



ALPHABET TEST AND LETTER SERIES:

RULES, PATTERNS, AND SHORTCUTS



RULES



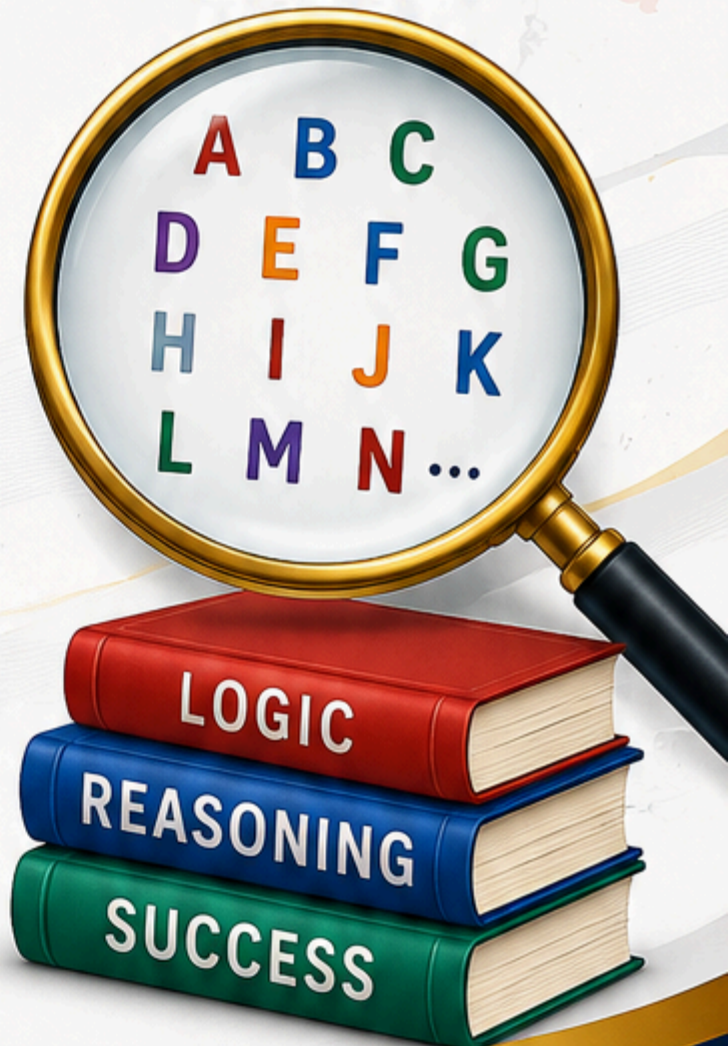
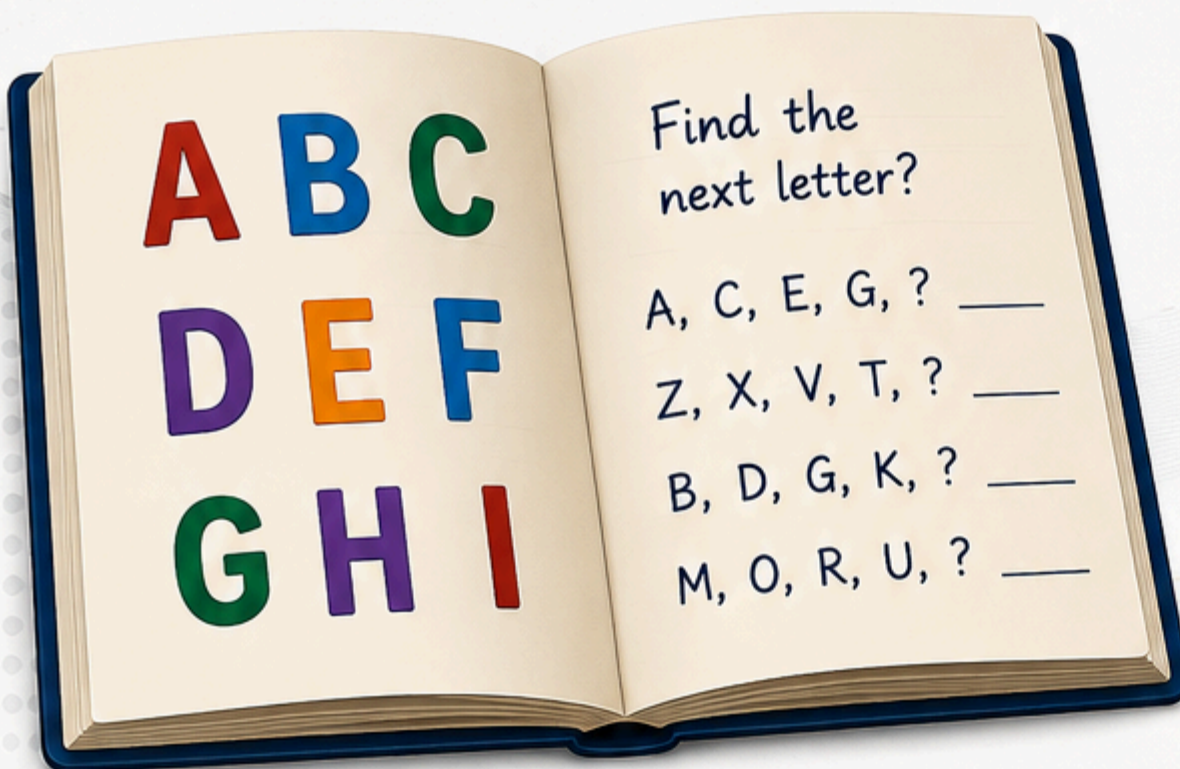
PATTERNS



