

A-Z

 **OF PASSING THE
GOOGLE ADWORDS
EXAMS**

PASS YOUR EXAM

Understand the complete process of passing your exam, from preparation, to taking the exam, to post-exam tips

FOCUS ON...

the key learning points that are essential to passing the exams and becoming an AdWords certified professional.

HANDS-ON EXPERIENCE

Understand the importance of knowing the inner workings of AdWords.



Introduction

This guide takes you through the complete process of passing your Google Adwords exam, through preparation, taking the exam, and post-exam tips.

We'll look at each of the exams individually, with a focus on the key learning points that are essential to passing the exams and becoming an AdWords certified professional.

To achieve the best results from your learning experience, we recommend that this guide be used in conjunction with:

- The [AdWords Certification Center](#) material provided by Google
- The [iPassExam](#) Question Bank

Chapter 1:

The Program

Before you can become certified, you will need to study and successfully pass the Advertising Fundamentals exam plus one of the advanced AdWords exams. The exam study material and exams are housed within the Google Partners Platform, and you must join the platform to start the journey to AdWords certification.

Please Note:

Signing up for the Partners platform and passing two of the exams does not mean that you will automatically become a 'Google Partner'. It does however mean that you will become an AdWords certified professional.

Passmark and Validity Period

Exam	Questions	Duration	Passmark	Validity
Fundamentals	100	120 minutes	80%	1 year
Search	100	120 minutes	80%	1 year
Display	100	120 minutes	80%	1 year
Video	74	90 minutes	80%	1 year
Shopping	60	90 minutes	80%	1 year
Mobile	70	90 minutes	80%	1 year

AdWords Certified Professional

Upon passing the exams, you become an AdWords certified professional. As an AdWords certified professional, you can:

- access your certification status for each exam on the certifications page within your Partners profile. The certifications page doesn't display your passing score, just the 'passed' status with the validity period for each of the passed exams.

- view/print a certificate of achievement for completion of the exams by visiting your 'Profile' page and clicking the 'AdWords Certified' link beneath your profile photo.
- enable your profile to be viewed publicly by scrolling to the 'Public Profile' section of your profile page. Selecting 'Public' next to 'Share with' enables profile visibility. You can share your profile page URL with clients and co-workers.

Once you are AdWords certified, you may choose to:

- Apply for a job at an advertising agency: Upon acceptance by the agency, your Partners profile can be affiliated with the company profile and contribute towards that company's "AdWords certified partner" status. If you choose to leave the agency, you can simply unlink your account from the agency and move on, which allows you to [retain your AdWords certified professional status](#).
- Provide account management services to customers.

A candidate who passes the exams can still provide great AdWords account management service whether they are an "AdWords certified partner" or not.

Becoming a Google Partner

Only an "AdWords certified partner" is able to display a [Google Partner badge](#). Becoming an "AdWords certified partner" means that the company is meeting certification, performance, and spend requirements specified by Google.

The [Partners badge requirements include](#):

- meeting Google's spend requirements of \$10,000 in 90 days;
- having at least one AdWords certified professional affiliated with the company or agency;
- accounts must be managed with a clear demonstration of best practices and high-quality results.

In turn, the reward of achieving this status and badge is a public listing on Google Partner Search, which can generate many new leads for a company or agency.

If an 'AdWords certified partner' should fall below the minimum requirements set out by Google, a communication will be issued to allow the company a time frame in which issues should be addressed. If it is still deemed that the company has fallen below the standard after this time, the company can lose its badge.

However, losing the badge does not mean that the company has been removed from the program; it just means that the company can no longer use the badge or be displayed on Google Partner Search as an "AdWords certified partner".

Upgrading

There is nothing stopping an AdWords certified professional from [setting up a company profile](#) and [affiliating with their individual profile](#).

Account management performance and various other factors are continually measured, and will be displayed on the 'Partner Status' page. This includes the status bars and minimum performance markers. These measures are designed to help a company work towards meeting Partner guidelines. Meeting Partner guidelines is not essential to working as a solo PPC account manager, but if a company does meet the guidelines, it automatically becomes a Google Partner.

Partner Incentives

In addition to badges, there are other Partner incentives such as:

Offers

Issued through the Partners portal, [promotional offers](#) are only available to qualifying members. These are designed to aid in achieving new business. If offers are available, they can be found by clicking the "Promotions" link in the left hand navigation panel of the Partners program portal.

Leads

Along with the badge comes the ability to appear in the Google Partner Search listing. The [leads](#) that result from this can be managed by clicking the "Leads" link in the left hand navigation panel. Admins are notified of new leads via email every time a new lead is received. It is expected that these leads will receive a response from the company in a timely manner.

