

1 SOURCE LAW

LOGIC GAMES – INTRODUCTION

Overview.

Analytical Reasoning (more commonly known as Logic Games) is regarded popularly as the most feared section on the LSAT. But at 1SL, we want you to see it as we do: the most fun. Logic Games are puzzles. They test your ability to quickly integrate a set of complex rules and infer hidden insights about the relationships between those rules.

In the LSAT, you will have 35 minutes to solve 4 Logic Games, averaging 8 minutes and 45 seconds per game. But some (e.g., linear sequencing) will eventually take you much less time, while others may take you more. The 1SL approach to Logic Games will simplify this section and, hopefully, make it fun. As always, if you have questions or concerns, ask your tutor.

Approach.

Step 1: Focus on the Rules. Time constraints will deceive you into believing you need to rush to the questions. This will slow you down. The only way you can solve a Logic Game is to fully understand the rules and the relationships between the rules.

Reading the rules is not enough. You must *actively* read each rule. Interrogate its meaning. Understand it clearly—what it means and what it doesn't. Rushing can be disastrous. Slowing down and addressing each rule deliberately will prevent a misunderstanding you fail to realize until question three.

Step 2: Diagramming. Only you can know how much diagramming you will need to solve a Logic Game. And only practice will tell you how much diagramming is useful for you and each game type. Each student is different, and each game is different. The 1SL curriculum will expose you to plenty of Logic Games so that you can experiment with different degrees of diagramming. Together, we will find the strategy that works best for you.

We do encourage all students to engage in at least minimal, short-hand diagramming if for no other reason than to facilitate active reading of the rules. Diagram each rule and, if conditional, its contrapositive. Refer to the 1SL Logic Games Diagramming Worksheets for practice diagramming different types of Logic Games.

Although we advise against engaging with the questions until Step 4, we acknowledge one exception: The first question of most games will ask you which of its answer choices is a possible solution to the game. As you diagram the rules and discover, for instance, that Harry cannot teach on Fridays, look through the answer choices of that first question and mark out any that have Harry teaching on Friday. Repeat this process for each rule as you diagram it. Usually, doing so will eliminate a couple of wrong answer choices.

Step 3: Look for Inferential Insights. Before turning to the questions¹—yes, still; just trust us—you need to spend some more intentional time with the rules. This Step is **The Key** to the Logic Games section. If

¹Except for the circumstance described under Step 2.

you miss several questions on any particular Logic Game, odds are you rushed to the questions and did not take the time to study the interactions of the rules.

The LSAC knows that most test takers can understand the basic setup of the game and its rules. So, the questions are designed to reward inferential insights. Think of inferential insights as hidden rules that are not provided by the test but, instead, generated by the interaction of two or more rules. These inferential insights can break open the game. You might find a hidden rule that shows you that there are only two possible iterations of the game-specific diagram, which will make the questions a breeze. Most of your time reviewing Logic Games with your tutor will be spent on Steps 2 and 3, helping you identify inferential insights and hidden rules.

Take plenty of time at this step. You need time to understand how each rule interacts with the others, uncover the hidden rules, and process how the hidden rules change your diagram. Get in the habit now of front-loading your time on Logic Games. As you begin your prep, consider spending 40 – 50 percent of your allotted 8 minutes and 45 seconds per game on Steps 1 – 3 (processing the rules, diagramming the game, and looking for inferential insights). This time will decrease throughout your LSAT prep as you become familiar with game types, diagramming strategies, and the process for making inferential insights and detecting hidden rules.

Step 4: Questions. The first question will likely ask you which of its answer choices is a solution to the game. Hopefully, because of your thorough diagramming, you will have narrowed the choices down to two or three, and the hidden rules will help you quickly find the right answer.

Beyond the first question, we suggest prioritizing questions that require you to build question-specific diagrams. Unlike game-specific diagrams, question-specific diagrams add a new requirement to the game-specific diagram. You will recognize these questions by their hypothetical prompts: “Suppose Nora must teach on Wednesday. Which of the following must be true?” Draw a new diagram with Nora on Wednesday and solve as much of the question-specific diagram as you can. Doing so will provide new insights (e.g., if Nora is on Wednesday, then Xavier is forced to Monday). These relationships will yield new hidden rules and provide templates of possible solutions that you can use to answer the more general questions. One or two question-specific diagrams will help you swiftly move through the more theoretical questions by capturing more of the universe of possibilities in additional diagrams.

Practice.

The only way to succeed on the LSAT is practice. The same is true of Logic Games. You need to familiarize yourself with as many Logic Games as you can before test day so that you recognize each game type and are able to swiftly move through the steps:

1. understand the rules;
2. create a game-specific diagram;
3. make inferential insights and uncover hidden rules, fine-tuning the game-specific diagram as needed; and
4. prioritize questions that require question-specific diagrams.

Return often to Logic Games you have already solved to practice diagramming and inferring insights. When in doubt, ask your tutor. We’re experts and enjoy this stuff. And soon, you will too.