SERIES



SHORTCUTS



EXAM
FOCUSED



SMART
TRICKS



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SAVING



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TO LEARN



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ALPHABET TEST AND LETTER SERIES: RULES, PATTERNS, AND SHORTCUTS

1. INTRODUCTION

WHAT IS ALPHABET TEST?

- Alphabet Test is a type of reasoning in which questions are based on the letters of the English alphabet.
- It includes questions related to the position, order, number of letters, codes, series, and logical patterns.

A B C

Alphabet Test and Letter Series

WHAT IS LETTER SERIES?

- Letter Series is a sequence of letters that follows a specific rule or pattern.
- You have to find the missing letter(s) or the next letter(s) in the series based on the given rule.

A C E G ?

WHY IS IT IMPORTANT?

- Asked in almost all competitive exams.
- Tests your logical thinking and pattern recognition.
- Scores can be improved quickly with the right rules and shortcuts.



BASIC IDEA

The English alphabet has 26 letters arranged in a fixed order. Most questions are based on:

- Position of letters
- Order and sequence
- Mathematical operations on letters
- Logical patterns



WHERE IS IT USED?

- Competitive Exams (SSC, CGL, CHSL, CPO, MTS)
- Banking Exams (IBPS, SBI, RBI, etc.)
- Railway Exams (NTPC, Group D)
- Defence Exams
- Campus Placements



THE ENGLISH ALPHABET

A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
N	O	P	Q	R	S	T	U	V	W	X	Y	Z
14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26

Note:

- Counting is always from Left to Right.
- Z is the 26th letter.

TYPES OF QUESTIONS

- 1 Alphabet Position
- 2 Forward / Backward Counting
- 3 Missing Letters in Series
- 4 Number of Letters Between/After/Before
- 5 Coding-Decoding
- 6 Statements & Conclusions
- 7 Word Formation & Dictionary Order



KEY POINTS TO REMEMBER



Understand the basic position of letters.



Identify the pattern or rule carefully.



Apply the correct rule systematically.



Use shortcuts to save time in exams.



Practice more to increase accuracy and speed.





ALPHABET TEST AND LETTER SERIES: RULES, PATTERNS, AND SHORTCUTS



1. FUNDAMENTALS OF ENGLISH ALPHABETICAL SEQUENCE

WHAT IS THE ALPHABETICAL SEQUENCE?

The English alphabet has 26 letters arranged in a fixed order. This order is the basis of many reasoning questions in Alphabet Test and Letter Series.



