

UPSC Mains General Studies Paper 4

A Comprehensive Guide

The Union Public Service Commission (UPSC) conducts the Civil Services Examination (CSE) annually to recruit candidates for prestigious services such as the Indian Administrative Service (IAS), Indian Police Service (IPS), and Indian Foreign Service (IFS). One of the most crucial eligibility criteria for aspirants is the age limit. Understanding the age criteria is essential for effective preparation and strategic planning.

Minimum and Maximum Age Limits

The age limit for the UPSC Civil Services Examination varies based on the candidate's category. As per the latest UPSC notification:

- **Minimum Age:** 21 years (as of August 1 of the exam year)
- **Maximum Age:**
 - **General Category:** 32 years
 - **OBC (Other Backward Classes):** 35 years
 - **SC/ST (Scheduled Castes/Scheduled Tribes):** 37 years
 - **EWS (Economically Weaker Sections):** 32 years (same as General category, but with reservation benefits)
 - **Persons with Benchmark Disabilities (PwBD):** 35 years (General & OBC) and 40 years (SC/ST)
 - **Ex-Servicemen:** 37 years (for General category)

Number of Attempts Based on Category

Apart from the age limit, UPSC also restricts the number of attempts a candidate can make:

- **General Category:** 6 attempts (up to 32 years)
- **OBC:** 9 attempts (up to 35 years)
- **SC/ST:** Unlimited attempts (up to 37 years)
- **PwBD:** 9 attempts (OBC) and unlimited (SC/ST)

Age Relaxation Criteria

The UPSC provides relaxation in the upper age limit for certain categories:

- **OBC candidates:** 3 years of relaxation (i.e., up to 35 years)
- **SC/ST candidates:** 5 years of relaxation (i.e., up to 37 years)
- **Defense Services Personnel disabled in operations:** 3 years of relaxation
- **Ex-Servicemen:** 5 years of relaxation
- **Candidates from Jammu & Kashmir (1980-1989 residents):** 5 years of relaxation
- **PwBD candidates:** 10 years of relaxation

Key Points to Remember

1. The cut-off date for calculating age is August 1 of the exam year.
2. A candidate must have attained the minimum age of 21 years but should not have exceeded the maximum limit.
3. The number of attempts and age limits are strictly enforced by UPSC, and exceptions are rarely granted.
4. Even if a candidate fills out the application form, their eligibility is subject to verification.

Conclusion

Understanding the age limit is crucial for UPSC aspirants as it directly impacts their preparation strategy. Candidates must carefully check their eligibility and plan their attempts wisely. Staying updated with UPSC notifications is essential to ensure compliance with the latest rules and regulations.

For more information, candidates should refer to the official UPSC website (www.upsc.gov.in) or the annual notification issued by the commission.

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