

LEARNING MADE EASY



# 5-HOUR QUICK PREP

# GED<sup>®</sup> Test

for  
**dummies**<sup>®</sup>  
A Wiley Brand

- 5 hours of prep in focused study blocks
- Take a practice test
- Know what to expect on test day

**Tim Collins, PhD**

GED<sup>®</sup> Test Learning Expert



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for  
**dummies**<sup>®</sup>  
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# GED<sup>®</sup> Test 5-Hour Quick Prep

by Tim Collins, PhD

for  
**dummies**<sup>®</sup>  
A Wiley Brand

## GED® Test 5-Hour Quick Prep For Dummies®

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# Start Here

Maybe you're struggling in your career, you want to apply to college, or you want to set a good example for your kids. Whatever your reasons for taking the GED, the test can help you get ahead if you don't have a high school diploma. This book helps you to prepare for the computer-based GED test, which, if you pass, offers you the equivalent of a high-school diploma without attending all the classes.

## About This Book

*GED Test 5-Hour Quick Prep For Dummies* helps you earn a high-school diploma in the shortest time possible. If you can prepare yourself for a series of challenging test sections that determine whether you've mastered key skills, you can get a GED diploma that's the equivalent of a high-school education — and you can do so in much less than four years.

This friendly instruction manual helps you succeed on the all-computerized GED test. Use this book as your first stop. It isn't a subject-matter preparation book — that is, it doesn't take you through the basics of math and then progress into algebra, geometry, and so on. It does, however, prepare you for the GED test by organizing your time into study blocks that add up to five hours:

- » **Block 1 (20 minutes):** Get an overview of the GED, including how to sign up, what to expect, and how to understand your score.
- » **Block 2 (30 minutes):** This block explains what you need to know for each part of the GED and offers tips for preparing and successfully answering the questions.
- » **Block 3 (1 hour):** The sample questions help you understand the questions you'll be asked and how the GED might ask them. You can use this block to practice only the questions you recognize and/or use the explanations to understand the questions and answers you need to review.
- » **Block 4 (3 hours, 5 minutes):** The shortened practice test with detailed explanations helps you practice not only answering questions, but also taking the timed test. Although this isn't a full-length practice test, the shortened version will still help you check your understanding of the material, as well as answer all those questions in test-like conditions, while still keeping your preparation time to five hours.
- » **Block 5 (5 minutes):** This short block gives you ten things to check, review, or prepare the night before the test, like planning your route and laying out comfy clothes.

## Foolish Assumptions

When I wrote this book, I made a few assumptions about you, dear reader. Here's who I think you are:

- » You're serious about earning your GED as quickly as you can.
- » You've made earning a GED a priority in your life because you want to advance in the workplace or move on to college.

- » You're willing to give up some activities so that you have the time to prepare, always keeping in mind your other responsibilities, too.
- » You meet your state's requirements regarding age, residency, and the length of time since leaving school that make you eligible to take the GED test. (You can find these on the GED Testing Service's website, <https://ged.com>.)
- » You have sufficient English language skills to handle the test (or sufficient Spanish language skills if you take the test in Spanish).
- » You want a fun and friendly guide that helps you achieve your goal.

If any of these descriptions sounds like you, welcome aboard. I've prepared an enjoyable tour of the GED test.

## Icons Used in This Book

Icons — little pictures you see in the margins of this book — highlight bits of text that you want to pay special attention to. Here's what each one means:



TIP

Whenever we want to tell you a special trick or technique that can help you succeed on the GED test, we mark it with this icon. Keep an eye out for this guy.



REMEMBER

This icon points out information you want to burn into your brain. Think of the text with this icon as the sort of stuff you'd tear out and put on a bulletin board or your refrigerator.



WARNING

Take this icon seriously! Although the world won't end if you don't heed the advice next to this icon, the warnings are important to your success in preparing to take the GED test.

## Where to Go from Here

Some people like to read books from beginning to end. Others prefer to read only the specific information they need to know now.

If you're a beginning-to-end type, you can start with Block 1 and proceed through each block sequentially. If you only want what you need to know now, I still suggest you start with Block 1, but then you can skip to whatever part of the book suits you best:

- » If you want to prepare for only one section of the GED, such as the Social Studies test, you can jump right to the social studies section in Block 2 and go from there.
- » If you want to test what you know first and then flip back to review what you missed, start with the shortened practice test in Block 4. Then check out Blocks 2 and 3 for help with areas you need to review.

## Block **1**

# GED Overview in 20 Minutes

**T**he GED test offers people without a high school diploma the opportunity to earn the equivalent of an American high school diploma without the need for full-time attendance in either day or night school. The GED test is a recognized standard that makes securing a job or starting college easier.

The recently revised test is in line with current Grade 12 standards in the United States and meets the College and Career Readiness Standards for Adult Education.

The GED test measures whether you understand what high school seniors across the country have studied before they graduate. Employers seek better-educated employees. Colleges want to make sure students are qualified. When you pass the GED test, you earn a high school equivalency diploma that can open many doors for you — perhaps doors that you don't even know exist at this point.