THE ENGLISH ALPHABET

A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
N	O	P	Q	R	S	T	U	V	W	X	Y	Z
14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26

POSITION OF LETTERS

Letter	From Left	From Right
A	1	26
B	2	25
C	3	24
...	...	...
Z	26	1

From Left: A = 1st, B = 2nd ... Z = 26th
From Right: Z = 1st, Y = 2nd ... A = 26th

KEY POINTS

- There are 26 letters in the English alphabet.
- The sequence is fixed and never changes.
- Counting is always done from Left to Right.
- Position of a letter = Number of letters before it + 1
- Reverse position from right = 27 - Position from left



QUICK FACTS

- Middle letter is 'M' (Position = 13)
- Vowels:
A, E, I, O, U
- Consonants: 21
- Y is a consonant.
- Z is the last letter.



RULES FOR COUNTING LETTERS

1. Forward Counting (Left to Right)

Example: Count 4 letters forward from D.

D E F G H
→

Answer: H

2. Backward Counting (Right to Left)

Example: Count 3 letters backward from G.

G F E D
←

Answer: D

3. Finding Position

Example: What is the position of Q?

A B C D E F G H I J K L M
N O P Q R S T U V W X Y Z
↓
16th

Answer: 16

4. Finding Letter by Position

Example: What is the 19th letter?

19th letter is S

Answer: S

IMPORTANT RELATIONS



Opposite Letters

A ↔ Z, B ↔ Y, C ↔ X ...
(Sum = 27)



Middle Point

M is exactly in the middle (13th position)



Mirror Position

Position from Left + Position from Right = 27



Same Gap

If there are n letters between two letters, the pattern remains same.



Shift Pattern

Adding or subtracting a fixed number to a letter gives another letter.





ALPHABET TEST AND LETTER SERIES: RULES, PATTERNS, AND SHORTCUTS



2. DIRECTIONAL COUNTING RULES (ALPHABET TEST)

THE ENGLISH ALPHABET

A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
N	O	P	Q	R	S	T	U	V	W	X	Y	Z
14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26

KEY IDEA

Counting letters can be done in different directions. Knowing the rules helps to solve questions quickly and accurately.

1. FORWARD COUNTING (Left to Right)



Count letters in the forward direction, from left to right.

Example:

Count 4 letters forward from G.

G	H	I	J	K
7	8	9	10	11

Answer: K

2. BACKWARD COUNTING (Right to Left)



Count letters in the backward direction, from right to left.

Example:

Count 3 letters backward from M.

M	L	K	J
13	12	11	10

Answer: J

3. SKIP COUNTING (Step Counting)



Count letters by skipping a fixed number of letters each time.

Example:

Count by skipping 2 letters from B.

B	D	F	H	J
2	4	6	8	10

Answer: J

4. CYCLIC COUNTING (Return to Start)



After Z, the next letter is A. Counting continues in a cycle.

Example:

Count 3 letters forward from Y.

Y	Z	A	B
25	26	1	2

Answer: B

IMPORTANT RULES

- Total letters in English alphabet = 26
- Counting is always done from Left to Right.
- After Z comes A.
- Before A comes Z.
- Position of a letter from Left = Number of letters before it + 1
- Position of a letter from Right = 27 - Position from Left
- While skipping, only count the letter you land on.

SHORTCUT FORMULA

If you have to find the n^{th} letter forward from a letter:

$$\text{Position of new letter} = (\text{Position of given letter} + n - 1) \bmod 26$$

(if result 0, then 26)

If you have to find the n^{th} letter backward from a letter:

$$\text{Position of new letter} = (\text{Position of given letter} - n + 26) \bmod 26$$

(if result 0, then 26)

EXAMPLES SUMMARY

Type	Rule	Example	Answer
Forward Counting (Left to Right)	Move to the right by given steps.	From C, 5 letters forward. C D E F G H	H
Backward Counting (Right to Left)	Move to the left by given steps.	From T, 4 letters backward. T S R Q	Q
Skip Counting (Step Counting)	Skip fixed number of letters each time.	Skip 2 letters from D. D F H J L	L
Cyclic Counting (Return to Start)	After Z, continue from A.	From X, 5 letters forward. X Y Z A B	B

QUICK TIPS

- ✓ Write the alphabet line mentally.
- ✓ Identify the starting letter position.
- ✓ Move in the required direction.
- ✓ Keep counting carefully.
- ✓ Use formulas for speed and accuracy.





ALPHABET TEST AND LETTER SERIES: RULES, PATTERNS, AND SHORTCUTS



3. MAJOR CLASSIFICATIONS OF LETTER SERIES

Letter Series questions follow certain rules or patterns. Based on the logic used, they are classified into the following major types.



