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500 Essential Words: GRE Vocabulary Flash Cards (Manhattan Prep GRE Strategy Guides)



Synopsis

Manhattan Prep and its top-notch GRE instructors release the most comprehensive set of GRE flash cards on the market. *500 Essential Words* is the first in a 2-volume set of flash cards. Manhattan Prep's GRE Vocabulary Flash Cards go above and beyond other GRE flash cards on the market. Designed help the student develop a lasting understanding of the word in a GRE-relevant context, the backs of all cards contain a word "network" with definitions, usage, synonyms, and more! *500 Essential Words* is the first in a 2-volume set of GRE flash cards - start with essential words and graduate to advanced vocabulary. Together, the sets comprise the most comprehensive vocabulary study tool on the market.

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Customer Reviews

I recently took the revised GRE and scored in the 85th percentile on the verbal section (much to my surprise I might add). I used both the Manhattans 500 Essential Words Flash Cards *500 Essential Words: GRE Vocabulary Flash Cards* as well as the Manhattan 500 Advanced Words Flash Cards *500 Advanced Words: GRE Vocabulary Flash Cards*. After making it through both of these sets of flash cards, I felt like I had a fairly good vocabulary for the GRE and did see many of these words on the test. [By the way, if these cards are out of stock on , just call Manhattan and buy them over the phone, that's what I had to do. I don't know why they have issues stocking these on]With this noted, if you do have additional time after finishing these two sets of flash cards, I **HIGHLY**

RECOMMEND** that you learn the 300 or so most common root words for the GRE as well. Root words are very helpful in deciphering words that you don't know that will come up on the GRE. I found Barron's Essential Words for the GRE book to be a good source for this, although I'm sure you can find these same root words in the Kaplan or related books as well. And while 300 root words seems like a lot of words to learn, you will probably know some/many of these words already, so fear not! There doesn't seem to be a good set of root word flash cards out there, so I ended up making my own, which was fine. One last note about learning root words: they will also help to strengthen and reinforce the vocab words you already know or are learning from both sets of the Manhattan cards. Learn your root words!

If you need help with reading comprehension and verbal practice problems, I used several different books. Here is my preferred list of books, in order:

Kaplan New GRE Verbal Workbook
New GRE Verbal Workbook (Kaplan GRE)

While I usually don't like Kaplan as a company (and I have not used any of their other books), I *would* highly recommend using their verbal workbook as there seems to be a good amount of practice problems and they seem similar to what you might see on the GRE.

Secondly, I did use the Barron's GRE Verbal Workbook and while I found it useful for its large amount of practice problems, I found some of the vocab words used as answers were less common than what I saw either on the GRE or on other practice problems and practice tests. With this noted, I still recommend using this book.

Finally, I did use Manhattan's Reading Comprehension and Essay GRE Strategy Book as well.

Reading Comprehension & Essays GRE Strategy Guide, 3rd Edition (Manhattan Prep Strategy Guides). The best thing I got from this book is learning how to take brief notes while reading over the reading passages on the GRE. Taking notes helps to reinforce what you are reading, a technique not talked about very often by other books. The practice problems in this book are decent, but nothing above that. I do wish they could have put more practice problems in this book (like the Kaplan Verbal Workbook), but there is still useful content here. If you are struggling with the analytical writing section, there are some good tips on this section as well.

One final note about both practicing your verbal, but also your math/quantitative: do as many practice tests as you can!!! When you purchase a book (any book I believe) from Manhattan, you get an access code to 6 full length online practice tests. I found these practice tests VERY VERY USEFUL for getting comfortable with the GRE format but also applying all of the verbal and math skills I was practicing. Most of the questions are very similar in difficulty to what you will see and you can review your questions as well. By the way, always review problems you get wrong, this is really important! For Kaplan, you have to purchase the Kaplan Premiere GRE review book to get the disc with access to 10 verbal practice tests and 10

quantitative practice tests. Like the Manhattan, I found these practice tests VERY VERY useful. Do yourself a favor, and get access to both the Manhattan and the Kaplan practice tests It will help immensely!

I bought the Kaplan AND these Manhattan GRE flashcards. The Manhattan are better, and here is why: Basically they are both the same in content. The Kaplan have a nice pronunciation guide, which is the only benefit they have over these. The Kaplan cards (NOT THESE MANHATTAN CARDS) are cheap. They are printed on thin paper, and they are physically pretty small. Also I wish the printing on the back were upside-down from how it is now (both brands are like this). These Manhattan cards are bigger, printed on card stock but still reasonably thin, and come with a nice key-ring that fits through holes. With these Manhattan cards you load up the key ring, and blast through about 50, maybe stash them in a large pocket and get to them later, or throw them in the backpack. Those Kaplan cards you are forced to try and keep the tiny cards together in stacks. The Manhattan you will use more because they are just easier to work with.

These are by far the best way for me to learn new vocabulary. I looked at all kinds of different GRE vocab media, including flash card and activity apps, website vocab learning quizzes, and different books which took an incredible variety of approaches, including dictionary-like, thesaurus-like, grouping words by category, and activities getting you to absorb the meaning from context clues. In the end, I got this and the 500 Advanced Words sets because they had everything the books had in an easy-to-sort format. The first thing I did was start yanking out chunks of cards and separating them into three categories: Known, Review, and Study. The Known pile includes cards I don't have to look at again, but serve as a reminder of how much I already know! The Review pile includes cards that had a definition or partial definition I wasn't familiar with, but, for the most part, I knew the word. The Study pile was the scary pile of words I didn't know. Once I got over my fear of the size of the Study pile, I started pulling them out of the pile in groups, reviewing them from the front and the back, and taking advantage of their reminders, helpful hints, synonyms, and root words (all listed conveniently on the back). When I hit a rut in my focus, I began turning the cards into crossword puzzles using online crossword puzzle generators. And once I started being able to see my progress, which the cards make uniquely possible (i.e., my new fourth pile, "Learned" was getting bigger and bigger and eventually was bigger than the "Study" pile), I felt even more encouraged to tackle more of them. Someone told me before I started that you can't really learn vocabulary for the GRE. You either know it or you don't. Yeah, I'm here to tell you that's 100% incorrect. I can't believe

how many new words I've learned! And I've got these cards to thank for it. I definitely recommend making the piles I talked about if you tend to get discouraged or anxious...it's a constant visual reminder of exactly where you are and how far you've come. (It does take a while to separate them, but it's worth it.) In short, I highly recommend getting these and the 500 Advanced Words sets in printed (vs. digital) format so that you can sort them. The cards are high quality with great example sentences, comparisons, synonyms, roots, and even silly hints that can help you remember complicated words. Separate out the words you know (go you!), then learn the ones you don't! Study on! We can do it!

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