

## Aptitude tests

"I do feel there's a kind of subtle racism. Many people seem to think that I can't speak the language or that I speak it so strangely that my thinking, my intelligence, must be limited, too." **Rachad Kanawati**, Syria

"You have to know the language. Otherwise, you won't go anywhere. There's no free lunch, but you can learn. You have to read a lot and speak as often as you can with other people."  
**Preethy Vaddakkadath**, India

### Languages - the key to passing aptitude tests

Everyone takes the same aptitude tests. It doesn't matter if you attended school in Switzerland or have only been living here for two or three years.

The aptitude test requires good language skills for any subject because you need to understand the exercises before you can do them.

#### For example:

##### Rule of three

3 gardeners work for a period of 4 days to clear a plot of land. How long will it take for twice the number of people to work on the same plot of land?

Correct answer: 2 days

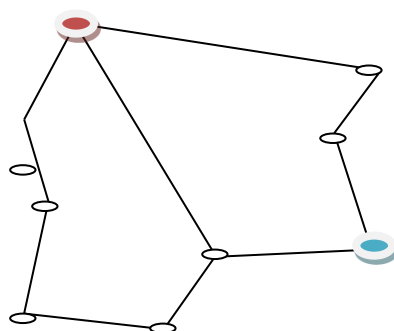
##### Basic math

Sonja and Larissa compare their bank accounts. Sonja's account balance is CHF 1,394 less than Larissa's. Larissa has CHF 9,341. How much money does Sonja have in her bank account?

Correct answer: CHF 7,947

##### Basic math and logic

You would like to take the train from point A (red dot) to point B (blue dot). You will have to pay CHF 1.80 for each leg of the journey (i.e. line between two points). Which route do you choose and how much will your train ticket cost you?



Correct answer: The fastest route involves only two legs. The train ticket will cost CHF 3.60.

## Number combinations

Mark all numbers of which the first digit is an uneven number and the second is an even one.

32 23 44 51 62 74 80 15 92 14 27 18

Correct answer: 32 23 44 51 62 74 80 15 92 14 27 18

## Languages

You need to be able to understand the language in order to answer the questions. Questions designed specifically to test language skills are even more challenging. Here, pupils are not graded on how well they understand the language but rather on how well they are able to use it.

### Syntax

Fill in each gap with an appropriate verb.

If you want to \_\_\_\_\_ for an apprenticeship position, then you need to \_\_\_\_\_ a complete application file. This file will \_\_\_\_\_ a cover letter, a CV, certificates from the last three school years, reports from pre-vocational traineeships and the results of aptitude tests. Many host companies \_\_\_\_\_ their first selection on whether the application file is complete or not. If important documents are missing, then they will usually \_\_\_\_\_ the applicant a letter informing him or her that the application has been rejected. Some companies may be a bit more lenient and \_\_\_\_\_ the applicant to \_\_\_\_\_ them with the missing documents instead.

Correct answer (note that in this exercise, there may be alternatives/different verbs which would also be considered correct for some gaps):

If you want to **apply** for an apprenticeship position, then you need to **submit** a complete application file. This file will **include** a cover letter, a CV, certificates from the last three school years, reports from pre-vocational traineeships and the results of aptitude tests. Many host companies **base** their first selection on whether the application file is complete or not. If important documents are missing, then they will usually **send** the applicant a letter informing him or her that the application has been rejected. Some companies may be a bit more lenient and **ask** the applicant to **provide** them with the missing documents instead.

### Unscrambling sentences

Write a sentence that contains all of the words below.

soon - application file - the - missing - please - documents - from - us - the - as - send - possible - as

Correct answer:

Please send us the missing documents from the application file as soon as possible.

if - school years - find - what - three - my - last - I - do - should - grades certificate - can't - I - from - the?

Correct answer:

What should I do if I can't find my grades certificate from the last three school years?

have - why - done - explain - pre-vocational traineeship! - you - not - cover letter - in - yet - a - please - your

Correct answer:

Please explain in your cover letter why you have not yet done a pre-vocational traineeship!

### Which words do not fit in the sequence?

Group 1:	run	walk	fly	stroll	march
Group 2:	beech	rose	alder	oak	spruce
Group 3:	clueless	friendly	nice	kind	charming

Correct answer:

Group 1:	run	walk	fly	stroll	march
Group 2:	beech	rose	alder	oak	spruce
Group 3:	clueless	friendly	nice	kind	charming

## Reading comprehension

Marjam is confused. A few days ago she sent her application file for an apprenticeship position that she was really interested in. She was very confident since she also knew that she was very well-suited for the position. She had gone to great trouble, had done lots of research and had gathered a considerable amount of information about the company. She had scanned all of her documents and sent the entire application file to the company via e-mail. And now this! Only a short e-mail message: "We have received your application. Please be patient, we will get back to you." What does this mean?

- Marjam has been turned down.
- Marjam has many competitors for this position.
- Marjam has obtained the position.
- Marjam forgot to send her CV with the other documents.

Correct answer:

- Marjam has many competitors for this position.

## Writing skills

You need to submit an application file online. Write an accompanying e-mail message.

There are two possible ways to write this e-mail message:

- Dear Ms Kuhn  
Thank you for having taken the time to talk with me over the phone. Please find attached my application documents. I look forward to hearing from you.  
Yours sincerely,  
xxx

Dear Sir/Madam  
In response to the vacant apprenticeship position advertised on [www.berufsberatung.ch](http://www.berufsberatung.ch), I would like to apply for this position. Please find attached my application file. I hope that we will have the opportunity to meet for an interview.  
Yours sincerely,  
Xxx

The first solution makes more sense..

## Vocabulary

Look at the word pairs below.

Which words have a similar meaning? > a

Which words have an opposite meaning? > b

Which words have different meanings altogether? > c

- |                          |            |           |
|--------------------------|------------|-----------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | common     | usual     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | courageous | fearful   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | lark       | larch     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | serious    | funny     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | robust     | talkative |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | hurry      | hasten    |

Correct answers:

- |   |            |           |
|---|------------|-----------|
| a | common     | usual     |
| b | courageous | fearful   |
| c | lark       | larch     |
| b | serious    | funny     |
| c | robust     | talkative |
| a | hurry      | hasten    |

What word should appear in the right-hand column to create an analogous link to the word pairs on the left?

Foot	Socks	Neck	_____
Bread	Baker	Meat	_____
Hay	Horse	Gasoline	_____
Bicycle	Bell	Police car	_____
Banana	Fruit	Carrot	_____

Correct answer:

Foot	Socks	Neck	Scarf
Bread	Baker	Meat	Butcher
Hay	Horse	Gasoline	Car
Bicycle	Bell	Police car	Siren
Banana	Fruit	Carrot	Vegetable