1. FORWARD SERIES (Ascending Order)

Letters are arranged in increasing order.

Example:

A B C D E F ?
1 2 3 4 5 6 7

Answer: G

Rule: +1 (Forward counting)

2. BACKWARD SERIES (Descending Order)

Letters are arranged in decreasing order.

Example:

Z Y X W V ?
26 25 24 23 22 21

Answer: U

Rule: -1 (Backward counting)

3. ALTERNATING SERIES (Forward + Backward)

Letters are arranged by alternating direction.

Example:

A C B D C E D ?
1 3 2 4 3 5 4 6

Answer: F

Rule: +1, -1, +1, -1 ...

4. SKIP SERIES (Step Counting)

Letters are arranged by skipping a fixed number of letters.

Example:

A C E G I ?
1 3 5 7 9 11

Answer: K

Rule: +2 (Skip 1 letter)

5. DOUBLE STEP SERIES (Variable Skip)

Letters are arranged by skipping 2 or more letters.

Example:

A D G J M ?
1 4 7 10 13 16

Answer: P

Rule: +3 (Skip 2 letters)

6. CYCLIC SERIES (Return to Start)

After Z, the series continues from A.

Example:

X Y Z A B C ?
24 25 26 1 2 3 4

Answer: D

Rule: Continue in cycle

7. PALINDROMIC SERIES (Mirror Pattern)

Letters repeat in mirror order.

Example:

A B C D C B A ?
1 2 3 4 3 2 1 ?

Answer: A

Rule: Mirror pattern

8. MIXED PATTERN SERIES (Combination)

Combination of two or more rules or patterns.

Example:

A C F J O ?
1 3 6 10 15 21

Answer: U

Rule: +2, +3, +4, +5, +6 ...

QUICK REFERENCE TABLE

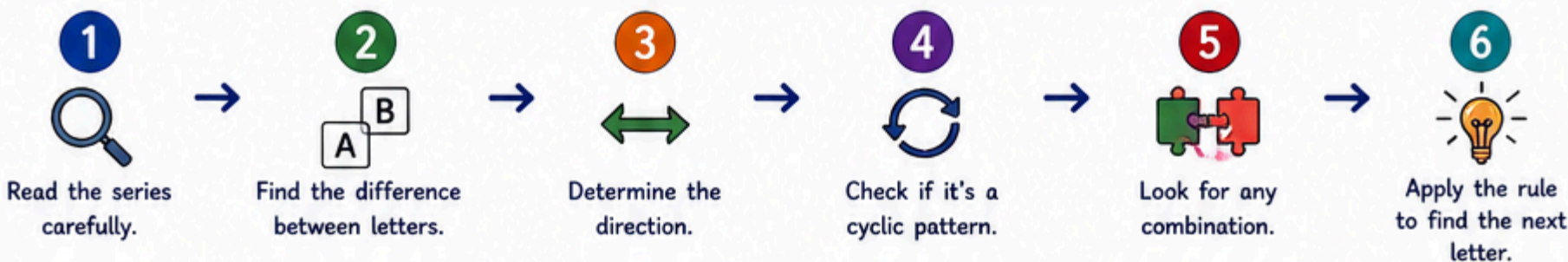
Type of Series	Pattern / Rule	Operation	Example	Next Letter
1 Forward Series	+1	⇒	A B C D E F ?	G
2 Backward Series	-1	⇐	T S R Q P ?	O
3 Alternating Series	+1, -1	⇄	A C B D C E D ?	F
4 Skip Series	+2	⇒	B D F H J ?	L
5 Double Step Series	+3	⇒	C F I L O ?	R
6 Cyclic Series	After Z → A	⇒	W X Y Z A B ?	C
7 Palindromic Series	Mirror	⇄	M N O N M ?	L
8 Mixed Pattern Series	Combination	⇄	A C F J O ?	U

KEY POINTS

- ✓ Identify the pattern first.
- ✓ Find the rule (difference between letters).
- ✓ Check direction (Forward / Backward / Alternating).
- ✓ Look for skip or step value.
- ✓ In cyclic series, remember Z is followed by A.
- ✓ Practice more to identify patterns quickly.



