

# CDS I 2026 Exam: Syllabus, Pattern, and Complete Preparation Guide

Are you preparing for the CDS I 2026 Exam?

The **Combined Defence Services (CDS) Examination**, conducted by the **Union Public Service Commission (UPSC)**, is one of the most prestigious defence exams in India. Every year, thousands of aspirants appear for CDS to join the **Indian Military Academy (IMA)**, **Indian Naval Academy (INA)**, **Air Force Academy (AFA)**, and **Officers' Training Academy (OTA)**.

If you are serious about cracking **CDS I 2026**, this guide will provide you with **complete details of the syllabus, exam pattern, preparation strategy, and expert tips**.

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## ☐☐ Overview of CDS I 2026 Exam

- **Conducting Body:** Union Public Service Commission (UPSC)
- **Purpose:** Recruitment into IMA, INA, AFA & OTA
- **Exam Frequency:** Twice a year (CDS I in April 2026 & CDS II in September 2026)
- **Mode of Exam:** Offline (Pen & Paper)
- **Medium:** English & Hindi (except English section)
- **Eligibility:** Unmarried graduates (both men & women for OTA)
- **Selection Process:**
  1. Written Exam
  2. SSB Interview (Intelligence & Personality Test)
  3. Medical Examination

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## ☐☐ CDS I 2026 Exam Pattern

The exam pattern differs for **IMA, INA, AFA** and **OTA**.

**For IMA, INA & AFA:**

Subject	Marks	Duration
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Subject	Marks	Duration
English	100	2 hours
General Knowledge	100	2 hours
Elementary Mathematics	100	2 hours
<b>Total</b>	<b>300</b>	<b>6 hours</b>

### **For OTA (Men & Women):**

Subject	Marks	Duration
English	100	2 hours
General Knowledge	100	2 hours
<b>Total</b>	<b>200</b>	<b>4 hours</b>

☐☐ **Negative Marking:** 0.33 marks will be deducted for every wrong answer.

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## ☐☐ **CDS I 2026 Syllabus (Detailed & Topic-Wise)**

### **1. English Language**

- Spotting Errors
- Sentence Improvement
- Fill in the Blanks
- Reading Comprehension
- Synonyms & Antonyms
- Idioms & Phrases
- Para Jumbles

### **2. General Knowledge**

- **Current Affairs:** National & International Events
- **History:** Freedom Movement, Modern Indian History, Ancient & Medieval India
- **Polity:** Constitution, Fundamental Rights, Parliament, Judiciary
- **Geography:** Indian & World Geography, Climate, Resources
- **Economy:** Economic Development, Budget, Policies
- **Science:** Physics, Chemistry, Biology basics
- **Defence Awareness:** Ranks, Exercises, Important Commands

### 3. Elementary Mathematics

- **Arithmetic:** Number System, Percentages, Ratio & Proportion, Time & Work, Profit & Loss, Speed, Distance & Time
- **Algebra:** Basic Operations, Linear & Quadratic Equations
- **Geometry:** Lines, Angles, Circles, Triangles, Quadrilaterals, Mensuration
- **Trigonometry:** Heights & Distances, Basic Identities
- **Statistics:** Graphs, Pie Charts, Bar Charts

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## ☐☐ Preparation Strategy for CDS I 2026

### 1. Subject-Wise Preparation Tips

- **English:** Read newspapers daily, practice error spotting, improve vocabulary.
- **GK:** Follow **The Hindu/Indian Express**, monthly magazines, and defence-related news.
- **Mathematics:** Revise NCERTs (Classes 6–10), practice daily, focus on speed & accuracy.

### 2. Time Management

- Solve previous year papers to understand the exam trend.
- Divide your preparation into **daily targets (2-3 hrs English, 3 hrs GK, 2 hrs Maths)**.
- Keep last 2 months for **revision & mock tests**.

### 3. Recommended Books

- **English:** Wren & Martin, Arihant Objective English
- **GK:** Lucent GK, Manorama Yearbook, Newspapers
- **Maths:** RS Aggarwal Quantitative Aptitude, NCERTs

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## ☐☐ Importance of Current Affairs & Defence Knowledge

- Regularly follow PIB, Yojana, and India Year Book.

- Cover **defence exercises (domestic & international), appointments, ranks, medals, and agreements.**

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## ☐☐ **SSB Interview Preparation**

Cracking the written exam is just the first step. The **SSB Interview** tests your **officer-like qualities (OLQs), leadership, and personality.**

- **Day 1 (Screening):** OIR Test & PPDT
- **Day 2-4:** Psychology Tests, Group Tasks, Personal Interview
- **Day 5:** Conference & Results

☐☐ Stay confident, practice group discussions, improve physical fitness, and build leadership skills.

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## ☐☐ **Role of Physical Fitness**

- Running (2-3 km daily)
- Push-ups, Pull-ups, Sit-ups
- Sports & Outdoor Activities
- Yoga/meditation for focus

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## ☐☐ **Why Choose Victor Growth for CDS I 2026 Preparation?**

If you are aiming for **CDS I 2026 success**, the right guidance can make all the difference. **Victor Growth**, one of India's leading defence exam coaching platforms, provides:

- **Expert Faculty:** Experienced mentors for English, GK, and Maths.
- **Structured Courses:** Covering the entire UPSC CDS syllabus with test series.
- **Mock Tests & PYQs:** To help you practice like the real exam.
- **SSB Training:** Personality development, mock interviews, and physical guidance.

☐☐ With **Victor Growth**, aspirants get a **complete preparation package** – from written exam to SSB interview.

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## FAQs on CDS I 2026 Exam

### Q1. When will CDS I 2026 exam be conducted?

The exam is expected in **April 2026** (exact date as per UPSC calendar).

### Q2. What is the age limit for CDS I 2026?

- IMA: 19-24 years
- INA: 19-22 years
- AFA: 19-23 years
- OTA: 19-25 years

### Q3. Is there negative marking in CDS?

Yes, **0.33 marks** are deducted for every wrong answer.

### Q4. Can women apply for CDS I 2026?

Yes, women can apply, but only for **OTA (Officers' Training Academy)**.

### Q5. How many attempts are allowed in CDS?

There is **no attempt limit**, candidates can apply until they meet the age and eligibility criteria.

### Q6. Which coaching institute is best for CDS preparation?

**Victor Growth** is highly recommended for its structured approach, expert faculty, and SSB guidance.

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