

# SBI PO Syllabus 2026

State Bank of India — State Bank of India — Probationary Officer

|                         |                                                                                                           |
|-------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Vacancies</b>        | Announced yearly for direct entry to SBI's Probationary Officer cadre                                     |
| <b>Age Limit</b>        | 21–30 years (relaxation per government norms for SC/ST/OBC/PwBD/ex-servicemen)                            |
| <b>Qualification</b>    | Graduation in any discipline from a recognised university (final-year candidates may apply provisionally) |
| <b>Application Fee</b>  | ■750 (General/OBC/EWS). SC/ST/PwBD candidates are exempted.                                               |
| <b>Official Website</b> | sbi.co.in                                                                                                 |
| <b>Last Reviewed</b>    | 1 Jul 2026                                                                                                |

## Overview

SBI PO is the direct-entry route into the Probationary Officer cadre of India's largest public sector bank, conducted independently of the IBPS process. Selection runs through Prelims (qualifying), Mains (which includes both an objective test and a descriptive paper), and a final Group Exercise & Interview stage. SBI PO is widely regarded as more competitive than IBPS PO given SBI's brand reputation, career growth prospects and typically fewer vacancies relative to applicant volume, and its Mains cut-offs tend to run higher than IBPS PO's as a result.

## What's New in the 2026 Cycle

- Conducted independently by SBI, separate from the IBPS Common Recruitment Process.
- Mains includes a Data Analysis & Interpretation section with a notably higher difficulty level than most other bank PO exams.
- Final selection stage includes a Group Exercise in addition to the Personal Interview, unlike IBPS PO's single-interview format.
- SBI PO cut-offs have historically run higher than IBPS PO's given the bank's brand pull and typically tighter vacancy-to-applicant ratio.

## Exam Pattern

### Preliminary Examination

Mode: Online, objective MCQ | Duration: 60 minutes (20 minutes per section)

| Section               | Questions | Marks |
|-----------------------|-----------|-------|
| English Language      | 30        | 30    |
| Quantitative Aptitude | 35        | 35    |
| Reasoning Ability     | 35        | 35    |

**Negative marking:** 0.25 mark deducted per wrong answer | **Nature:** Qualifying only — marks not added to final merit.

## Main Examination — Objective Test

Mode: Online, objective MCQ | Duration: 3 hours

| Section                           | Questions | Marks |
|-----------------------------------|-----------|-------|
| Reasoning & Computer Aptitude     | 45        | 60    |
| Data Analysis & Interpretation    | 35        | 60    |
| General/Economy/Banking Awareness | 40        | 40    |
| English Language                  | 35        | 40    |

**Negative marking:** 0.25 mark deducted per wrong answer | **Nature:** Counted for final merit alongside the descriptive test.

## Main Examination — Descriptive Test

Mode: Online, typed descriptive | Duration: 30 minutes

| Section                        | Questions | Marks |
|--------------------------------|-----------|-------|
| English Letter Writing & Essay | 2         | 50    |

**Negative marking:** Not applicable | **Nature:** Counted for final merit.

## Group Exercise & Interview

Mode: Group activity followed by a board interview | Duration: —

| Section        | Questions | Marks |
|----------------|-----------|-------|
| Group Exercise | —         | 20    |
| Interview      | —         | 30    |

**Negative marking:** Not applicable | **Nature:** Counted for final merit.

# SBI PO — Detailed Subject-Wise Syllabus

## English Language

*Comprehension-heavy — building reading speed matters as much as grammar accuracy.*

- Reading comprehension
- Cloze test
- Para jumbles
- Error spotting
- Fill in the blanks
- Vocabulary — synonyms, antonyms
- Sentence rearrangement

## Quantitative Aptitude (Prelims)

*Standard bank-Prelims difficulty — accuracy under the 20-minute sectional timer is the main challenge.*

- Simplification & approximation
- Number series
- Data interpretation
- Arithmetic — percentage, ratio, average, profit & loss
- Time, speed & distance, time & work

## Reasoning Ability (Prelims) / Reasoning & Computer Aptitude (Mains)

*SBI's puzzles are consistently rated among the toughest across bank exams — dedicated puzzle practice pays off disproportionately.*