HOW TO APPROACH ANY LETTER SERIES QUESTION





ALPHABET TEST AND LETTER SERIES:

RULES, PATTERNS, AND SHORTCUTS



4. ADVANCED WORD-FORMATION AND ALPHABETICAL ORDER TASKS

These tasks test your ability to form meaningful words, arrange them in alphabetical order, and solve problems based on dictionary order and position.



1. WORD FORMATION FROM GIVEN LETTERS

Form meaningful words using the given set of letters.

Example:
Letters: A, D, E, N

Possible Words:
ADEN, AND, ANE, DEN, DEAN, NED, END, DE, EN, NE



2. WORD FORMATION BASED ON POSITION

Form words using letters at specific positions.

Example:
From the word EARTH, take 1st, 3rd, 5th letters.

E	R	T	H
1	2	3	4
↑		↑	↑

Answer: E T H

3. ALPHABETICAL ORDER (DICTIONARY ORDER)

Arrange words according to dictionary (alphabetical) order.

Example:
Words: MANGO, APPLE, GRAPE, BANANA

Step-by-step:
APPLE < BANANA < GRAPE < MANGO

Answer:
APPLE, BANANA, GRAPE, MANGO



4. DICTIONARY ORDER BETWEEN TWO WORDS

Find how many words will come in dictionary order between the given two words.

Example:
How many words are there in dictionary order between CAT and COW?

Words: CAT, CAV, CAW, CAX, CAY, CAZ, CBA, CBB, ... , COW

Answer: Many (depends on list)

RULES FOR DICTIONARY ORDER

- ✓ Compare first letters.
- ✓ If different → the word with earlier letter comes first.
- ✓ If same → compare second letters.
- ✓ Continue this process until difference is found.
- ✓ A shorter word comes before a longer word if all compared letters are same.

Example:
Compare: CARE and CART

1 st Letter	C	=	C	(Same)
2 nd Letter	A	=	A	(Same)
3 rd Letter	R	=	R	(Same)
4 th Letter	E	<	T	(Different)

So, CARE comes before CART.



5. WORD STARTING / ENDING WITH GIVEN LETTERS

Find words starting or ending with a given letter.

Example:
Words starting with 'B': BALL, BOOK, BOY, BAT, ...
Words ending with 'Y': BOY, DAY, PLAY, SKY, ...



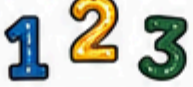
6. COUNT THE NUMBER OF WORDS

Count how many meaningful words can be formed.

Example:
How many 3-letter words can be formed using A, B, C?

Possible Words:
ABC, ACB, BAC, BCA, CAB, CBA

Answer: 6



7. WORD REARRANGEMENT IN ALPHABETICAL ORDER

Arrange the given words in dictionary order.

Example:
Words: SUN, STAR, SKY, SEA

Step-by-step:
SEA < SKY < STAR < SUN

Answer:
SEA, SKY, STAR, SUN



8. ODD ONE OUT (BY ORDER / PATTERN)

Find the word which does not follow the order.

Example:
BAG, BALL, BAT, CAT, BED

Here, CAT is the odd one out because it starts with 'C', others start with 'B'.

Answer: CAT



SHORTCUTS TO SOLVE FAST

- ☆ Always write letters in order to avoid confusion.
- ☆ For dictionary order, compare letter by letter from left to right.
- ☆ Memorize common words to identify patterns quickly.
- ☆ In word formation, start with small words and then longer ones.
- ☆ Practice regularly to improve speed and accuracy.

QUICK REFERENCE TABLE

Task Type	Key Point	Example
Word Formation	Use all or some letters to form words.	A, B, C → ABC, AC, CAB
Position Based	Pick letters at given positions.	TRAIN → 1 st , 3 rd , 5 th = TAN
Alphabetical Order	Dictionary order (A to Z).	APPLE < BANANA < CAT
Count Words	Count possible meaningful combinations.	A, B → AB, BA = 2
Odd One Out	Find the word that breaks the pattern.	BAT, CAT, BAD, BAG





ALPHABET TEST AND LETTER SERIES: RULES, PATTERNS, AND SHORTCUTS



QUICK EXAMINATION FACTS

ALPHABET – A fixed set of 26 letters (A to Z) used to form words and patterns.

