

How Many Attempts for UPSC, UPSC Attempts Limit General, OBC, SC/ST

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The **Number of Attempts** for the General Category to appear for the UPSC Civil Services Exam is 6 Attempts up to the age of 32 Years. The Number of Attempts to become an IAS Officer for each reservation category is different, as announced by UPSC in their official notification released every year in the month of February. A few years ago, the maximum age limit was 26, and the maximum number of attempts was 4. The number of attempts was changed to 6 in the year 2014.

How Many Attempts for UPSC?

Here is a table of the number of UPSC attempts and the upper age limit for each category:

Category	Age Limit	Number of Attempts
General	32	6

OBC	35	9
SC/ST	37	Unlimited
PwBD	42	• 9 for General and OBC • Unlimited for SC/ST
EWS	32	6

The upper age limit for the **UPSC 2026** prelims is calculated on **August 1, 2026**. This means that the candidate must be below the mentioned maximum age of 32 years (general category), 35 years (OBC), 37 years (SC/ST), 35 years (defence personnel), 37 years (ex-servicemen), or 42 years (blind, deaf-mute, and orthopedically handicapped persons) on August 1, 2025

In special cases, OBC/SC/ST candidates may get additional age relaxation. For example, an OBC ex-serviceman will get an age relaxation of $3 + 5 = 8$ years, so their upper age limit will be 40 years.

UPSC CSE 2026: Who Cannot Apply?

As per the official **UPSC Civil Services Examination (CSE) Notification 2026**, certain candidates are barred from appearing in the examination depending on their current service status. These restrictions mainly apply to candidates already appointed to All India Services or Central Services.

Serving IAS and IFS Officers: Eligibility Rules

Candidates who have already been **appointed to the Indian Administrative Service (IAS) or the Indian Foreign Service (IFS)** through any previous Civil Services Examination and are currently serving **cannot apply for CSE 2026**.

If a candidate is appointed to IAS or IFS **after clearing the CSE Preliminary Examination 2026** and continues in service, they will **not be allowed to appear for the CSE Main Examination 2026**.

In cases where appointment to IAS or IFS happens **after the CSE Mains 2026 has begun but before the final result is declared**, and the candidate continues in service, they will **not be considered for allocation to any service** based on the CSE 2026 results.

IPS Re-allocation Not Permitted

Candidates who have already been **selected or appointed to the Indian Police Service (IPS)** through any earlier Civil Services Examination will **not be eligible for IPS allocation again** on the basis of CSE 2026, even if they reappear in the exam.

One-Time Service Improvement Chance from CSE 2026

UPSC has provided a **one-time improvement opportunity** for candidates allocated to **IPS or any Central Group 'A' Service** through CSE 2026.

Such candidates may appear in **CSE 2027**, provided they meet all eligibility conditions. However, to do so, they must take a **one-time exemption from joining the training** of the service allotted through CSE 2026.

This exemption is allowed **only once**. If the candidate neither joins training nor formally takes the exemption, the **CSE 2026 service allocation will be cancelled automatically**.

What Happens After Appearing in CSE 2027?

If the candidate is **selected again in CSE 2027**, they must choose **one service** either the one allotted in 2026 or the one allotted in 2027. The service not chosen will be cancelled.

If the candidate appears in CSE 2027 but **fails to secure any service**, they will be allowed to **join the service allocated through CSE 2026**.

However, if the candidate **does not join training of the final selected service**, the allocation of **both services will stand cancelled**.

The candidate's **seniority will be based on the service they finally join** and will not be reduced due to the improvement attempt.

Limits on Future Attempts After Improvement

Once a candidate uses this **one-time improvement opportunity**, they **cannot appear in CSE 2028 or later** unless they **resign from the service** they have joined.

If a candidate wishes to use remaining attempts in future CSEs, they must **not join any allocated service**, in which case the earlier service allocation will be cancelled automatically.

Relaxation for Candidates Allocated Services Before 2026

Candidates who were allocated any service through **CSE 2025 or earlier** are allowed to appear **once in either CSE 2026 or CSE 2027 without resigning** from service.

However, to appear in **CSE 2028 or subsequent examinations**, such candidates must **resign from their current service**.

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