



FRS Ability Tests

Briefing Guide

This briefing guide is for people taking the FRS Ability Tests. It explains what the tests are, why they're used, and tips on what to expect.



Why am I being asked to take these tests?

The FRS Ability Tests measure an important quality in firefighters: cognitive ability. This is linked to your ability to reason and make good judgement calls, particularly in complex or fast-paced scenarios.

The tests have been designed by psychologists at Test Partnership, based on established best-practice guidelines. Research has shown that people who do well in these tests are more likely to make successful firefighters. The FRS Ability Tests are an important step in understanding your fit for the role. They are an objective and fair way to measure someone's potential.

Typically the FRS Ability Tests will form part of a wider selection process, all designed to identify who has the right kind of skills and abilities to become a successful firefighter.

The FRS Ability Tests include three types of test: numerical, verbal, and mechanical. Depending on the role you are applying to, you may be asked to take one, two, or all three types of test.



What are the FRS Ability Tests?

The FRS Ability Tests are a set of ability tests designed measure three important elements of cognitive ability, which are:

- Numerical reasoning;
- Verbal reasoning; and
- Mechanical reasoning

The FRS Ability Tests have been professionally developed for the Fire and Rescue Service. They measure specific cognitive abilities, based on established research. Each person's scores are calculated relative to how well other people do on the tests.

The questions are designed so that everyone has a fair chance. There is no benefit to having any particular experience or specialist knowledge.



What do the questions look like?

Each of the three types of test (numerical, verbal, and mechanical) are measuring different things. The format of each test is illustrated in Figure 1, and is described here below:

Numerical reasoning

The numerical test has six pages of questions. On each page, there are three questions. So that's 18 questions all together. Each page has a time limit of three minutes.

Each page will have some numerical data, for example it might be a table or a graph. Each page will have three statements relating to that numerical data. For each of the three statements, you must select one of the following answers:

True (the statement is definitely true based solely on the information provided);

False (the statement is definitely false based solely on the information provided); or

Cannot Say (it cannot be determined whether the statement is true or false without further information).

You are allowed to use a **calculator** during this test, so make sure you have one to hand.

Verbal reasoning

The verbal test has five pages of questions. On each page, there are four questions. So that's 20 questions all together. Each page has a time limit of three minutes.