LETTER SERIES – A sequence of letters following a rule or pattern.

PATTERN – A logical rule or arrangement that repeats or follows a sequence.

REMEMBER

- Small facts
- Build strong memory
- High scores!

QUICK EXAMINATION FACTS

- The English alphabet has 26 letters from A to Z.

A B C

- A comes before Z in the alphabetical order.

A < Z

- Position of a letter from left = Number of letters before it + 1.

1 2 3

- **Position** of a letter from right = 27 – Position from left.

27

- There are 5 vowels:
A, E, I, O, U.

A E I
O U

- There are 21 consonants.

21

- Y is the 25th letter and a consonant.

25

- **Z** is the last letter and its position is 26.

Z

- After Z comes A in cyclic counting.

Z → A

- Middle letter is 'M' (13th position).

M

- The alphabet is the basis for coding, sequencing and patterns.



- In skip counting, count only the letters you land on.

A → C → E

- In alternating series, direction changes after every step.

→ ← → ←

- In **backward counting**, move from right to left.



- **Double step series** skips 2 letters each time.

A → C → E

- **Mirror pattern** means letters repeat in reverse order.

A B C C B A

- In **dictionary order**, compare left to right.



- If first letters are same, compare second letters.



- **Shorter word comes first** if all letters are same.

CAT
CATALYST

- **Word formation** uses given letters to make meaningful words.



- Total possible 2-letter combinations from 26 letters = 26 × 25.

26 × 25

- Total possible 3-letter combinations from 26 letters = 26 × 25 × 24.

26 × 25 × 24

- Practice improves speed and accuracy.



- **Identify the rule first, then apply it.**



- Use formulas to save time in solving questions.



- Careful reading of the series helps avoid mistakes.



ONE LINE MEMORY TRICKS

26

26 Letters
(A to Z)

+



Fixed
Order

+



Basis of
Patterns

+



Rules Create
Sequences

+



Practice Builds
Memory

=



High
Score





Alphabet Test and Letter Series: Rules, Patterns, and Shortcuts



MCQs – PAGE 1

QUICK REMINDERS

- ★ Total letters in English alphabet = 26 (A to Z)
- ★ Counting Left to Right: A = 1, B = 2, ..., Z = 26
- ★ After Z comes A
- ★ Position from right = 27 – Position from left
- ★ Vowels: A, E, I, O, U (5) Consonants: 21



IMPORTANT RULES

- Forward Series (Ascending Order):
+1, +2, +3, ...
- Backward Series (Descending Order):
-1, -2, -3, ...
- Skip Series (Step Counting):
+n (Skip n – 1 letters)
- Cyclic Series: After Z comes A
- Position Formula: Right Position = 27 – Left Position



1

Q1. Which letter will come 5th to the right of the 9th letter from the left end of the English alphabet?

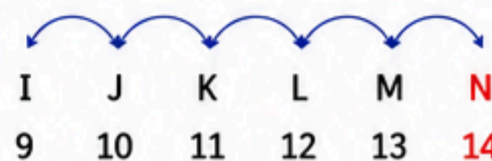
- (a) M (b) N
(c) O (d) P

Correct Answer: (b) N

Explanation:

- 9th letter from the left = I
- Move 5 steps to the right:
I (1), J (2), K (3), L (4), M (5), **N** (6)
- Hence, the answer is N.

Counting to the Right



2

Q2. Which letter will come 4th to the left of the 15th letter from the right end of the alphabet?

- (a) K (b) I
(c) H (d) P

Correct Answer: (c) H

Explanation:

- 15th letter from the right = L
- Counting left:
L (1), K (2), J (3), I (4), **H** (5)
- Hence, the answer is H.

Right to Left Counting



3

Q3. Which letter will come in place of the question mark (?) in the following series?
A, D, G, J, M, ?, S

- (a) P (b) Q
(c) R (d) T

Correct Answer: (a) P

Explanation:

- Pattern: +3 (Skip 2 letters)
- A(1), D(4), G(7), J(10), M(13), **P**(16), S(19)
- Hence, the missing letter is P.

