

Drone and remotely piloted aircraft knowledge preparation: study guide

Aviation, aerospace, air traffic, and airports · suite
apt-078-drone-and-remotely-piloted-aircraft-knowledge-preparation · generated
2026-09-15T15:29:50.366Z

Detail	Value
Title	Drone and remotely piloted aircraft knowledge preparation: study guide
Generated	2026-09-15T15:29:50.366Z
Fixture/version	apt-078-drone-and-remotely-piloted-aircraft-knowledge-preparation
Sector	Aviation, aerospace, air traffic, and airports
Guide version	v2

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- Answer keys and scoring logic stay server-side and are never included in any download or export.

How to use this guide

This file contains the whole study outline for this suite: every skill it draws on, the full lesson for each of those skills, worked examples, practice tips, a glossary, and where each piece of material comes from. Nothing here is a summary of a page you still have to visit.

1. Read the skills section end to end once, without timing yourself.
2. Work the guided practice mode for the suite, using the practice tips as a checklist.
3. Move to the mini-test only when guided practice feels unhurried.
4. Sit the full simulation last, once, in the conditions you expect on the day.

Practice attempts are stored on the device you used, never on an account. Exporting a result is the only way anything leaves that device.

Practice modes and durations

Practice modes for Drone and remotely piloted aircraft knowledge preparation

Mode	Duration	What it is for
Guided practice	15 minutes	Untimed, with feedback after every item.
Mini-test	18 minutes	A short timed set for checking pace.
Full simulation	45 minutes	Full length and full time, in one sitting.

- Start guided practice:
<https://learn.novusstreamsolutions.com/aptitude/practice/new?bank=apt-078-drone-and-remotely-piloted-aircraft-knowledge-preparation&mode=guided>
- Start mini-test:
<https://learn.novusstreamsolutions.com/aptitude/practice/new?bank=apt-078-drone-and-remotely-piloted-aircraft-knowledge-preparation&mode=mini>
- Start full simulation:

Skills covered, in full

This suite draws on 5 skill constructs. Each one below carries its complete lesson.

Situational judgment

Evaluating workplace responses against role-relevant principles.

Learn a repeatable way to compare workplace responses: establish the facts, identify duties and risks, respect role boundaries, then choose a proportionate first action. This is educational preparation, not an official scoring guide.

What you should be able to do after this lesson:

1. Separate facts stated in a scenario from assumptions that the scenario does not support.
2. Rank response options by immediate risk, policy or role obligations, proportionality, and follow-through.
3. Explain why a strong first action is better than passive, punitive, or unauthorized alternatives.

Worked examples and pitfalls

Worked scenario: an unverified safety concern: A colleague reports a possible equipment fault while a deadline is approaching. First distinguish the known fact, the report, from the unverified cause. A strong response protects people and affected work, checks the concern through the right channel, tells the relevant lead, and records what was done. Ignoring the report underreacts; shutting down unrelated work or accusing someone before checking the facts overreacts.

Method: facts, duties, risks, response: Write four short notes before ranking options: what is known, who may be affected, which duty or boundary applies, and what safe next step is available now. Prefer an action that addresses the immediate issue and creates useful follow-through. Do not reward an option merely because it sounds decisive.

How to practise this skill

- Answer the question asked: best first action, worst action, or complete response are different tasks.
- Check whether an option acts within the person's authority and escalates only as far as the risk requires.
- When two options look reasonable, prefer the one that gathers missing facts and communicates ownership.

Glossary

Proportionality: Matching the urgency and scope of a response to the evidence, likely impact, and authority available.

Role boundary: The limit of what a person may decide or do without approval, specialist help, or escalation.

Follow-through: Confirming ownership, recording the decision, and checking that the issue was actually resolved.

Study this next

- Situational judgement test:
<https://learn.novusstreamolutions.com/search?q=Situational%20judgement%20test>

- Workplace ethics: <https://learn.novusstreamsolutions.com/search?q=Workplace%20ethics>
- Decision-making: <https://learn.novusstreamsolutions.com/search?q=Decision-making>
- Situational judgment lesson on Novus Learn:
<https://learn.novusstreamsolutions.com/aptitude/skills/situational-judgement/lesson>

Where this material comes from

- Novus Learn original situational-judgment suite scenarios and published construct mapping.
- Novus educational framework: facts, duties, risks, role boundaries, proportional action, and follow-through.

Educational preparation only. Novus Learn does not administer official exams and does not guarantee scores or hiring outcomes.

Critical thinking

Evaluating evidence, assumptions, arguments, credibility, and alternative explanations.

Critical thinking assessments ask you to take an argument apart: what is being concluded, what it rests on, what evidence would settle it, and whether a proposed conclusion actually follows. Published critical-thinking batteries typically run five task types - inference, recognition of assumptions, deduction, interpretation, and evaluation of arguments - and they are deliberately built so that agreeing with a conclusion and judging the argument as strong come apart. The construct is heavily weighted in policy analysis, audit, legal, investigative and graduate selection, and it is the same skill that stops a plausible chart from turning into a bad decision. Practice stays on this device; there is no account and nothing is uploaded unless you export it.

What you should be able to do after this lesson:

1. State an argument's conclusion in your own words before evaluating it, and identify which sentences are premises and which are background.
2. Use the negation test to separate a required assumption from a statement that would merely strengthen the argument.
3. Distinguish validity from truth, and identify affirming the consequent as distinct from the valid modus tollens form.
4. Compute a posterior probability on a screening example and explain why the rate of true positives among all positives is far lower than intuition suggests.
5. Generate at least two alternative explanations - selection, reverse causation, a common third factor - for any claimed causal effect, and name the comparison that would rule them out.
6. Judge argument strength on relevance and directness rather than on agreement, including marking arguments you personally reject as strong.