- Puzzles & seating arrangement (high-difficulty in Mains)
- Syllogism & inequality
- Coding-decoding & blood relations
- Input-output & data sufficiency
- Computer basics — hardware, software, networking

## Data Analysis & Interpretation (Mains)

*Historically the most difficult section in SBI PO Mains — selective, accurate attempts beat exhaustive but error-prone ones.*

- Advanced/mixed DI — caselets, tabular, graphical, missing data
- Data sufficiency
- Probability, permutation-combination
- Quadratic equations at Mains-level difficulty

## General/Economy/Banking Awareness (Mains)

*Rewards steady daily current-affairs habits more than last-minute revision, given its broad scope.*

- Current affairs — national & international
- Banking & financial awareness
- RBI monetary policy & regulations
- Government schemes
- Static GK relevant to banking

## Descriptive Test — Letter & Essay Writing

*Worth real marks (50) — practise SBI-specific letter/essay formats, not just generic writing.*

- Formal letter writing on banking/professional topics
- Essay writing on current or banking-related themes
- Structured, concise professional writing

## Selection Process

- 1 Preliminary Examination — qualifying stage.

- 2 Main Examination — objective test plus descriptive test; counted for final merit.
- 3 Group Exercise & Interview — final stage before selection.
- 4 Final merit based on combined Mains (excluding Prelims) and Group Exercise & Interview scores.

## Salary & Job Profile

SBI PO starting basic pay is approximately ₹48,480, broadly comparable to IBPS PO's structure, with an in-hand salary generally in the ₹75,000–₹80,000 per month range depending on posting location and applicable allowances, plus SBI-specific perks and career progression benefits.

## Best Books for Preparation

- Quantitative Aptitude for Competitive Examinations — R.S. Aggarwal
- A Modern Approach to Verbal & Non-Verbal Reasoning — R.S. Aggarwal
- Objective General English — S.P. Bakshi (Arihant)
- Banking Awareness & Financial Awareness — Arihant/Disha Publications

## Previous Cut-off Trends (Approximate)

SBI PO Mains cut-offs have historically run higher than IBPS PO's, reflecting the bank's brand pull and typically tighter vacancy-to-applicant ratio, but the exact figure shifts every cycle based on paper difficulty and vacancy count. Always check SBI's official cut-off release for exact figures.

## Preparation Tips

- Dedicate extra practice specifically to SBI-style puzzles — they're consistently rated tougher than other bank exams' formats.
- Since SBI PO cut-offs run higher than IBPS PO's, aim meaningfully above last year's cut-off rather than treating it as a safe target.
- Practise the Group Exercise format specifically — many otherwise strong candidates underperform simply from unfamiliarity with group tasks.
- Keep banking and economy current affairs revision continuous through the Mains-to-interview gap, not just before Mains.

## Exam Day Guidelines

- Carry the Call Letter, a valid original photo ID, and a passport-size photograph.
- Reach the venue at least an hour before reporting time for biometric verification and document checks.
- No electronic devices are allowed inside the exam hall at any stage.
- For the Group Exercise & Interview stage, practise structured group-discussion participation, not just individual interview answers.

## Frequently Asked Questions

### Is SBI PO the same exam as IBPS PO?

No — SBI conducts its own independent recruitment process for its Probationary Officer cadre, separate from the IBPS Common Recruitment Process used by other public sector banks.

### What is the Group Exercise in SBI PO selection?

It's a group-based activity conducted alongside the Personal Interview at the final stage, assessing collaborative and communication skills in addition to individual interview performance.

**Are SBI PO Prelims marks counted in the final result?**

No, Prelims is purely a qualifying stage; final merit is based on the Main Examination (objective + descriptive) plus Group Exercise & Interview scores.

**Is SBI PO harder than IBPS PO?**

SBI PO is generally considered more competitive due to SBI's brand reputation and typically higher cut-offs, though both exams share a broadly similar syllabus and pattern structure.

**Is there negative marking in SBI PO?**

Yes, 0.25 marks are deducted for every wrong answer in the objective sections of both Prelims and Mains.

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Compiled and reviewed by Syllabus Hub against the official State Bank of India notification as of 1 Jul 2026. Exam patterns, vacancies and dates are subject to change — always cross-check with the official notification at [sbi.co.in](https://sbi.co.in) before applying. © 2026 Syllabus Hub.