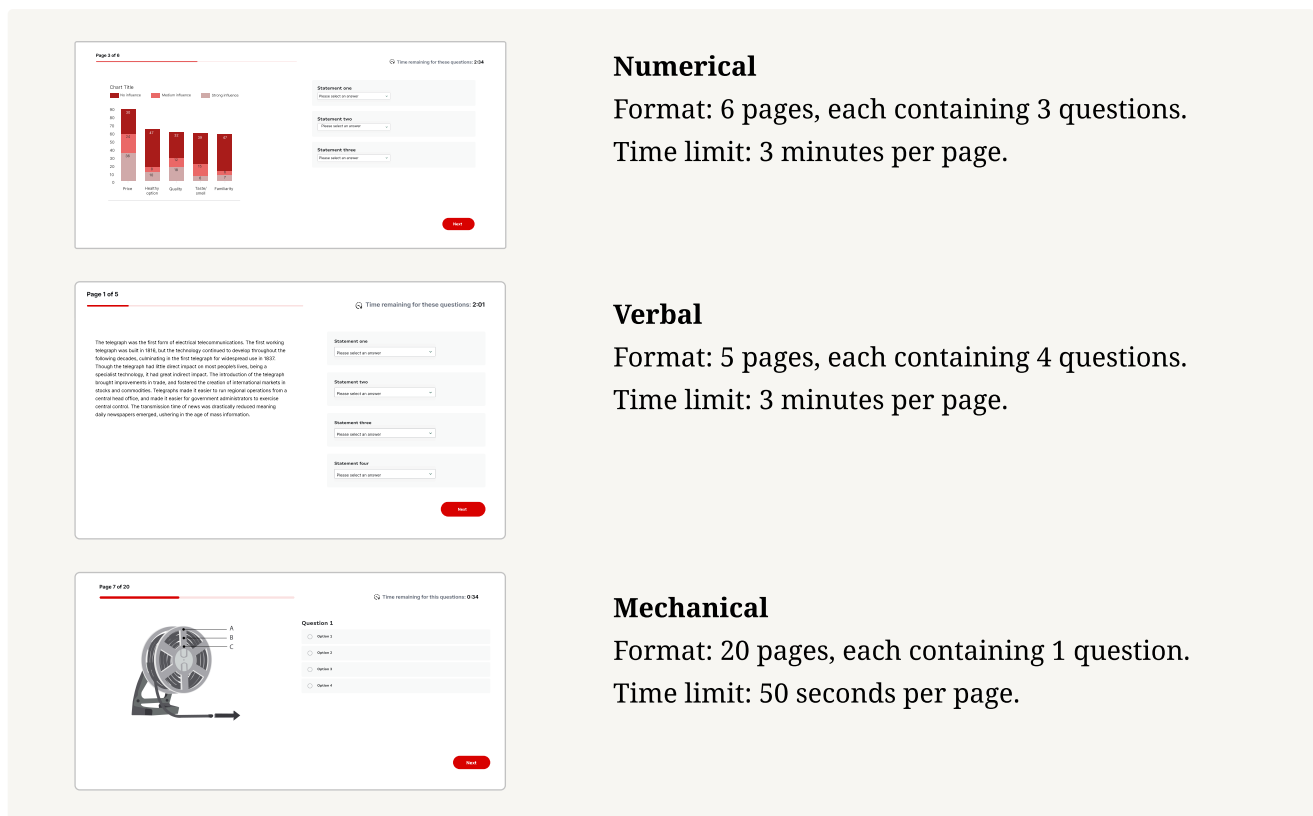
Each page will have a passage of written information, and four statements about that passage. For each of the four statements, you must select one of the following answers:

- **True** (the statement is definitely true based solely on the information contained in the passage)
- **False** (the statement is definitely false based solely on the information contained in the passage)
- **Cannot Say** (it cannot be determined whether the statement is true or false without further information).

Mechanical reasoning

The mechanical test contains 20 pages. On each page there is just one question, and there is a time limit of 50 seconds per page.

In each question you will be shown a mechanical situation, which may involve mechanical concepts such as forces, movement, temperature, or pressure. You need to read the question and select the best answer from the options available.



The figure displays three examples of questions from the FRS Ability Test, each in a separate screenshot.

- Numerical:** The first screenshot shows a bar chart titled 'Chart Title' with a legend for 'Sales volume', 'Sales revenue', and 'Profit margin'. The x-axis lists 'Price', 'Quality', 'Value', and 'Family'. To the right, there are three 'Statement' boxes, each with a dropdown menu for the answer. A 'Next' button is at the bottom right.
- Verbal:** The second screenshot shows a text passage about the telegraph. Below the text are four 'Statement' boxes, each with a dropdown menu for the answer. A 'Next' button is at the bottom right.
- Mechanical:** The third screenshot shows a diagram of a mechanical device with parts labeled A, B, and C. Below the diagram is a 'Question 1' box with four radio button options (Answer 1, Answer 2, Answer 3, Answer 4). A 'Next' button is at the bottom right.

Figure 1: the three types of FRS Ability Test



Test time limits

The FRS Ability Tests all have time limits. Remember, if you need reasonable adjustments such as extra time, contact the test administrator before your test.

Each page has a time limit, and the time remaining is shown at the top of the page.

When the time limit on each page runs out, the test will automatically move on to the next page. As soon as a page has loaded, the timer will begin to count down for that page, and will continue to do so even if you close your browser or lose internet connection.

If you close your browser midway through a test, you are able to log back in. However the timer will have continued to count down while you were away.

