

CBSE Class 10 Maths Sample Papers: How to Use Them to Actually Improve

Two-page summary of the examfront Learning Hub guide.

What a sample paper is

A sample paper is a practice question paper built to match the real CBSE board exam — same structure, sections, marks distribution and question style. CBSE publishes official sample papers (usually with marking schemes) on its academic website each year. Start with the official set; use publisher papers only for extra practice afterwards.

The paper you are practising for

Section	Question type	Marks
A	Multiple Choice Questions	$20 \times 1 = 20$
B	Very Short Answer	$5 \times 2 = 10$
C	Short Answer	$6 \times 3 = 18$
D	Long Answer	$4 \times 5 = 20$
E	Case-based	$3 \times 4 = 12$
Total (38 questions, 3 hours)		80

The Sample Paper Cycle (core "formula")

Attempt → Review → Categorise → Revise → Reattempt

- 1. Attempt the paper in one sitting: 3 hours, no notes, no breaks.
- 2. Review against the marking scheme as strictly as an examiner — method marks only for shown working.
- 3. Categorise every lost mark by cause: concept gap, forgotten formula, misread question, careless calculation, or time pressure.
- 4. Revise only the weak areas this paper exposed.
- 5. Reattempt similar questions (or the paper later) to confirm the fix took.

Key Takeaways

- ✓ The score is not the point — what the paper teaches you is.
- ✓ Sample papers reveal real readiness, train 3-hour pacing, and show exactly where marks leak.
- ✓ Step 3 (categorising mistakes) is what separates students who improve from those who plateau.
- ✓ Quality beats quantity: 5 papers run through the full cycle beat 15 solved and forgotten.
- ✓ Start once most of the syllabus is covered; increase frequency as the exam approaches.

Worked example: running one paper through the cycle

Priya attempts an official sample paper in one 3-hour sitting and scores 58/80. Instead of moving on, she categorises the 22 lost marks:

Cause of lost marks	Marks	Where	Fix
Concept gap	8	Q34 (Heights & Distances), Q37 case study	Re-learn angle of depression; redo NCERT Ex 9.1
Forgot formula	4	Q28 (mode of grouped data)	Formula sheet: $\text{Mode} = l + ((f_1 - f_0)/(2f_1 - f_0 - f_2)) \times h$
Careless arithmetic	5	Q22, Q31 (sign error, ÷ slip)	Slow down; re-check each line in Section C
Time pressure	5	Q36–38 left incomplete	Cap Section A at 20 min; attempt Section E before D

What she learns: 10 of 22 lost marks (careless + time) have nothing to do with maths knowledge. Only 8 need actual re-learning. Her revision plan is now precise: one chapter, one formula, one habit, one timing rule — instead of "revise everything".

Reattempt: A week later, on a second paper, she scores 69/80. Careless and time losses drop from 10 to 3 marks. The cycle repeats with the new mistake list.

Practise sample papers with examfront

Turn every paper into real marks — examfront shows you exactly where your marks leak and why.

- ✓ Free Chapter 1 — start practising at no cost
- ✓ Mistake identification — see the pattern behind every lost mark
- ✓ Anytime tests — practise whenever you are ready
- ✓ Weekly tests — build exam stamina and pacing
- ✓ Mock tests before the exam — full papers on the latest CBSE pattern

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