

Which Subject to Start First for UPSC?

Description

The Union Public Service Commission (UPSC) Civil Services Examination is one of India's toughest exams. Thousands of aspirants each year work tirelessly to secure a position in prestigious services like the Indian Administrative Service (IAS). The UPSC syllabus is vast, and one of the first questions many aspirants face is: **Which subject should I start first for my UPSC preparation?**

Choosing the right subject to begin with is a crucial decision. It will lay the foundation for your preparation and set the pace for your entire study journey. If you start with the right subject, you will cover essential portions of the syllabus faster and more efficiently. In this blog, we will guide you on how to pick the first subject to study for UPSC, focusing on General Studies (GS) and providing a clear path for your initial preparation.

Key Considerations Before Deciding Which Subject to Start First

Before diving into specific subjects, there are some important factors you must consider to make an informed decision. Here are a few key points to guide your choice:

1. Overlapping Topics with General Studies (GS)

General Studies covers a broad spectrum of subjects like **Indian Polity, History, Geography, Economics, Science & Technology, Environment, and Current Affairs**. To begin with, it's wise to focus on subjects that are part of both the **GS papers** and other sections of the UPSC exam. This will allow you to build a strong foundation that covers multiple areas with one study session. For example:

- **Polity and Governance:** Topics related to the Indian Constitution, polity, governance, and public administration overlap with **GS Paper II** (Governance, Constitution, Polity, Social Justice, etc.) and **Public Administration** in the Mains.
- **Geography:** This subject overlaps with **GS Paper I** (Geography of India and the World), and understanding the basics of Geography early on will help with both GS and your optional subject (if chosen).
- **History:** Indian and World History overlap heavily with **GS Paper I** and can provide a strong base for Prelims and Mains.

2. Scoring Subjects and Ease of Understanding

Some subjects are easier to score in than others. Subjects like **Indian Polity, Geography, and History** are often considered easier to grasp, and many candidates start their preparation with these subjects to boost their confidence.

- **Polity** is a relatively straightforward subject and is widely regarded as scoring because of its clear-cut facts and structure.
- **Geography** provides clear concepts and can be easily understood if you follow a systematic approach.
- **History**, though vast, has a defined structure and chronology, making it easier to memorize and apply concepts.

3. Importance of Building a Strong Foundation Early On

When you start your UPSC preparation, focusing on the subjects that form the core of the exam will help you cover key portions of the syllabus early. These subjects are not only critical for **Prelims** but also play a major role in **Mains** and the **Interview** stage.

- **Current Affairs**: While not strictly a subject in itself, staying updated with current affairs from Day 1 is crucial. This knowledge is integral to almost all GS papers, Essay writing, and the Interview process.

4. Time Management and Subject Duration

The time available to you for preparation should also influence your decision. If you have more time at your disposal, you can choose subjects with a broader syllabus. But if you're short on time, opt for subjects that have a smaller syllabus, allowing you to complete them faster and start revising early. For example:

- **Science & Technology**: The portion in GS is not too vast, and you can quickly grasp the fundamental topics with regular study.
- **Environment and Ecology**: Similarly, it's a relatively concise and important subject for the Prelims and Mains.

Recommended Subjects to Start First for UPSC Preparation

Here are some of the subjects that you should consider starting with for your UPSC General Studies preparation:

1. Indian Polity

Indian Polity is often considered the backbone of UPSC preparation. It's a subject that's vital for both **Prelims** and **Mains** and has a relatively straightforward syllabus.

- **Importance**: This subject covers key topics such as the Indian Constitution, fundamental rights, governance, judiciary, and political parties, all of which are heavily tested in both GS Paper II (Governance, Polity) and the Interview.
- **Why Start First?**: The concepts in Indian Polity are easy to grasp and can be quickly applied to both the **Prelims** and **Mains** exams. It's also an essential foundation for understanding the administrative aspects of India, especially for your **Public Administration** optional (if you opt for it).

- **Best Resources:** Books like **M. Laxmikanth's Indian Polity** are excellent for building a strong understanding.

2. Geography

Geography is another excellent subject to start with for UPSC. The subject is divided into two main parts: **Physical Geography** (such as landforms, climate, and resources) and **Human Geography** (population, migration, and economic geography).

- **Importance:** Geography forms an important part of **GS Paper I** and helps in **Prelims** and **Mains** preparation. It's useful for Essay writing as well.
- **Why Start First?:** Geography has a practical approach with a lot of visual content like maps and diagrams. It's often considered easy to grasp, and studying it early on will help you understand world and Indian geography better.
- **Best Resources:** Books like **Certificate Physical and Human Geography** by **G.C. Leong** and **NCERT books** are great for beginners.

3. History

History is one of the most important subjects in the UPSC exam. It has three broad components: **Ancient**, **Medieval**, and **Modern** history.

- **Importance:** History is critical for **GS Paper I** and is also essential for **Prelims**. It is also useful for your **Essay** writing.
- **Why Start First?:** History is more systematic in nature, with a clear chronology and timeline. Starting early allows you to get a solid grasp of important events, personalities, and social, economic, and political developments.
- **Best Resources:** For **Ancient** and **Medieval History**, **NCERTs** are useful. For **Modern History**, books like **Bipin Chandra's Modern India** can be used.

4. Economics

Economics is a key component of **GS Paper III** and **Prelims**. It is essential for understanding topics such as the **Indian Economy**, **Macroeconomics**, and **Economic Development**.

- **Importance:** Economics is crucial for Mains and Prelims. Topics like inflation, growth, development, and poverty are often asked.
- **Why Start First?:** Economics is heavily interrelated with **Polity** and **General Science**. Starting with economics gives a clear understanding of important macroeconomic factors.
- **Best Resources:** **Ramesh Singh's Indian Economy** and **NCERT books** can be a good starting point.

5. Environment and Ecology

Environment and Ecology is a compact yet important subject in UPSC preparation. It is an essential part of **GS Paper III** and has a high weightage in the **Prelims** exam.

- **Importance:** Environment-related issues are often featured in both **Prelims** and **Mains**. They are also relevant for the **Essay** paper.
- **Why Start First?:** The subject is relatively concise, and learning the basics of ecology early on will give you an edge.
- **Best Resources:** **Shankar's Environment** book is highly recommended for this subject.

Conclusion: Start with Core Subjects for a Strong Foundation

When preparing for UPSC, it's vital to start with subjects that lay the foundation for both **Prelims** and **Mains**. Subjects like **Indian Polity**, **Geography**, and **History** are great for beginners and will help you score well while covering a major portion of the syllabus. As you proceed, you can build on this foundation with other subjects like **Economics** and **Environment**.

If you're looking for expert guidance and structured support to boost your preparation, consider enrolling in **SHRI RAM IAS**, one of the **best IAS coaching in Delhi**. They offer specialized coaching, personalized attention, and comprehensive study material for all GS papers, helping you to streamline your UPSC journey effectively.

At **SHRI RAM IAS**, you'll receive expert mentorship, resources, and test series that will ensure you are on the right track from day one. Choose the right subject to begin with, and start your UPSC journey with **SHRI RAM IAS**, the **IAS coaching in Delhi** that provides the best training and mentorship for success in this prestigious exam.