Worked examples and pitfalls

The negation test finds assumptions; nothing else does: Argument: 'The council should fit bin sensors across the district. In the trial depot they cut collection trips by a fifth.' Candidate assumption A: 'The trial depot's waste pattern is broadly representative of the rest of the district.' Negate it - suppose the trial depot is nothing like the rest of the district - and the argument collapses, because a result that does not transfer supports nothing about the district. So A is a required assumption. Candidate assumption B: 'Bin sensors are the cheapest available technology for this purpose.' Negate it - suppose they are the most expensive - and the argument still stands as given, since it argued from a reduction in trips, not from cost. B is not required; it would strengthen a cost-based argument that was never made. Candidate C: 'Fewer collection trips reduce total operating cost.' Negate it and the recommendation loses its point, so C is required too, even though the argument never mentions cost. That last case is the one candidates miss, because the required assumption

is what bridges the evidence to the recommendation, and bridging assumptions are by definition unstated. The failure mode across this whole item type is picking statements that support the conclusion instead of statements the argument cannot survive without.

Base rates: 90 percent accurate, 15 percent right: A production line runs an automated defect test. Defects occur in 1 percent of units. The test flags 90 percent of genuinely defective units, and wrongly flags 5 percent of good units. A unit has just been flagged - how likely is it to be defective? Work in whole units rather than probabilities. Take 10,000 units: 100 are defective and 9,900 are good. Of the 100 defective, the test flags 90. Of the 9,900 good, it wrongly flags 5 percent, which is 495. Total flags: $90 + 495 = 585$. Of those, 90 are genuine, so the answer is $90 / 585 = 15.4$ percent. Better than the 1 percent base rate, and nowhere near the 90 percent that intuition offers. The error has a name - confusing the probability of a flag given a defect with the probability of a defect given a flag - and it has a practical consequence: the rework queue has to be sized for 585 units a batch, not 100, and 495 of the 585 units sitting in it are perfectly good. Whenever a test, screening rule or model accuracy figure appears in an item, ask how many of the negatives there are, because with a rare condition the false positives from a large clean population swamp the true positives from a small affected one.

Three alternative explanations, and the comparison that settles it: Claim: 'Employees who attended the optional resilience workshop took 30 percent fewer sick days last year, so the workshop works.' Alternative one, selection: attendance was optional, so the people who signed up may have been the healthier and more engaged to begin with, and would have taken fewer sick days regardless. Alternative two, reverse direction: employees who were frequently unwell were the least able to attend a full-day workshop, so illness determined attendance rather than the other way round. Alternative three, a common third factor: the workshop ran on Thursday afternoons at head office, so attendance largely tracks being an office-based rather than shift-based worker, and shift workers take more sick leave for reasons that have nothing to do with resilience training. What would settle it: randomly assigning the offer to half the workforce and comparing the two groups. Failing that, the cheapest useful check already exists in the payroll data - compare attendees' and non-attendees' sick days in the year before the workshop. If attendees were already 30 percent lower, selection is doing the entire job. The habit worth building is to name the comparison group before you accept any before-and-after number.

Deduction: affirming the consequent versus modus tollens: Rule: 'If an invoice is over 10,000 euro, it requires two signatures.' Argument A: 'This invoice has two signatures, therefore it is over 10,000 euro.' Invalid - this is affirming the consequent. The rule makes two signatures necessary for large invoices; it says nothing that prevents a cautious manager from double-signing a 400 euro invoice, so a two-signature invoice of any size is consistent with the rule. Argument B: 'This invoice has only one signature, therefore it is not over 10,000 euro.' Valid - this is modus tollens, denying the consequent to deny the antecedent, and it holds assuming the rule was followed. Argument C: 'This invoice is not over 10,000 euro, therefore it does not have two signatures.' Invalid again, denying the antecedent. Two further points that deduction items test directly. First, validity is about form alone: 'All banks close on Sundays; Riverton Mutual is a bank; therefore Riverton Mutual closes on Sundays' is perfectly valid even if the first premise is false, and a valid argument with a false premise can deliver a false conclusion. Second, in these items you must accept the premises as given even when you know them to be untrue, because the question is whether the conclusion follows, not whether it is true.

Interpretation: what a survey figure does and does not license: Data: all 1,200 employees of a firm were surveyed. 62 percent said they would accept a four-day week at 90 percent pay. Of those who said yes, 71 percent were under 35. Conclusion one: 'A majority of this firm's employees would accept the trade.' This follows - 62 percent of a complete census of the firm is a majority, and the conclusion is properly limited to this firm. Conclusion two: 'A majority of the firm's under-35 employees would accept the trade.' This does not follow, and the arithmetic shows why. Sixty-two percent of 1,200 is 744 accepters, and 71 percent of 744 is about 528 accepters aged under 35. That is the composition of the accepters, not the acceptance rate within

the under-35 group, and without knowing how many under-35s the firm employs the rate is undetermined: if there are 900, the rate is $528 / 900 = 59$ percent; if there are 600, it is 88 percent; if there were 1,100 the rate would be below half. Conclusion three: 'The firm should move to a four-day week.' This does not follow either - a stated preference about pay says nothing about output, shift cover, customer hours or cost. Notice that conclusion two is the base-rate error from the screening example, wearing survey clothing.

Strong and weak arguments on the same question: Question: should the agency publish raw inspection scores for every site? Strong argument for: 'In the neighbouring authority, publication was followed by a measurable fall in repeat violations, which is the stated aim of the inspection regime.' It is directly about this decision, it addresses the regime's own objective, and it offers evidence - and if true it would change your view. Weak argument for: 'Yes, because transparency is always good.' Sweeping, unsupported, and it would apply identically to publishing anything at all, which is the tell. Strong argument against: 'Raw scores omit the severity weighting, so a site with one critical failure can rank above a site with six minor ones, and a member of the public cannot see the difference.' Specific, mechanistic, directly about the proposal, and it would change your view. Weak argument against: 'No, because businesses will object.' It may be true and it may matter politically, but it does not bear on whether publication achieves the regime's aim, and no evidence is offered. Two tests separate strong from weak: is the argument about the exact question asked, and would accepting it change the decision? Note that you can hold a firm personal view on publication and still be required to mark the argument on the other side as the strong one - that split is what the item type is measuring.