You may wonder why you should even bother taking the GED test and getting your GED diploma. One reason is that people with high school diplomas earn more and spend less time unemployed than people without diplomas. In a recent year, unemployment for people without a high school diploma was 5.9 percent. That dropped to 3.7 percent for individuals with a diploma or a GED certificate. Incomes were about 25 percent higher for high school or GED graduates than people without diplomas. In addition, your GED can qualify you for even more education. Earnings increase and unemployment decreases at each level of education from associate's degree on up. Even with just some college, you can earn more, on average.

Ready to get started? This block gives you the basics of the GED test: How the test is administered, what the test sections look like, how to schedule the test (and whether you're eligible), and how the scores are calculated (so you know what you need to pass).

# Registering for the Test

Before you go online to sign up for the GED, you need to know a few things. After you determine that you're eligible, think about whether you want to take only one or two sections at a time or all sections at once. If you're eligible for accommodations, you need to have your documentation ready. The following sections walk you through the details.

## Knowing if you're eligible

Before you schedule your test date, make sure that you meet the requirements to take the GED test. You're eligible to apply to take the GED test only if

- » **You're not currently enrolled in a high school.** If you're currently enrolled in a high school, you're expected to complete your diploma there. The purpose of the GED test is to give people who aren't in high school a chance to get an equivalent high school diploma.
- » **You're not a high school graduate.** If you're a high school graduate, you should have a diploma, which means you don't need to take the GED test.
- » **You meet state requirements regarding age, residency, and the length of time since leaving high school.** When you open your online account at <https://ged.com>, the software will screen you to ensure that you meet your state's requirements.

## Choosing when and where to take the test



REMEMBER

You can take the GED when you're eligible and prepared. You can then apply to take the GED as soon as you want. Pick a day (or days) that works for you.

The GED has four sections: language arts, social studies, science, and math. You can take each of the four test sections separately, at different times, and in any order you want. Taking all four sections of the GED together takes about seven hours. However, the test is designed so you can take each section when you're ready. In fact, you can take the test sections one at a time, in the evenings or on weekends, depending on the individual testing center.

You can also take some of the tests online at home and others at a testing center. This flexibility is one of the benefits of doing the test by computer. If you want to take the test online at home, you must pass the GED Ready practice test before you can sign up. Even if you're taking the test at a test center, this short online test can help you determine whether you're likely to be successful, which can help you avoid wasting time and money on retests. And if you don't pass, the detailed feedback will help you find your strengths and areas for improvement.

As the time this book was published, some states don't offer the test and some don't allow online testing. You can take the test in a neighboring state that allows online or non-resident testing. Just select the state you'd like to test in when you set up your online account. This information changes periodically, so be sure to check <https://ged.com/state-information-online-testing> for the latest information. And remember: Nearly all employers and higher education schools nationally accept your passing score.

If you need special arrangements to accommodate your situation, the GED Testing Service will help arrange the test for you at a convenient time and location.

## Asking for accommodations or language options

If you have a special need, it can be accommodated. You shouldn't feel bad about requesting an accommodation, either. Many people do, and the most common accommodations are for vision-related issues. Remember, though, that if you request an accommodation, you will need to provide acceptable documentation.

If you're learning English, you can choose to take the test in Spanish or, in Canada, French.

### Disability accommodations

The GED Testing Service makes every effort to ensure that all qualified people have access to the tests. If you have a disability, you may not be able to register for the tests and take them the same week, but, with some advanced planning, you can probably take the tests when you're ready. Here's what you need to do:

- » Review the information and instructions at [https://ged.com/about\\_test/accommodations](https://ged.com/about_test/accommodations).
- » At least a month before you want to take the test, go to <https://ged.com> and open an online account, or log into an existing account.
- » Follow the instructions to request an accommodation. The software will walk you through the steps to request an accommodation and submit the proper documentation.
- » You will need documentation of your special need from an appropriate professional. The software will give the exact requirements and instructions you can show the professional so they can provide the correct documentation.
- » Complete all the proper forms and submit them with a medical or professional diagnosis.
- » Start planning early so that you're able to take the tests when you're ready.

The GED Testing Service defines specific disabilities, such as the following, for which it may make special accommodations:

- » Learning and cognitive disorders (LCD)
- » Attention deficit/hyperactivity disorder (ADHD)
- » Psychological and psychiatric disorders (EPP)
- » Physical disabilities and chronic health conditions (PCH)

### Language options

The good news is that English doesn't have to be your first language for you to take the GED test. In the United States, the GED test is offered in English and Spanish. A French version is available in Canada.



TIP

If English (or Spanish) isn't your first language, you must decide whether you can read and write English or Spanish as well as or better than 40 percent of high school graduates. If so, then you can prepare for and take the test without additional language preparation. If you don't read or write English or Spanish well enough to pass, then you need to take additional classes to improve your language skills until you think you're ready. Your local community college or adult education center is the best place to get started. Your account at <https://ged.com> can also help you find local programs that will suit your needs.