Pattern: +3



4

Q4. Which letter will come in place of the question mark (?) in the following series?
Z, X, V, T, R, ?, N

- (a) Q (b) P
(c) O (d) M

Correct Answer: (b) P

Explanation:

- Pattern: -2 (Skip 1 letter backward)
- Z(26), X(24), V(22), T(20), R(18), **P**(16), N(14)
- Hence, the missing letter is P.

Pattern: -2



5

Q.5) Which letter will come 7th to the right of the letter which is 8th from the left end of the alphabet?

- (a) O (b) P
(c) Q (d) R

Correct Answer: (a) O

Explanation:

- 8th letter from the left = H
- Move 7 steps to the right:
H(1), I(2), J(3), K(4), L(5), M(6), N(7), **O**(8)
- Hence, the answer is O.

Counting to the Right



Tip:

Always count carefully and recheck steps to avoid mistakes.





Alphabet Test and Letter Series: Rules, Patterns, and Shortcuts



MCQs – PAGE 2

QUICK REMINDERS

- ★ Total letters in English alphabet = 26 (A to Z)
- ★ Counting Left to Right: A = 1, B = 2, ..., Z = 26
- ★ After Z comes A
- ★ Position from right = 27 – Position from left
- ★ Vowels: A, E, I, O, U (5) Consonants: 21



IMPORTANT RULES

- Forward Series (Ascending Order):
+1, +2, +3, ...
- Backward Series (Descending Order):
-1, -2, -3, ...
- Skip Series (Step Counting):
+n (Skip n – 1 letters)
- Position Formula: Right Position = 27 – Left Position



6

Q6. Which letter will come in place of the question mark (?) in the following series?
Z, X, U, S, P, ?, K

- (a) N (b) O
(c) M (d) L

Correct Answer: (a) N

Explanation:

- Pattern: -2 (Skip 1 letter backward)
- Z(26), X(24), U(21), S(19), P(16), N(14), K(11)
- Hence, the missing letter is N.

Pattern: -2

Z	X	U	S	P	N	K
26	24	21	19	16	14	11

7

Q7. If the word TRIUMPH is written in reverse alphabetical order, which letter will come in the middle?

- (a) R (b) M
(c) P (d) U

Correct Answer: (c) P

Explanation:

- Letters in TRIUMPH:
T, R, I, U, M, P, H
- Reverse alphabetical order (Z to A):
U, T, R, P, M, I, H
- Middle letter (4th position) is P.

Reverse Alphabetical Order
(Z to A)

U	T	R	P	M	I	H
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

↑
Middle Letter

8

Q8. Complete the following letter series by choosing the correct sequence of letters from the options below:

a _ c d b c _ a c d _ b d a b _

- (a) b, c, d, a (b) b, d, a, c
(c) c, d, a, b (d) d, a, b, c

Correct Answer: (b) b, d, a, c

Explanation:

- The pattern repeats in cycles of 4 letters:
a, b, c, d
- Fill the blanks accordingly:
a b c d b c d a c d a b d a b c
- Hence, the correct sequence is b, d, a, c.

Pattern: Repeat in Cycle

a b c d

9

Q9. Which of the following comes 8th from the right end of the alphabetical order?

- (a) Q (b) R
(c) S (d) T

Correct Answer: (c) S

Explanation:

- Counting from right:
Z(1), Y(2), X(3), W(4), V(5), U(6), T(7), S(8)
- Hence, the 8th letter from the right is S.

Counting from Right

Z	Y	X	W	V	U	T	S
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8

10

Q10. Which letter will come in place of the question mark (?) in the following series?
B, D, C, G, E, K, H, ?

- (a) Q (b) O
(c) N (d) P

Correct Answer: (d) P

Explanation:

- The pattern alternates between:
+2, -1, +4
- Sequence with positions:
B(2) → D(4) [+2]
D(4) → C(3) [-1]
C(3) → G(7) [+4]
G(7) → E(5) [-2]
E(5) → K(11) [+6]
K(11) → H(8) [-3]
H(8) → P(16) [+8]
- Hence, the missing letter is P.

Pattern: +2, -1, +4
(Alternating with increasing steps)

B	D	C	G	E	K	H	P
2	4	3	7	5	11	8	16

+2 -1 +4 -2 +6 -3 +8



Tip:

Look for alternating patterns and changes in step value.





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KNOWLEDGE TODAY,
SUCCESS TOMORROW

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