How to practise this skill

- Negate every candidate assumption out loud. If the argument survives the negation, it was never an assumption, however supportive it sounds. This single habit converts the assumption item type from guesswork into a mechanical check.
- Write the conclusion in your own words before reading any option. Half of the wrong answers on inference and evaluation items are responses to a conclusion the argument never reached.
- Ask 'percentage of what?' on every percentage in the stimulus and reconstruct the denominator in whole units. Base-rate and composition errors both dissolve the moment you write out counts instead of rates.
- Deliberately practise marking arguments you disagree with as strong and arguments you agree with as weak. Assessments in this construct are built to catch agreement masquerading as evaluation, and the effect is largest on politically loaded stimuli.
- For any causal claim, write two alternatives - selection and a third factor - and name the comparison group that would rule them out, before you decide whether the evidence supports the claim.
- Log wrong answers by task type rather than by topic: inference, assumption, deduction, interpretation, evaluation. Candidates are rarely weak across all five, and the profile tells you where the next hour of practice belongs.

Glossary

Conclusion: The claim an argument is trying to establish. It is not always last, is often signalled by therefore, so, or should, and locating it correctly determines every subsequent judgement about the argument.

Assumption: An unstated premise the argument requires in order to work. Identified by negation: negate it and a genuine assumption brings the argument down, while a merely helpful statement leaves it standing.

Validity and soundness: An argument is valid when the conclusion cannot be false while the premises are true, which is a property of form alone. It is sound when it is valid and the premises are actually true.

Affirming the consequent: The invalid pattern 'if P then Q; Q; therefore P'. It is the most common deductive distractor because it differs from the valid modus tollens form by only the position of a negation.

Base rate: How common something is in the population before any test or evidence is applied. Ignoring it

makes accurate-sounding tests appear far more informative than they are when the condition is rare.

Confounder: A third factor associated with both the supposed cause and the outcome, capable of producing the entire observed relationship on its own. Ruled out by randomisation or by an explicit comparison group.

Selection effect: A difference between groups created by how people entered them rather than by the treatment under study. Optional programmes and voluntary surveys are where it appears most often.

Falsifiability: The property of a claim that some observation could show it to be wrong. A claim compatible with every possible result carries no information, which is why 'what would change your mind?' is a diagnostic question.

Study this next

- Critical thinking skill hub: <https://learn.novusstreamsolutions.com/aptitude/skills/critical-thinking>
- Practise the critical thinking bank: <https://learn.novusstreamsolutions.com/cognitive-skills/critical-thinking>
- Verbal reasoning lesson: <https://learn.novusstreamsolutions.com/aptitude/skills/verbal-reasoning/lesson>
- Government audit suite: <https://learn.novusstreamsolutions.com/aptitude/tests/government-audit>
- Investigator and detective reasoning suite:
<https://learn.novusstreamsolutions.com/aptitude/tests/investigator-and-detective-reasoning>
- Critical thinking lesson on Novus Learn:
<https://learn.novusstreamsolutions.com/aptitude/skills/critical-thinking/lesson>

Where this material comes from

- Worked items written for Novus Learn. The arguments, survey figures, defect-test numbers and evaluation options above are original and invented for this lesson; no published or copyrighted test item is reproduced.
- The five task types named in the summary - inference, assumption, deduction, interpretation, evaluation of arguments - describe a structure used publicly across several critical-thinking assessments; no affiliation with any publisher is claimed or implied.
- Terminology follows standard, widely published usage in introductory logic and research methods - validity, soundness, affirming the consequent, base rate, confounder, selection effect.
- Novus Learn aptitude construct registry (catalog seed) for the construct scope and the suite mapping shown in the related links.
- Public educational framing only - not affiliated with any official exam board, publisher or employer.

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Spatial reasoning

Rotation, folding, views, orientation, maps, and three-dimensional visualization.

Spatial reasoning is the ability to turn an object in your head and be right about the result: to tell a rotation from a mirror image, fold a flat net into a solid and know which faces meet, read plan and elevation views back into a three-dimensional shape, and hold your own orientation steady while a route turns underneath you. It is a heavily weighted construct in pilot and aircrew selection, firefighter and military technical batteries, architecture and design admissions, and trades screening where a drawing has to be built. Much of it can be trained by replacing imagination with a checkable procedure. Practice is device-local unless you export it.

What you should be able to do after this lesson:

1. Distinguish a rotation from a reflection by checking whether the clockwise order of three marked features is preserved or reversed.

2. Read a cube net and name which faces end up opposite, using the rule that squares two apart in a straight strip are opposite.
3. Reconstruct a solid from plan, front and side views, count its unit cubes, and identify when the views leave the count undetermined.
4. Predict the hole pattern produced by unfolding a punched sheet, treating each unfold as a reflection across the fold line rather than a rotation.
5. Work with bearings and relative direction, converting between a map frame and a traveller frame without losing track of which is which.
6. Name the cross-section produced by cutting a cylinder, cone or cube on a given plane, including the oblique cuts people default to calling circles.

Worked examples and pitfalls

Rotation preserves handedness; reflection reverses it: A figure carries three distinguishable marks (say a red band, a blue band and a yellow band), which read red, blue, yellow going clockwise around its centre. Rotating that figure in the plane, by any angle, never changes that clockwise order: it still reads red, blue, yellow clockwise from whatever mark you start at. Mirroring it reverses the order, so a reflected copy reads red, yellow, blue clockwise. That single check answers the whole is-this-a-rotation-or-a-reflection family without imagining any motion. It works on letters, which is why no in-plane rotation of the letter R produces a backwards R, and no rotation of a lower-case b produces a d: b and d are mirror images across a vertical line, and turning one will never give you the other. Contrast b and q, which are related by a half turn and therefore genuinely are rotations of each other. The distinction is exactly what the clockwise-order test measures. In three dimensions the equivalent is handedness at a corner: pick three edges meeting at a vertex, and a rotation preserves whether they form a right-handed or left-handed set while a reflection swaps it. This is exactly why most Western dice, viewed at the corner where the 1, 2 and 3 faces meet, show those numbers running anticlockwise, and a die showing them clockwise is a mirror-image die rather than a differently rotated one. The one honest limitation: a figure with its own mirror line looks identical after reflection, so the test decides nothing for symmetric shapes, which is precisely why item writers use asymmetric ones.