When the time limit on each page runs out, any answers you have selected will be automatically submitted, and any unattempted questions will count as incorrect. So you don't need to click 'next' on every page, you can just let the timer run out if you wish.



Before the test

You don't need to any prior knowledge before taking an ability test. However here are some tips to make sure you perform to the best of your ability.

Tips for the FRS Ability Tests:

- Try to find a time and a place where you will not be disturbed or distracted.
- If you can't answer a question in time, use your best guess.
- Take note of how much time you will have per page.
- Use a laptop or desktop computer. The tests do run on tablets and smart phones, but larger screens will give you the best chance of quickly taking in all the information.
- When you receive your login details, you will get access to example questions. We recommend you try these example questions before starting your real test.
- In addition to the example questions, there are practice tests towards the end of our preparation page here: <https://www.testpartnership.com/preparation-frs.html>
- If it would help to make adjustments to your assessment, let the test administrator before starting your test.
- If you normally wear glasses, have these to hand.
- If you normally use assistive technologies, such as screen reading software, check your preferred setup is compatible using our example questions.
- Try to stay calm. If you've taken some example questions, and know what to expect, there's no need to be anxious.

Tips specific to the numerical test:

- Have to hand a calculator you are familiar with. This will help you perform calculations quickly.
- It will help to have some rough paper for your workings.
- Remember this is not a maths test, so don't worry if you didn't enjoy maths at school. This test is measuring your ability to think clearly and logically with numerical data.

Tips specific to the verbal test:

- It's important to base your answers only on the information given in the passage of text. Don't rely on assumptions you think might be the case; it has to be based on what the passage is telling you.

Tips specific to the mechanical test:

- If you can't see an answer option that fully satisfies your analysis, pick the answer that most closely matches it.



Can I use AI to help me take the assessment?

No. Using AI tools would not give an accurate representation of your genuine ability. The Fire and Rescue Service is interested in learning about you and your suitability for becoming a firefighter; they are not interested in answers from bots.

The FRS Ability Tests have monitoring software which picks up on suspicious test activity for manual review. Everyone who passes their online test may be invited to take a short verification test in-person at a later stage of the selection process. So the best advice is try your best and answer as yourself.



Accessibility

The FRS Ability Tests have been designed to be fair and inclusive for everyone.

When the tests were developed, they were trialled on thousands of people from mixed groups. Questions were only approved if the research showed that they do not unfairly disadvantage any particular group of people.

If you feel reasonable adjustments would allow you to perform at your full potential, please contact the test administrator before starting your real test. It's always best to ask, and your situation can be discussed in confidence.

The tests are compatible with most modern internet browsers on desktops, laptops, tablets, and smartphones, however we recommend using a desktop or laptop computer for the FRS Ability Tests. This will give you the best chance of quickly seeing all the information on each page. If your device is not compatible with the assessment, a warning message will appear before your test begins.

The test interface is compatible with popular screen readers including JAWS. However, content contained within images inherently is not readable by screen readers. So screen reading software will not help with the charts and graphs in the numerical test. Nor will it be able to describe the situations visually represented in the mechanical test. If you are partially sighted or usually use a screen reader, please contact the test administrator before your test.

If you usually use assistive technology or peripheral devices, we recommend you check your preferred setup on our practice questions towards the end of this page:

<https://www.testpartnership.com/preparation-frs.html>

The test instructions and content have been designed to be clear and concise. For example the questions avoid double-negatives. If you are unclear on anything, please contact the assessment administrator who will be happy to help.



During the test

Each test starts with an instructions page. Make sure you read and understand the instructions before proceeding. If you're unsure about anything, check with the test administrator or the contact in charge of the recruitment process.

You can take each test in turn; you don't have to take one test immediately after another. So feel free to take a break before moving onto the next test.

If your internet drops during your test or you are logged out, you can come back to it using the same link and same login details. However, any answers you had selected on the page you were on will be lost when you return. Your answers to previous pages will have been saved. So check you have a stable internet connection before you start.

Finally; stay calm and focused, and **good luck!**