consolidated Pay Levels in the 7th Central Pay Commission. Now the IAS pay scale is decided only on the Basic Pay along with TA, DA and HRA.

IAS Salary in India:

Pay Level	Basic Pay(INR)	Number of years required in service	Post		
			<i>District Administration</i>	<i>State Secretariat</i>	<i>Central Secretariat</i>
10	56100	1-4	Sub-divisional magistrate	Undersecretary	Assistant Secretary
11	67,700	5-8	Additional district magistrate	Deputy Secretary	Undersecretary

12	78,800	9-12	District magistrate	Joint Secretary	Deputy Secretary
13	1,18,500	13-16	District magistrate	Special secretary-cum-director	Director
14	1,44,200	16-24	Divisional commissioner	Secretary-cum-commissioner	Joint Secretary
15	1,82,200	25-30	Divisional commissioner	Principal Secretary	Additional secretary
16	2,05,400	30-33	No Equivalent Rank	Additional Chief Secretary	No Equivalent Rank
17	2,25,000	34-36	No Equivalent Rank	Chief Secretary	Secretary
18	2,50,000	37+ years	No Equivalent Rank	No Equivalent Rank	Cabinet Secretary of India

The Dearness Allowance(DA) is fixed at 0% for IAS officers starting their career and increases with time.

The salaries of all IAS officers start at the same level and then increase with their tenure and promotions.

The next table gives the answer to the question that what is the salary of an IAS officer per month at the entry level and the monthly salary of IAS officer at the apex level:

Level	Basic Pay	Total IAS Salary
Entry level (starting salary)	56100	56100 - 132000
Maximum Pay (cabinet secretary level)	250000	250000

Officers are also entitled to HRA or official accommodation. Special facilities include subsidized accommodation, telephone, and transport facilities, medical benefits, dearness allowance, city compensatory allowance, leave travel allowance. After retirement, there are very good social welfare facilities.

But most importantly what the civil services have to offer to every Officer is the ability to make a difference. It acts as a tool to leave behind a legacy and to have a real impact on the future of our country. The power and prestige wielded by an IAS officer are second to few. As accentuated in the first two sections the Civil Services is a pool of the Elite, home to the best and the brightest.

Now, let's start preparing

Here are some knick-knacks to help you prepare better.

1. The depth of the syllabus and the level of competition

The Union Public Service Commission (UPSC) is India's chief regulating body which is responsible for conducting a number of competitive exams to recruit for various civil services vacancies for the government of India. The members of the civil services present themselves as administrators in the central government and state government; emissaries in the foreign missions/embassies.

- tax collectors
- revenue commissioners
- civil service commissioned police officers;
- Permanent representative and employees in the United Nations.

One of the most popular exams is the IAS (Indian Administrative Service) or the (CSE) Civil Services exam. The Civil Services exam has the reputation of being the nation's toughest exam having a success rate of less than 0.4% every year. The UPSC exams are conducted in two phases. The UPSC IAS prelims exam is conducted in the month of June and is objective type. The applicant will be tested on two papers, Paper-1 (General Studies) and Paper-2 (Civil Services Aptitude Test). The UPSC IAS Mains are conducted in the month of October/November and it is a subjective type. The applicant will be tested on nine subjective papers and the personality test. The written papers would include four papers on General Studies (4), English Paper (1), Language, Paper (1), Essay (1), One Optional Subject has two papers (2).

Why IAS?

Before stepping into the preparation of one of the toughest exams in the nation, do take a step back and ask yourself why? This would help you have a clearer mindset throughout your preparation. The personality test is where your candidature would be measured against your performance.

The subsets of IAS

The IPS, IRS, IFS fall under the aegis of the IAS exam and the cutoff to get recruited in the services mentioned above is decided after the conduction of the exam.

IPS- Indian Police Service

IRS- Indian Revenue Service

IFS- Indian Foreign Service

For instance, the cutoff for the year 2018 for the various categories is as follows.

UPSC Cut off Marks of IAS Prelims Exam:

The cut-off marks for the UPSC prelims exam 2018 is **98** for the general category. The category-wise minimum qualifying marks for prelims are given in the following table.

Category	UPSC Prelims Cut off Marks(out of 200)
General	98
OBC	96.66
SC	84
ST	83.34
PwBD - 1	73.34
PwBD - 2	53.34
PwBD - 3	40
PwBD - 5	45.34

(PwBD indicates physically handicapped candidates)

The prelims cut off marks are based on General Studies I only. The General Studies II or the CSAT paper is not counted for merit ranking and is only qualifying in nature. The GS II paper requires candidates to score at least 33% in it to qualify for the mains.

A general candidate needed only 98 out of 200 marks in the GS I paper to clear the 2018 IAS prelims. If you analyse, this is lower than the cut off marks of both the 2017 and 2016 UPSC Prelims exams. While it was 105.34 in 2017, it was 116 in 2016.

How do you think you can contribute?

A proper understanding of what your target is, will streamline your preparation and keep you focused better.

The final is the personality test, being an IAS officer places you with the nation's finest. Ask yourself where you can prove your calibre, what changes you can bring. Your plan of contribution need not be monumental but it should set you apart, this will give you an edge over all the other applicants in the interview session.

Yes! IAS preparation is incredibly demanding

It is not an overrated fact that IAS is the nation's toughest competitive exam. It demands intensive preparation and practice. There is no generalized format or answer for the most commonly asked question 'how many hours does an IAS aspirant need to put in every day. It will differ from person to person. So let us look at it from different perspectives.

Time Required:

10-12 months of aggressive preparation. Four out of every ten Indians (21-32 years) aspire to become an IAS officer. Only 5% of that massive NUMBER actually makes the cut. The reason is not rocket science; it is only because of the KIND of preparation they resort to. A slow and delayed preparation is equivalent to no preparation. The 5% who make it go all guns blazing into their IAS prep. (The right coaching, the right book+ the right motivation).

Ideal Number of hours you need to put in every day:

It is not about the number of hours you put in; it is about the completion of your short term target. In an ideal situation, you should target two subjects every day. For a beginner, 6 hours minimum and as your IAS exam approaches 10-12 hours a day.

Keep taking short breaks, they help!

Outline the syllabus, Design your preparation:

Heard of the biological process "catabolism" where you break down the original components into their by-products, do the same with your IAS syllabus. Find out about what topic you would have an edge and the topics you would need help in. Do it for all the subjects. You have now marked your territory; the bulk of the syllabus wouldn't scare you at all. Also, this is an excellent confidence building exercise.

Objectifying the syllabus

Most of the IAS aspirants feel that the bulk of IAS syllabus deters them. No doubt, the syllabus is huge, but remind yourself that it is something that you have already studied before. Let's take a quick look at the definition for Divide and Conquer: It basically means that you divide the population (in this case the subjects) into manageable chunks

and that makes it impossible for them to come together (dividing them) and fight against the sovereign authority (conquering them). Let's subject IAS to it.

Theory Papers: History, Economy, Polity, Geography, Optional subject (Demands a lot of your time!)

Aptitude Test: CSAT (Demands a fragment of your time, more of your intelligence!)

[Enjoy your preparation](#)

It is a lengthy process, might as well have some fun with it!