Cube nets: two apart in a strip means opposite: A net made of six squares. Four of them, call them A, B, C and D, sit in a horizontal strip left to right. Square E sits directly above B, and square F sits directly below B. Fold it. The strip of four wraps around the cube as a band, so squares two apart in that strip end up on opposite faces: A is opposite C, and B is opposite D. E and F are the remaining pair, and they become the top and bottom, opposite each other. The two rules that solve almost every net item are exactly these. Squares separated by one square in a straight line end up opposite. Squares sharing an edge on the net end up adjacent on the cube, and can never be opposite. Everything else is applying them carefully. A die adds one more constraint worth carrying: opposite faces of a standard die sum to seven, so 1 faces 6, 2 faces 5 and 3 faces 4, and a net showing 1 and 6 two apart in a strip is consistent while a net showing 1 and 2 two apart is not a standard die. The classic error on these items is trying to fold the net in your head all at once. Do not. Pick one square as the base, identify its opposite by the two-apart rule, then repeat for a second pair, and you have determined the cube in two cheap steps rather than one expensive act of visualisation.

Three views, one solid, and the cubes you cannot see: A solid is built from unit cubes on a base one cube deep and three cubes wide. The column heights, left to right, are 3, 1 and 2. The front view is therefore a staircase profile of heights 3, 1, 2. The side view, looking along the row from the right, is a single column three cubes tall, because the tallest column hides the others behind it. The plan view is a three-by-one rectangle. Total cubes: 3 plus 1 plus 2, which is 6, and here the three views pin it down exactly because the plan view tells you the solid is only one cube deep. Now change one thing. Suppose the plan view is three by two, so the solid is two cubes deep. The front view can still read 3, 1, 2 while the count is anything from 6, one row of cubes with a hollow back, up to 12, a solid block matching the front profile in both rows. The views constrain the shape but do not determine it, and a well-written item will either supply the count or ask for the

minimum and maximum rather than a single figure. That is the trap in this family: candidates who assume every hidden position is filled will over-count, and candidates who assume nothing is hidden will under-count. Read the plan view first to establish the footprint, then use the elevations to cap each column, then ask explicitly whether the item wants the minimum, the maximum, or a determined value.

Punched and unfolded, with coordinates: Take a square sheet 8 units across, with the origin at its centre so the corners are at plus or minus 4 in each direction. Fold the right half onto the left half across the vertical centre line, then fold the bottom half up onto the top half across the horizontal centre line. What is left visible is one quarter, the region where x runs from minus 4 to 0 and y runs from 0 to 4. Punch a single hole at the point minus 3, 3. Now unfold, one step at a time, and treat every unfold as a reflection. Undoing the horizontal fold reflects across the line y equals 0 and adds a hole at minus 3, minus 3. Undoing the vertical fold reflects both existing holes across x equals 0 and adds holes at 3, 3 and 3, minus 3. The finished sheet has four holes, at all four combinations of plus or minus 3. Two rules generalise from this. The number of holes is one punch multiplied by two for each fold the punch passed through, so two folds give four holes and three folds give eight, provided the punch went through every layer, which it does when the folds are through the middle. And the positions are mirror images across each fold line, never rotations. That second point is where the marks go: candidates who place the fourth hole by rotational symmetry get three holes right and one wrong, which is exactly the answer option the item includes.

Bearings, and the difference between the map and the walker: A walker leaves a gate, goes 300 m due north, then 400 m due east. The straight-line distance back to the gate is the hypotenuse of a 300 by 400 right triangle, which is 500 m: the 3-4-5 triangle, so no calculator is needed. The bearing from the gate to the walker is measured clockwise from north, and it is the angle whose tangent is 400 over 300, which is about 53 degrees, so the bearing is 053. The return bearing is that plus 180, which is 233. Bearings are always three digits and always clockwise from north, so 53 degrees is written 053 and a bearing of 350 is very slightly west of north, not south. Now the other half of this construct, which trips up more people than the trigonometry. You are facing south and you turn left. Which way are you now facing? East. Your left hand points east when you face south, and the standard wrong answer, west, comes from reading left as left-on-the-map while forgetting that the map is drawn north-up and you are not. The general fix is to state your heading before every turn and rotate your frame with the traveller: facing north, left is west; facing south, left is east; facing east, left is north; facing west, left is south. On route items, physically rotate the page so the direction of travel points up before working out a turn, and rotate it back only to read off the final compass direction.

What a cut actually reveals: Cross-section items ask what shape a plane makes as it slices a solid, and the reflex answer of circle is wrong most of the time. A cylinder cut perpendicular to its axis gives a circle. Cut parallel to the axis, it gives a rectangle. Cut obliquely so the plane crosses only the curved surface, it gives an ellipse; cut obliquely so the plane also crosses one flat end, it gives an ellipse with one side sliced flat, a D-shape. A cone is richer, because its sections are the conic sections that give the family its name: perpendicular to the axis gives a circle; an oblique cut that crosses every side of the cone gives an ellipse; a cut parallel to one slanted side gives a parabola; a cut parallel to the axis gives a hyperbola branch; and a cut through the apex gives a triangle. A cube is the one that surprises people. A cut parallel to a face gives a square, obviously. A cut through three vertices that are mutually adjacent to one corner gives an equilateral triangle. And a cut through the midpoints of six edges, perpendicular to a long diagonal of the cube, gives a regular hexagon: a six-sided section from a six-faced solid with no curves anywhere. For a flat-faced solid, work these by counting faces rather than by visualising: the section of a convex polyhedron gains exactly one straight edge for every face the plane passes through, so a cut crossing six faces of a cube must close into a six-sided figure and a cut touching only three cannot have more than three sides. For curved solids the question becomes whether the plane meets the curved surface all the way round, which gives a closed circle or ellipse, or only partway, which leaves an open arc closed off by a straight chord.

How to practise this skill

- Replace visualisation with a rule wherever one exists. Two-apart-means-opposite on nets, and clockwise-order-preserved for rotations, both give a checkable answer in seconds and are reliable when mental imagery gets tired late in a section.
- Physically rotate the paper or the device on route and orientation items so the direction of travel points up, work out the turn, then rotate back to read the compass direction. Fighting the north-up convention in your head is the single largest source of left-right errors.
- On view and cube-count items, read the plan view first to fix the footprint, then use the elevations to cap each column, then decide explicitly whether the question wants a minimum, a maximum, or a determined count.
- Treat every unfold as a reflection across the fold line. Say the word reflection out loud as you draw each new hole; the rotational version of the pattern is a deliberately included wrong answer in almost every folding item.
- Build a physical reference once. Fold a paper cube net, mark the faces, and hold it: ten minutes with a real cube fixes the opposite-face rule more firmly than an hour of diagrams, and the memory transfers to items you have never seen.
- Practise untimed first and check whether your errors cluster in rotation, folding, views or orientation, because the four subskills train differently. Attempts are stored on this device only, so an honest error log costs nothing and is what tells you which drill to repeat.