Insights

Within the Partners platform, users can also find '[Insights](#)'. This collection of product training, industry research, and case studies provided by Google promises to bring up-to-date information and guidance on Google advertising products. The main idea behind this is that these resources should aid companies in growing their business.

Chapter 2:

Preparing for the Exams

Once signed up to the Google Partners platform, it's time to turn your attention to preparation. Exam preparation can be approached in a number of ways depending on how you learn best.

If You Fail to Plan You Plan to Fail

The exams are free to take, and they can be retaken after 7 days. This does not mean that they should be approached with a casual attitude. The exam questions will be difficult and the clock will be ticking. It is prudent to study thoroughly. If you fail, without knowing your weaknesses, your only recourse may be to reread the entire learning center in the hope you can find your blind spot. This is where iPassExam can help :)

You can sit the Google AdWords exams online, whenever you want. There is no scheduled exam date upon signing up for the program; you just sit it when you're ready. The flexibility is very convenient. However, it's important to remain focused with the study material. You will need to decide on a study schedule and stick to it.

Don't take the test before you are ready, there's nothing worse than an exam fail to fill you with self-doubt.

Hands-on Experience

It's important to comprehend the inner workings of AdWords. If you don't have access to a working account, at least [sign up for one](#) and create a campaign, ad groups, ads, keywords, etc.

Explore and make sure you are familiar with the layout and various tabs, that you understand various settings, report types, billing, etc. While the exam is based on Certification Center material, many questions will test your knowledge with certain "what if?" and best practice scenarios. Applying your knowledge to an account will help the information to stay fresh in your mind, further your abilities with navigation, and deepen your understanding of the inner workings of the account that are essential when taking the exam.

Sources of Information

Make use of the learning material, time, and technology available. There's a wealth of learning material available in the [Google Partners Study Guides](#) - perhaps an overwhelming amount. Break it down into 'bite size chunks' and don't try to digest multiple chapters in one sitting.

It essential to read these guides because the exams are based on them. We recommend reading a module and then testing your understanding of what you've read by answering the questions on that module here on iPassExam, e.g. [Understanding the value of online advertising](#).

Our system will then provide you with a tailored learning plan and direct you to the sections in the Adwords Partners Study Guides that you need to re-read.

In addition, you can supplement your learning by:

- Listening to a [Google AdWords Webinar](#),
- Using the [AdWords online Classroom](#)
- Watching the [Google AdWords business channel on YouTube](#)

Many of the webinars and learning videos contain slides and account demonstrations, which are valuable if you feel that you are lacking in understanding on certain elements of navigation.

Work in a Team (if you can)

If others around you are preparing for the exams at the same time, schedule a study group or meeting. This way you can all help each other with strengths and weaknesses. You could test each other on common terms and best practices and discuss what you are learning to make sure that you have a correct understanding of the information.

Exam Question Style

The AdWords exams are famously known amongst industry professionals to be trickily worded. Regardless of whether you have worked with AdWords for many years, or if you are new to AdWords, you can guarantee there will be some questions on the exam that could 'catch you out'. (We know this is not MCQ best practice, but it's an unfortunate facet of the Google Exams.)

Exam Question Types

The exam is multiple choice. This can give many candidates a false sense of security about taking and passing the exam. Don't make the mistake of assuming that just because it's multiple choice, it will be obvious which answers are correct or incorrect. I can assure you that that the answers to some of the exam questions are generally not blatantly obvious.

'Distractor' Options

A good MCQ is designed to have a distractor option. A 'distractor' is an option that is cleverly worded as a viable option. A good distractor wouldn't be obvious to a person not fully versed in the topic.

'Single Best Answer' Questions

You will encounter questions on the exam where you feel there should be more than one correct answer. However, there is only an option to select one answer.

When you encounter one of these questions, read through the question again to ensure that you have fully understood what is being asked. Then choose what you think is the most correct option.

This is very common issue! Google looks for the "best" answer to a scenario, not all possible answers to it.

True/False Questions

The good news is there's a 50/50 chance of getting this correct even if you know nothing on the topic. Don't rely on this, as there aren't so many of these style of questions in the exams.

Out Of Date Questions

This can be a very frustrating aspect of the exams. There can be a difference between the AdWords platform/study guides and the exam questions. For example, you may still see the terminology 'Google Places' used in the exam, whereas the training material refers to 'Google My Business'.

Please Note:

In iPassExam we highlight these terminology differences so you can be prepared for either.

Unfortunately, it is also possible to see retired features and functions included in the answer options of questions. Luckily this doesn't happen too often, so you shouldn't worry too much about this.

The Functionality of the Exam Software

It's an open book exam. You can open other tabs and research answers if you wish to do so. It's worth noting that open book exams sound great until you notice the timer ticking. It's surprising how long researching can take, so it's best not to rely heavily on this option.

