

How to Start Preparing for CDS April 2026 Exam – Beginner's Roadmap

Preparing for the **CDS April 2026 Exam** can feel overwhelming, especially if you are a beginner. The **Combined Defence Services (CDS) Examination**, conducted by **UPSC**, is one of the most prestigious exams for those who dream of joining the **Indian Army, Navy, Air Force, or Officers' Training Academy (OTA)**.

If you are new to CDS preparation, this guide will give you a **step-by-step beginner's roadmap** to crack the exam with confidence.

☐☐ Step 1: Understand the CDS Exam Structure

Before starting preparation, you must know **what the exam demands**.

CDS April 2026 Exam Pattern

- **For IMA, INA, AFA:**
 - English (100 marks) – 2 hours
 - General Knowledge (100 marks) – 2 hours
 - Elementary Mathematics (100 marks) – 2 hours
 - **Total = 300 Marks**
- **For OTA (Men & Women):**
 - English (100 marks) – 2 hours
 - General Knowledge (100 marks) – 2 hours
 - **Total = 200 Marks**

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

☐☐ Step 2: Know the Syllabus

1. English Language

- Grammar, Vocabulary, Reading Comprehension, Synonyms/Antonyms, Error Spotting.

2. General Knowledge

- Current Affairs, History, Polity, Geography, Economy, Science, Defence Awareness.

3. Mathematics (only for IMA/INA/AFA)

- Arithmetic, Algebra, Trigonometry, Geometry, Mensuration, Statistics.

☐☐ Step 3: Make a Realistic Study Plan

As a beginner, you need **structured preparation**. Here's a roadmap:

Daily Study Routine (6-8 hours)

- **2 hours - English:** Vocabulary, comprehension, grammar.
- **3 hours - GK/Current Affairs:** Newspaper reading, monthly magazines, static GK.
- **2 hours - Mathematics:** NCERT practice, speed & accuracy building.
- **1 hour - Revision & Practice Tests.**

☐☐ Consistency is more important than long study hours.

☐☐ Step 4: Focus on Current Affairs

Current affairs play a **key role** in CDS. Beginners should:

- Read **The Hindu or Indian Express** daily.
- Follow **monthly current affairs compilations**.
- Focus on **defence exercises, international relations, sports, appointments, and government schemes**.

☐☐ Step 5: Practice Previous Year Papers

- Solve at least **10 years of CDS previous papers**.
- Identify frequently asked topics.
- Work on time management.

☐☐ Step 6: Prepare for SSB Interview Early

CDS preparation isn't just about the written exam. The **SSB Interview** evaluates leadership, communication, and personality.

- Join group discussions.
- Work on public speaking and confidence.
- Stay physically fit with running, push-ups, and outdoor activities.

☐☐ Step 7: Use the Right Books & Resources

- **English:** Wren & Martin, Arihant Objective English
- **GK:** Lucent GK, Manorama Yearbook, Newspapers
- **Maths:** NCERTs (6–10), RS Aggarwal Quantitative Aptitude

☐☐ Step 8: Stay Consistent & Motivated

- Start preparation **at least 6–8 months before** the exam.
- Make short notes for revision.
- Avoid procrastination—discipline is the key to success.

☐☐ Why Choose Victor Growth for CDS Preparation?

Starting preparation alone can be confusing for beginners. This is where **Victor Growth** becomes your ideal partner:

- **Structured Courses:** Covering English, GK, and Maths in detail.
- **Expert Mentorship:** Faculty with years of CDS coaching experience.
- **Mock Tests & PYQs:** To help you build exam-like practice.
- **SSB Training:** Personality development, group tasks, and interview guidance.
- **Personalized Roadmap:** Tailored strategies for beginners.

☐☐ With **Victor Growth**, even a complete beginner can transform into a confident aspirant ready for **CDS April 2026**.

FAQs on CDS April 2026 Preparation

Q1. When should I start preparing for CDS April 2026?

Start at least **6-8 months before the exam** for proper coverage and revision.

Q2. Can a beginner crack CDS in the first attempt?

Yes, with **consistent study, mock tests, and proper guidance (like Victor Growth coaching)**, beginners can clear CDS in their first attempt.

Q3. Do I need coaching for CDS preparation?

Self-study works for some, but **coaching like Victor Growth** provides structure, expert tips, and SSB guidance, making the journey easier.

Q4. How should I prepare for CDS GK as a beginner?

Read newspapers daily, revise NCERTs, and follow current affairs magazines regularly.

Q5. Is maths compulsory in CDS?

Yes, for **IMA, INA, and AFA**, but **not required for OTA**.

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