Glossary

Chirality (handedness): The property that distinguishes a figure from its mirror image. Rotation preserves it and reflection reverses it, which is what makes the clockwise-order test decisive for asymmetric figures.

Net: A flat arrangement of faces that folds into a solid. On a cube net, squares two apart in a straight strip become opposite faces and squares sharing an edge become adjacent ones.

Plan view: The view looking straight down on an object. It fixes the footprint of a stacked-cube solid, which is why it is the first view to read.

Elevation: A view looking horizontally at an object, usually given as front and side. Each elevation caps the heights it shows but hides anything directly behind.

Orthographic projection: A drawing convention showing an object through separate parallel views with no perspective. Together the views constrain a solid but do not always determine it.

Bearing: A direction measured clockwise from north and written with three digits, so due east is 090 and a heading slightly west of north is 350. The reverse bearing differs by 180 degrees.

Egocentric versus allocentric frame: The difference between directions relative to a traveller who is turning and directions relative to a fixed map. Left means different compass headings in the two frames, which is why headings must be restated before every turn.

Cross-section: The shape revealed where a plane cuts a solid. It gains one straight edge for each flat face the plane crosses and one curve for each curved surface, which turns the question into a count.

Study this next

- Spatial reasoning skill hub: <https://learn.novusstreamsolutions.com/aptitude/skills/spatial-reasoning>
- Spatial reasoning practice bank: <https://learn.novusstreamsolutions.com/cognitive-skills/spatial-reasoning>
- Mechanical comprehension lesson: <https://learn.novusstreamsolutions.com/aptitude/skills/mechanical-comprehension/lesson>
- Firefighter spatial reasoning suite: <https://learn.novusstreamsolutions.com/aptitude/tests/firefighter-spatial-reasoning>
- Architecture and design aptitude suite:

<https://learn.novusstreamsolutions.com/aptitude/tests/architecture-and-design-aptitude>

- Spatial reasoning lesson on Novus Learn:

<https://learn.novusstreamsolutions.com/aptitude/skills/spatial-reasoning/lesson>

Where this material comes from

- Worked items written for Novus Learn from standard introductory geometry: cube-net opposite-face rules, orthographic view reconstruction, reflection across fold lines, right-triangle distances and bearings, and the conic and polyhedral cross-sections. The 3-4-5 distance, the 053 and 233 bearings, and the four hole coordinates were each computed and checked.
- Terminology checked against the public Wikipedia articles 'Net (polyhedron)', 'Multiview orthographic projection', 'Chirality', 'Bearing (navigation)' and 'Conic section'. Definitions only; every figure described above is original.
- Novus Learn aptitude construct registry (catalog seed) for the construct scope and related suite mapping.
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Attention and concentration

Sustained focus, selective attention, and accuracy under time pressure.

Attention and concentration is the skill of still noticing on minute forty of a checking block as reliably as you did on minute two, and of pointing the noticing at the right thing when two things compete. It has three distinguishable parts - selective attention, sustained attention or vigilance, and divided attention - and assessments load them differently: cancellation and checking tasks load vigilance, conflict tasks load selection, and dispatch-style monitoring loads division. It is the construct that decides whether a records clerk, a dispatcher, an air-side controller or a quality inspector catches the one wrong digit in a shift. Practice here is device-local, with no account and nothing uploaded.

What you should be able to do after this lesson:

1. Count occurrences of a target in a dense string without double-counting or losing your place, using a fixed scan path rather than free looking.
2. Separate hits, misses and false alarms in your own results and work out whether you are set too eager or too cautious for the scoring rule in force.
3. Predict where in a long block your error rate will rise, and schedule micro-resets against that curve instead of pushing through it.
4. Recognise a transposition error, the class that survives a same-characters gist check and is therefore missed most often.
5. Explain why an automatic process such as reading interferes with a controlled one, and use that to anticipate which distractors will actually cost you time.
6. Run a two-stream monitoring task by alternating on a fixed cadence rather than attempting genuine simultaneity.

Worked examples and pitfalls

A cancellation count you can actually check: Count every 7 in this row: 4 7 1 7 7 3 9 7 2 8 7 5 7 6 0 7.

Working left to right and tapping once per hit: hits at the second, fourth, fifth, eighth, eleventh, thirteenth and sixteenth positions. That is seven sevens. Two error modes produce nearly all the wrong answers. The first is the adjacent pair - the 7 7 at positions four and five gets counted once, because the eye takes a repeated

character as one perceptual object. The second is losing the place after the 9, where the visually similar 9 and 7 force a moment of re-checking and the scan restarts a character early, producing an over-count of eight. The defence for both is a fixed scan path with a physical anchor: a fingertip or cursor moving one character at a time, never jumping back. Re-scanning to check is the thing that creates the double-count, so if you must verify, verify by counting a second time from the RIGHT-hand end and comparing totals, never by re-reading part of the row.

Hits, misses and false alarms: the eager candidate loses: A checking batch contains 300 records, 40 of which are genuinely faulty. Candidate A flags 46 records and 36 of them are truly faulty. Hits 36, misses 40 minus 36 equals 4, false alarms 46 minus 36 equals 10. Candidate B flags 38 and 34 are truly faulty: hits 34, misses 6, false alarms 4. On hit rate alone A wins, 36 out of 40 which is 90 percent against B's 34 out of 40 which is 85 percent. Now apply the scoring rule that most checking tasks actually use, where a false alarm cancels a hit: A scores 36 minus 10 equals 26, B scores 34 minus 4 equals 30. B wins by four despite catching two fewer faults. This is why 'flag anything that looks odd' is bad advice on a scored checking task, and why the first thing to read on a checking item is whether wrong flags are penalised. Your response criterion - how much evidence you demand before flagging - is adjustable, and it should be set from the scoring rule, not from your temperament.

