

3-3 Expect to get questions wrong

One benefit of the adaptive mechanism is that you can get questions wrong and still achieve a high score. If, for instance, you answer eight of the first ten questions correctly, the next question you see will likely be very difficult. The GMAT is assuming at that point that you're a very good test-taker to have gotten eight of the first ten, so it wants to see just how good you are. If you get that question wrong, the test doesn't assume you're hopeless—it still knows that you got those initial eight correct. The test revises its estimation slightly downward.

Ultimately, it's almost certain that you'll get several questions wrong. Even two or three in a row doesn't consign you to a weak result. Expect to miss at least half a dozen questions. In fact, it's possible to reach the 80th percentile in the Quantitative section while missing at least ten questions.