

CDS or Combined Defence Service

CDS or combined defence services exam is conducted by UPSC twice a year. CDS is just like NDA & only difference is CDS is for graduates and NDA is for 10+2.

Selected candidates are admitted to various branches of armed forces like

- [Indian Military Academy](#)
- [Officers Training Academy](#)
- [Indian Naval Academy](#)
- [Indian Air Force Academy](#)

The entire process of selection involves two rounds one is written exam and another is interview.

We shall talk about selection process in great details in coming paragraphs.

Basically if you failed at NDA after 10+2 then you can go for CDS after you complete graduation.

A Career in CDS

A career in armed forces could be very exciting. Many of them join because they really want to serve their country and others join just for a job.

Whatever the reason be fact is a lot of candidates apply for CDS each year. In 2016 around 3 million candidates across India are expected to appear for CDS written exam. If you are selected in one of the branches of armed forces then you are set for your rest of the life.

Apart from getting pay, perks and pension you also get many benefits that are missing in a private job.

Your job can be challenging depending upon which type of armed force you join.

Your job can be very tough and disciplined so you have to prepare yourself for it.

However if you are not ready for a challenging lifestyle then it is advised that you do not go for CDS.

CDS: Eligibility and Educational Qualification

For being eligible for different branches of CDS you need to meet certain requirements for education, age, sex and marital status.

Indian Military Academy

Unmarried male who are born not earlier than 2nd July 1992 and not later than 1st July 1997 for the CDS 2016.

Naval Academy

Unmarried male who are born not earlier than 2nd July 1993 and not later than 1st July 1998.

Air Force Academy

Unmarried male who are born not earlier than 2nd July 1993 and not later than 1st July 1997 for the CDS 2016.

For candidates holding certificates issued by DGCA there is age relaxation up to 26 years.

Officer's Training Academy

Unmarried male who are born not earlier than 2nd July 1992 and not later than 1st July 1998.

Officer's Training Academy Women

Unmarried female who are born not earlier than 2nd July 1992 and not later than 1st July 1998.

CDS 1 2018 Exam Age Limit

- **CDS 1 2018 Exam Age Limit For IMA** : Male candidates born not earlier than 2nd Jan 1995 and not later than 1st Jan 2000 only are eligible.
- **CDS 1 2018 Exam Age Limit For OTA** : Male candidates (married or unmarried) born not earlier than 2nd Jan , 1994 and not later than 1st Jan , 2000 only are eligible. Unmarried Women, issueless widows who have not remarried and issueless divorcees (in possession of divorce documents) who have not remarried are eligible. They should have been born not earlier than 2nd Jan 1994 and not later than 1st Jan 2000
- **CDS 1 2018 Exam Age Limit For AFA** : 20 to 24 Years as on 1st Jan , 2019 i.e. born not earlier than 02 Jan 1995 and not later than 01 Jan 1999 (Upper age limit for candidates holding valid and current Commercial Pilot Licence issued by DGCA (India) is relaxable up to 26 Yrs. i.e. born not earlier than 02 Jan 1993 and not later than 01 Jan 1999) only are eligible. Note : Candidate below 25 years of age must be unmarried. Marriage is not permitted during training. Married candidates above 25 years of age are eligible to apply but during training period they will neither be provided married accommodation nor can they live out with family.
- **CDS 1 2018 Exam Age Limit For NA** : Unmarried male candidates born not earlier than 2nd Jan 1995 and not later than 1st Jan 2000 only are eligible.

Educational Qualification

- **Indian Military Academy:** A degree from a recognized university.
- **Naval Academy:** A degree from a recognized university with physics and mathematics.
- **Air Force Academy:** A degree from a recognized university with physics and mathematics.

CDS Selection Procedure

The entire CDS selection process consists of two steps. First one is written exam and second is interview round.

Candidates who pass the written exam are eligible for the interview conducted by service selection center or SSC.

So let us see the entire process in great details.

CDS: Written Exam Pattern

Indian Military Academy, Air Force Academy and Naval Academy

It includes three papers of 100 marks each

1. English – 100 marks
2. General Knowledge – 100 Marks
3. Elementary Mathematics – 100 Marks

Total = 300 Marks

Subject	No. of Questions	Marks	Timing
English	120	100	2 Hours
General Knowledge	120	100	2 Hours
Elementary Maths	100	100	2 Hours
Total	340	300	2 Hours

Officers Training Academy

1. English – 100 Marks
2. General Knowledge – 100 Marks

So there is no mathematics.

The most important paper is mathematics where you have to answer 100 questions in just 120 minutes. So prepare enough before entering the examination hall.

CDS: Interview Round

Once you are through with the written exam you have to go for interview round. Interview round is conducted in two stages, Stage I and Stage II.

Stage 1

The stage 1 of the interview is called [Officer Intelligence Rating](#) (OIR) where they test you for picture perception.

You will be tested for picture perceptions where you have to observe a picture and answer various questions related to picture you have just seen.

If you clear Stage 1 then you go for Stage 2

Stage 2

Stage 2 interview is held over 4 days and it is very gruelling. Here they take an interview, group testing officer tasks, psychology tests and conference.

If you clear all of them then you are selected.

Every candidate will be tested by three different people Interviewing officer, group testing officer and psychologist.

So this is the entire process of CDS from written exam to interview.

CDS: Exam Syllabus

English

Here you will be tested for vocabulary as well as grammar. You have to prepare yourself by learning various words and going through English grammar.

General Knowledge

General knowledge would be a vast subject and you have to know many things like current affairs, history of India, geography etc.

You must read newspaper daily to stay abreast with all the news. However the exam will test just basics of a given field and not get into details.

Elementary Mathematics

Elementary mathematics is the most important subject. Here it will include everything that you learned in 10, 11 and 10+2.

Arithmetic, unitary method, number theory, algebra, trigonometry, geometry, theorems, mensuration, statistics etc.

Practice and prepare beforehand for the exam.

Interview

For stage I you have to see pictures and answer questions related to it and for stage 2 you have to have a developed personality because you will be tested for various things like intelligence, analytical skills, presence of mind, team work etc.

Benefits of Career in CDS

Although we debated pay and perk that you get after joining an academy very early in this article but we need to look at other benefits also.

1. You are covered for almost everything like all types of allowances, education for children, medical, rationing etc.
2. There is a full retirement pension plan which will cover you for your rest of the life.
3. The most important part is the respect that you get from the society because you are serving the country at the highest level.
4. You can also find a great job after you retire because of your background in defense forces.

How to Apply

Finally we conclude this article by giving you information on how you can apply for CDS and some important dates to note.

You can apply online by filling an application form with all the necessary details and submitting there.

For general candidate the cost of the application is Rs 200.

The commencement of applying online starts in July of a given year and ends on August.

You will get the admit card in the second week of September. Date of the exam is in October and results will be declared in December.

Fill your registration form in two parts and note the registration ID and password because you will use to download your admit card.

It is recommended that you download your admit card at least 3 weeks before the examination form.