The transposition that passes every gist check: Compare these two lines and decide whether they match. Invoice 4820-7391-06. Invoice 4820-7931-06. They do not: the middle group reads 7391 in the first and 7931 in the second, with the 3 and the 9 swapped. Transpositions are the most-missed error class in record checking for a structural reason - the character SET is identical, the length is identical, the first and last characters of the group are identical, so every fast check the visual system runs comes back clean. Substitutions and omissions change the character inventory and get caught; transpositions do not. Two habits raise the catch rate. Read digits in fixed groups of two rather than as a whole number, so 73-91 against 79-31 becomes a mismatch at the first group instead of a subtle difference somewhere in a four-digit blur. And check groups in a deliberately non-natural order - last group, first group, middle group - because reading left to right lets the confirmation you built at the start carry you through the middle, which is exactly where the swap is usually planted.

Conflict: why reading fights you: The classic demonstration is Stroop's, published in 1935: the word RED printed in blue ink, with the instruction to name the ink colour. Naming takes measurably longer, and errors go up, because reading a familiar word is automatic and cannot be switched off, so the automatic response has to be suppressed before the controlled one can be produced. The same conflict has a numeric version you can test on yourself in a second: how many characters are in the string 4 4 4? The answer is three, and the digit 4 pulls at you the entire way. In an assessment this appears wherever the salient feature and the asked-for feature come apart - a chart where the tallest bar is not the answer to the question, a form where the highlighted field is not the one being verified, a row where the bold total is not what the stem requested. The practical move is to name the target feature out loud before you look - 'ink colour', 'character count', 'the value for March' - because pre-loading the target biases selection before the automatic reading response gets a chance to win.

Where the errors actually appear in a 45-minute block: Errors in a long checking block are not spread evenly. Mackworth's 1948 clock-watching study established the pattern that gives the effect its name: detection declines over a prolonged watch, with the sharpest deterioration early rather than at the very end. Practically, on a 45-minute self-timed checking block, expect your per-minute error rate in minutes 20 to 45 to run visibly above minutes 1 to 20 even though nothing about the material changed, and expect the subjective sense of effort to lag the actual decline, so it will not feel like you are getting worse. Two things work against it. Break the block into three fifteen-minute segments with a ten-second reset between them - look away, unfocus, breathe out - which costs thirty seconds of a 45-minute block, about one percent of the time, and buys back more than that in caught errors. And score your practice by segment rather than as one number, because a single overall accuracy figure hides exactly the information you need: whether your problem is skill, which

shows as flat error rate, or endurance, which shows as a rising one.

Two streams: alternate on a cadence, do not try to merge: A dispatch-style monitoring task: keep a running total of the numbers announced on channel one while watching channel two for the code word AMBER.

Genuine simultaneity is not available - the two tasks compete for the same control resource - so the choice is not whether to alternate but whether to alternate deliberately or accidentally. Deliberate looks like this: fix the arithmetic to a rhythm, updating the total only at each announcement and holding a single number between updates, which frees the gaps for channel two. If the total is 34 and the next announcement is 7, you spend under a second reaching 41 and then you are free again. Accidental looks like re-deriving the running total from the beginning because you did not trust it, which locks up the whole window and is when AMBER goes past unheard. The measurable failure of divided attention is almost never a failure to hear the target; it is a failure to have any spare capacity at the moment it arrived. The related phenomenon worth knowing is inattention blindness, illustrated by Simons and Chabris in 1999: an unexpected and perfectly visible event is missed entirely when attention is committed to a counting task.

How to practise this skill

- Fix your scan path before you start, and never re-scan backwards to double-check. Backward re-scanning is what produces both double-counts and lost places; if you need to verify a count, run it again from the other end and compare.
- Read the scoring rule before the first item. Whether false alarms are penalised changes the correct strategy completely, and a criterion set for the wrong rule costs more marks than slow reading does.
- Check numeric strings in fixed groups of two or three and in a deliberately shuffled group order. Transpositions are the errors that survive whole-string comparison, and they are the ones planted on purpose.
- Time your practice in segments and log accuracy per segment, not per session. A flat error rate means you need speed; a rising one means you need endurance and breaks, and the two problems have opposite fixes.
- Name the target feature out loud before each conflict item. Pre-loading the relevant dimension is the cheapest available defence against the salient-but-wrong answer.
- Practise with an actual distractor present rather than in silence. A test hall has movement, coughing and page-turning, and attention practice in perfect quiet trains a condition you will not meet.

Glossary

Selective attention: Prioritising one source or feature while suppressing competing ones. It is what fails when the visually salient element of a display captures the response instead of the requested one.

Sustained attention (vigilance): Maintaining detection performance over a long, low-event period. It is the capacity that checking, monitoring and inspection tasks are really sampling.

Vigilance decrement: The decline in detection performance over a prolonged watch, typically steepest early in the block. Mackworth's 1948 clock test is the standard public reference.

Divided attention: Handling two streams that compete for control. Performance is best modelled as fast alternation with a switch cost, not as genuine parallelism.

Hit, miss, false alarm, correct rejection: The four outcomes of any detection decision: flagging a real fault, missing one, flagging a clean record, and correctly leaving a clean record alone. Any honest accuracy claim needs at least the first three.

Response criterion: How much evidence you require before flagging. Shifting it trades misses against false alarms without changing your underlying sensitivity, which is why it must be set from the scoring rule.

Stroop interference: The slowing that occurs when an automatic response, such as reading a word, conflicts with the requested response, such as naming its ink colour. Named for Stroop's 1935 experiments.

Inattentional blindness: Failing to notice a fully visible, unexpected event because attention is committed elsewhere - the effect Simons and Chabris demonstrated in 1999 with a counting task.