You cannot skip or mark questions for later review

Upon starting the test, you will need to choose the correct answer option before you can move to the next question. You cannot skip questions or mark them for review at a later point in the test. Once you click 'Confirm answer' you will move to the next question, and you cannot navigate back.

You cannot pause the exam

Once you have started the test, it cannot be paused, so make sure you have taken a "bio break", have your coffee or cold drink prepared, and have your notes by your side. During the exam, the two-hour countdown is provided in the bottom right corner of your screen. You will see a status bar in the bottom left of the screen showing your percentage of questions completed.

Study Environment

Allow yourself a quiet, clear, and well-lit space to study

There's nothing worse than feeling overwhelmed or frustrated by noise and distraction. A clear, quiet space can make it easier to concentrate. Good lighting will aid in better concentration and prevent tired eyes and headaches.

Plan to study in a realistic way that works for you

Locking yourself in a room and trying to tackle it all in a single day is unrealistic. Plan your study. Are you going to study in the day, or in the evening at home? Take some time to think about your own study style and focus on maintaining a steady pace. Remember to make sure that you take regular breaks with time to relax so that your mind stays fresh and interested.

Note-making is essential

We're all unique and absorb information at different rates and through different methods. Take some time to think about how you best absorb information, whether you make notes, draw diagrams or flowcharts to remember layout and processes, or stick post-it notes around your home/office, etc. These prompts are going to be a valuable aid in learning and taking the exam. Some people like to use memory techniques such as [mind mapping](#). Others may find that they [learn more visually](#) and find that highlighting key points of information with a marker may help them digest it more easily.

Chapter 3:

Taking the Exam

What to Expect

Now you feel ready to take your exam, you will need to log into your [Google Partners account](#).

When you take the exam, a new window will open in your browser, displaying:

“Once you confirm an answer, you won’t be able to review the answer or change it. If you end the exam early or the timer runs out before you’ve answered enough questions correctly, you won’t pass.”

Just to clarify this point - the timer still keeps counting down, even if you:

- close the window before finishing the exam
- lose your internet connection before completing the exam

Remember you can click the start exam button to reopen the exam window and continue where you left off.

Once you click the ‘Start Exam Now’ button, you will be looking at the first question on the exam, and the clock will begin counting down.

Guessing

Don't leave any answer blank, after all you have a 25% chance of selecting the correct answer.

If the options are long sentences choose the longest option. Questions writers sometimes need to be specific in defining a correct option, this causes the option text to contain more words. It's not always true, but it can increase the probability.

Completing the exam

Upon answering the last question of the exam and confirming your answer, your exam is automatically submitted for marking and you will be immediately presented with your final score. Your score page will display a message stating “You got **/100 questions correct” as well as a percentage figure. At this point you can close the window in which you took the exam and return to the Partners Portal.

Don't panic if you can't see a Pass/Fail on your Partner's profile straight away. Although you have just seen your score in the previous window, it can take up to 48 hours to show that you have passed or failed the exam within your Partners Certifications/AdWords tab. When the message does finally appear giving your exam status, remember that your actual score will not be displayed.

If you do not pass the exam on your first attempt, you will be allowed to resit the exam after seven days have passed.

Chapter 4:

After The Exam

After receiving a pass for Fundamentals, you will need to decide which of the AdWords advanced exams you should take next. The AdWords Advanced exams are far more in depth than Fundamentals and will contain many topics that are not covered in Fundamentals.

Tip: Don't leave too much of a time gap between taking the Advertising Fundamentals and Search Advanced Exams. There is an overlap with certain topics in the learning material between Fundamentals and Search, so it pays to study Search whilst Fundamentals learning is still fresh in your mind.

When making your decision, you should know that there's no written rule or guideline stating that one of the AdWords advanced exams is more respected or desirable than the other. The preference of which advanced exam is taken first is purely up to you. Your decision should depend on the type of advertising that you plan to focus on. The Search and Display Networks offer vastly different advertising opportunities and features.

It's not essential to take all of the advanced exams, although having all certifications is an achievement and demonstrates product knowledge across the AdWords platform. When choosing which of the advanced exams to take first, consider your current level of knowledge and which of the exams is more relevant to your career goals.

Further Reading And Useful Links

Google Links

Google has published a help website giving detailed information about the Google Partners platform and program. To visit this site, go to [Google Partners Help](#).

PPC Exam Blog

To keep up-to-date with changes to the certification process and exams, please visit [our blog](#).

To view posts from exam candidates who have shared information and tips about their exam experience on their own blogs, please see the following links:

1. [How To Pass the AdWords Exams](#) - by John King
2. [How To Survive The Google AdWords Advanced Search Exam](#) - by Margot Da Cunha
3. [How To Pass The AdWords Advanced Display Exam & Earn Google Partner Status](#) - by Brad McMillen

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