## Signing up for your test

You book your appointment through the GED Testing Service's website, <https://ged.com>, based on available testing dates. When you sign up for the test, you can search for times and locations that suit you. Because a computer administers the test, you will schedule an individual appointment. Your test starts when you start and ends when the allotted time ends.

If you sign up to take the test online at home, your computer and your home (or other location where you take the test) have to meet special requirements outlined when you sign up. The <https://ged.com> website will walk you through these requirements. If you sign up to take the test at a testing center, you will take the test in a computer lab, often containing no more than 15 seats; testing facilities may be located in many communities in your state.

## Identifying What to Bring to the Test

Passing the GED can bring you many benefits, so you need to treat it seriously and come prepared. Make sure you bring the following items with you on test day:

- » **You:** The most important thing to bring to the GED test is obviously you. If you enroll to take the test, you have to show up; otherwise, you'll receive a big fat zero and lose your testing fee. If something unfortunate happens after you enroll, go to your online account and see if you can reschedule. You may need to call the GED Testing Service or use their online chat to reschedule.
- » **Correct identification:** Before you can start the test, the test proctors — online and in person — want to make sure that you're really you. Bring a government-issued photo ID — a driver's license, a state ID card, a passport, or a matrícula consular are all fine. Have your ID in a place where you can easily reach it. And, when asked to identify yourself, don't pull out a mirror and say, "Yep, that's me."
- » **Registration confirmation:** The registration confirmation is your proof that you did register. If you're taking the test in an area where everybody knows you and everything you do, you may not need the confirmation, but I suggest you take it anyway. It's light and doesn't take up much room in your pocket or purse.
- » **Other miscellaneous items:** After you register for the test, you receive instructions that list what you need to bring with you. Besides yourself and the items I listed previously, other items you want to bring or wear include the following:
  - **Comfortable clothes and shoes.** When you're taking the test, you want to be as relaxed as possible. Uncomfortable clothes and shoes may distract you from doing your best. You're taking the GED test, not modeling the most recent fashions.
  - **A bottle of water and a healthful snack.** Check whether you can bring these with you into the room at the testing center. If you test online at home, you are only allowed to have some water, in a clear glass, on the desk with you. But you can eat a quick snack in the 10-minute break between tests if you take more than one test.
  - **Reading glasses.** If you need glasses to read a computer monitor, don't forget to bring them to the test. Bring a spare pair, if you have one. You can't do the test if you can't read the screen.
  - **Calculator.** You may bring a handheld Texas Instruments TI-30XS MultiView calculator to the testing center, which you may use whenever the calculator icon appears on the screen. For many people, a real calculator saves time on the test. However, you aren't required to BYOC (bring your own calculator). A calculator icon appears on the screen whenever one is necessary to answer a question. All you have to do is click on the calculator icon, and you have a fully functioning calculator on-screen. See the section "On-screen calculator" later in this block for details about how to use it.



# Knowing What to Expect During the Test

When you know what to expect during the GED, it's easier to do your best on the test. The following section explains what you need to know: the exam room rules, the computer skills you need, and an overview of the material you need to know for each section of the GED.

## Understanding exam room rules

The rules about what enters the testing room are strict. Don't take any chances. If something isn't on the list of acceptable items and isn't normal clothing, leave it at home. Laptops, cellphones, and other electronic devices will most likely be banned from the testing area.

Leave other electronics at home, locked in your car, or in a locker at the testing center. The last place on earth to discuss whether you can bring something into the test site is at the door on test day.



REMEMBER

Whatever you do, be sure *not* to bring the following with you to the testing room at the GED testing center, and make sure they are out of reach (or out of the room) if you test at home:

- » Books
- » Notes or scratch paper
- » Tablets
- » Cellphones
- » Smartwatches
- » Apple AirPods or other wireless earphones
- » Anything valuable, like a laptop computer that you don't feel comfortable leaving outside the room while you take the test

Also, keep your eyes on your monitor. Everybody knows not to look at other people's work during the test, but, to be on the safe side, don't stretch, roll your eyes, or do anything else that may be mistaken for looking at another test. At a test center, most of the tests will be different on the various computers, so looking around is futile and doing so can get you into a lot of trouble. You should also keep your eyes on the screen if you test online at home. Everything you need to take the test is on the screen in front of you. Looking around the room or looking away from the screen repeatedly could be considered suspicious behavior.

## Identifying computer skills you need

If you know how to use a computer and are comfortable with a keyboard and a mouse, you're ahead of the game. If not, practice your keyboarding. Also, practice reading from a computer screen because reading from a screen is very different from reading printed materials. At the very least, you need to get more comfortable with computers, even if that means taking a short course at a local learning emporium. In the case of the GED test, the more familiar you are with computers, the more comfortable you'll feel taking the test.

When taking the computerized GED test, you have two important tools to allow you to answer questions: the keyboard and the mouse. You may also use an on-screen calculator and whiteboard for certain parts of the test. The following sections examine each tool in greater depth and explain exactly how you use them to complete the GED test. Make sure that you understand the