Study this next

- Attention and concentration skill hub:
<https://learn.novusstreamsolutions.com/aptitude/skills/attention-concentration>
- Cognitive Skills Lab: attention practice:
<https://learn.novusstreamsolutions.com/cognitive-skills/attention-concentration>
- Emergency dispatch and 911 communications suite:
<https://learn.novusstreamsolutions.com/aptitude/tests/emergency-dispatch-and-911-communications>
- Error detection lesson: <https://learn.novusstreamsolutions.com/aptitude/skills/error-detection/lesson>
- Perceptual speed lesson: <https://learn.novusstreamsolutions.com/aptitude/skills/perceptual-speed/lesson>
- Attention and concentration lesson on Novus Learn:
<https://learn.novusstreamsolutions.com/aptitude/skills/attention-concentration/lesson>

Where this material comes from

- Character strings, invoice comparisons, batch counts and monitoring scenarios above are written for Novus Learn. All figures are original and no published test item is reproduced.
- Terminology and directions of effect follow widely published work: Mackworth (1948) on the vigilance decrement, Stroop (1935) on response conflict, Simons and Chabris (1999) on inattentional blindness, and the standard hit/miss/false-alarm framing from signal detection theory. Concepts only; no result figures are attributed to those studies.
- Novus Learn aptitude construct registry (catalog seed) for construct scope and suite mapping.
- Public educational framing only - not affiliated with any official exam board, publisher or employer, and not a clinical, diagnostic or attention-disorder screening measure.

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Deductive reasoning

Applying stated rules and constraints to reach valid conclusions.

Deductive reasoning is the disciplined application of rules you have been handed to a case you have been handed, stopping precisely where the rules run out. Where logical reasoning tests the machinery of inference, deductive items test restraint: they hand you a policy, a clue set or a specification and reward the candidate who reaches the one conclusion that is forced and declines the three that are merely plausible. It is the dominant construct in legal and policy admissions tests, critical-thinking style batteries with a cannot-say option, drone and aviation rule-knowledge screening, and any role where a written procedure has to be applied to an awkward real case. Practice stays on this device unless you export it.

What you should be able to do after this lesson:

1. Apply a multi-clause eligibility rule to a specific case and identify exactly which clause decides it, including when the case fails on one clause while satisfying every other.
2. Distinguish validity from truth, and explain why an assessment item requires you to accept a premise you believe to be false.
3. Choose the cannot-say or insufficient-information response correctly, and articulate the specific fact that would have been needed to decide.
4. Solve a small elimination grid from a clue set, showing which clue eliminated which cell.
5. Handle exclusive and inclusive or correctly, and know when eliminating one disjunct establishes the other.

6. Derive a bounded answer from numeric constraints (a maximum, a minimum, or a short list of possibilities) rather than guessing a single value the constraints do not fix.

Worked examples and pitfalls

A three-clause rule and the case that fails on one: A dispatch policy: an order ships the same day if it is placed before 14:00 local time, AND every line on the order is in stock, AND the account is not on credit hold. Three cases. Case A is placed at 13:40, has one of four lines backordered, and the account is clear. Same-day? No. The word AND makes this a conjunction: all three clauses must hold, and one failure is fatal regardless of how comfortably the others pass. The reason candidates get this wrong is not logic, it is arithmetic instinct. Two out of three feels like a pass, and the 13:40 timestamp is written to feel like the clause the item is really about. Case B is placed at 14:00 exactly, fully in stock, no hold. Same-day? No, because before 14:00 excludes 14:00 itself. Boundary wording is deliberate in policy items; before, by, up to and no later than are four different lines. Case C is placed at 09:15, fully in stock, account on credit hold, and the customer has paid the invoice that caused the hold but the hold has not been lifted in the system. Same-day? No. The rule keys on the account being on hold, not on whether it deserves to be, and importing your judgement about what the policy is trying to achieve is the single most reliable way to fail this construct.

Valid but false, true but unjustified: All mammals lay eggs. A whale is a mammal. Therefore a whale lays eggs. The argument is VALID, the conclusion follows inescapably from the premises, and its first premise is false, so the argument is unsound and the conclusion is false. Validity is a property of the shape, soundness is validity plus true premises. Now the mirror image. Some birds cannot fly. A penguin is a bird. Therefore a penguin cannot fly. The conclusion is true, but the argument is invalid: some birds cannot fly leaves open which ones, so the premises do not force it. A true conclusion reached by an invalid route earns nothing. This matters practically because deductive assessment items routinely use premises that are false in the real world, all deliveries to the northern depot arrive by rail, precisely to test whether you reason from the page or from memory. The instruction to treat the statements as true is not a formality; a candidate who silently corrects a premise is answering a different question. Read the premise, accept it for the duration of the item, and put your world knowledge down.

When cannot say is the correct answer: Given: every technician on the night shift holds a confined-space ticket. Priya holds a confined-space ticket. Candidate conclusion: Priya works the night shift. The answer is cannot say, and the reason is worth naming precisely. The rule runs from night-shift technician to ticket-holder, and Priya has been placed at the ticket-holder end. Nothing in the premises says ticket-holders are exclusively night-shift technicians, so Priya could be a day-shift technician, a contractor or a safety officer. The fact that would have decided it is a converse or an exclusivity clause, only night-shift technicians hold the ticket, and being able to state that missing fact is the difference between guessing cannot-say and knowing it. Two calibration checks. First, cannot say is not a hedge for items you find hard; if you can construct one world where the conclusion is true and one where it is false while both satisfy every premise, cannot say is provably right. Second, cannot say is wrong whenever a contrapositive settles the matter: given the same premise and the fact that Sam does NOT hold a confined-space ticket, Sam definitely does not work the night shift, and answering cannot say there is a real error.

An elimination grid, solved clue by clue: Three analysts (Rowan, Sana, Theo) are each based in one of Cardiff, Dublin or Edinburgh and each covers one of energy, retail or transport. Clues: (1) the Dublin analyst covers retail; (2) Theo is not in Dublin and does not cover transport; (3) Sana is not based in Cardiff; (4) Rowan is not based in Edinburgh; (5) Sana does not cover transport. Work the cities first. Clues (2), (3) and (4) leave only two city arrangements: Rowan-Cardiff, Sana-Dublin, Theo-Edinburgh; or Rowan-Dublin, Sana-Edinburgh, Theo-Cardiff. Take the second. Rowan in Dublin covers retail by (1); Theo cannot cover transport by (2), so Theo covers energy; that leaves transport for Sana, which clue (5) forbids. The whole arrangement dies. So the first stands: Rowan in Cardiff, Sana in Dublin, Theo in Edinburgh. Now the subjects. Sana in Dublin covers retail by (1). Theo is not transport by (2), so Theo covers energy. Rowan

takes transport, and clue (5) is satisfied because Sana has retail. Final grid: Rowan, Cardiff, transport; Sana, Dublin, retail; Theo, Edinburgh, energy. Two working habits do most of the lifting. Record negatives as well as positives. Theo-not-Dublin is as useful as any positive placement. And when a clue only bites after several others have landed, as clue (5) does here, park it and come back rather than abandoning the branch.

Or, and the two meanings it carries: A fault report states: either the sensor or the relay has failed, but not both. The relay tests good. Conclusion: the sensor failed. Valid, and comfortably so. The not both makes this an exclusive or, and eliminating one disjunct forces the other. Now strip the qualifier: either the sensor or the relay has failed. The relay tests good. Conclusion: the sensor failed. Still valid. Disjunctive syllogism works for the inclusive reading too, because inclusive or asserts at least one. The difference shows up on the OTHER side of the inference. With the exclusive version, learning the relay HAS failed tells you the sensor did not. With the inclusive version, learning the relay has failed tells you nothing at all about the sensor. Both may have gone. Candidates who treat every or as exclusive will confidently clear a good component; candidates who treat every or as inclusive will miss a genuine deduction. Read for the qualifier: but not both, exactly one of, and either-but-not signal exclusivity, while a bare or in a technical document is normally inclusive. When a policy says applicants must hold a degree or five years of experience, the inclusive reading is almost certainly intended, and an applicant with both is not disqualified.

Numeric constraints give you a bound, not a value: Four people share a 28-night on-call rota. Each person takes at least four nights. Ama takes exactly twice as many nights as Bo. Cal takes eight. What is the largest number of nights Ama can take? Set it up: $A + B + C + D = 28$ with $C = 8$ and $A = 2B$, so $2B + B + 8 + D = 28$, giving $3B + D = 20$. Both B and D must be at least four, so $3B$ is at most 16 and B is at most 5 (since B must be a whole number and 3 times 6 is already 18, leaving $D = 2$). B is also at least four, so B is 4 or 5. $B = 4$ gives $A = 8$ and $D = 8$: the rota is 8, 4, 8, 8, totalling 28, all at least four: legal. $B = 5$ gives $A = 10$ and $D = 5$: the rota is 10, 5, 8, 5, totalling 28: also legal. So the answer is 10. The trap answer is 12, produced by checking the total and forgetting that D would then be 2, below the floor. Two lessons live here. The constraints do not fix a single rota, and a candidate who insists on one answer for every person will invent a value; the honest output is a bound plus the small set of legal arrangements. And the binding constraint is the floor on D, not the total, identifying which constraint actually stops you going further is the entire skill in this item type.

How to practise this skill

- Before touching a rule-application item, list the clauses on separate lines and mark each one as satisfied, failed or unknown for the case in front of you. Conjunctions are decided by the first failure, and writing them out stops you from being led by the clause the item made most vivid.
- Circle every boundary word, before, by, at least, no later than, more than, up to and including. A large share of deductive marks turn on whether the boundary value itself is inside or outside the rule.
- When you reach for cannot say, write the one sentence that would have settled the item. If you cannot name that missing fact, you are probably guessing, and if you can, you are almost certainly right.
- Practise accepting false premises out loud. Say the premise is false in the real world and I am reasoning from it anyway before you answer; the habit protects you from the items that are deliberately built on untrue statements.
- On grid puzzles, record negatives in the grid, not just confirmations, and note which clue produced each elimination so you can retrace a branch instead of restarting it.
- Finish every numeric-constraint item by substituting your answer back into all constraints, including the ones you did not use. Attempts stay on this device, so the extra thirty seconds of checking costs nothing and catches the off-by-one that the answer options are designed to reward.

Glossary

Valid argument: An argument whose conclusion cannot be false while its premises are true. Validity is about structure alone and says nothing about whether the premises are actually correct.

Sound argument: A valid argument whose premises are also true. Assessment items test validity; soundness is usually outside the scope you are given.

Premise: A statement offered as given. In deductive items you are instructed to treat premises as true for the duration of the question, even where they contradict your own knowledge.

Cannot say: The response indicating that the premises are consistent with the conclusion being either true or false. It is a positive finding about the evidence, not an admission of uncertainty.

Disjunctive syllogism: The valid inference from either P or Q together with not-P to the conclusion Q. It holds for both the inclusive and the exclusive reading of or.

Exclusive or: A disjunction asserting that exactly one alternative holds, signalled by but not both or exactly one of. Unlike inclusive or, it also lets you infer not-Q from P.

Counterexample: A single case satisfying every premise while making the conclusion false. Producing one is the fastest proof that an argument is invalid or that an answer option is not forced.

Binding constraint: The constraint that actually stops a quantity going further. Naming it converts a vague numeric item into a definite maximum or minimum.

Study this next

- Deductive reasoning skill hub: <https://learn.novusstreamsolutions.com/aptitude/skills/deductive-reasoning>
- Deductive reasoning practice bank:
<https://learn.novusstreamsolutions.com/cognitive-skills/deductive-reasoning>
- Logical reasoning lesson: <https://learn.novusstreamsolutions.com/aptitude/skills/logical-reasoning/lesson>
- Legal reasoning suite: <https://learn.novusstreamsolutions.com/aptitude/tests/legal-reasoning>
- Critical-thinking style familiarization suite:
<https://learn.novusstreamsolutions.com/aptitude/tests/watson-glaser-style-critical-thinking-familiarization>
- Deductive reasoning lesson on Novus Learn:
<https://learn.novusstreamsolutions.com/aptitude/skills/deductive-reasoning/lesson>

Where this material comes from

- Worked items written for Novus Learn from standard introductory logic and constraint reasoning: conjunctive rule application, validity versus soundness, disjunctive syllogism, and elimination grids. The grid and the rota problem were each solved exhaustively and checked for a unique answer.
- Terminology checked against the public Wikipedia articles 'Validity (logic)', 'Soundness', 'Disjunctive syllogism' and 'Exclusive or'. Definitions only; every case and clue set above is original.
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Recommended preparation

- Practice situational judgement:
<https://learn.novusstreamsolutions.com/aptitude/skills/situational-judgement/lesson>
- Build spatial reasoning: <https://learn.novusstreamsolutions.com/aptitude/skills/spatial-reasoning/lesson>

- Strengthen attention and concentration:
<https://learn.novusstreamsolutions.com/aptitude/skills/attention-concentration/lesson>

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