

Arrangement of Words

~ Reasoning · SSC Exams ~



← circled = key tricks!



An **Arrangement of Words** question gives 4–6 jumbled words/phrases. You must put them in the **correct dictionary or logical order** and pick the matching option-code.

① The Core Method – 3 Checks 🔗

Check 1 — Meaning link: do the words describe stages of a process, sizes, or ranks? → use **logical order**.

Check 2 — No meaning link: words are unrelated in meaning (random nouns)? → use **dictionary order** (compare letters).

Check 3 — Read the question line: “order in a dictionary” vs “meaningful/logical order” — the exact wording tells you which method to apply.

Worked example – spot the type first

Words: **Book, Chapter, Sentence, Word, Paragraph**

Step 1 — these describe units of writing that build on each other — a **logical/size** sequence, not random words.

Step 2 — arrange smallest unit to largest: a Word forms a Sentence, sentences form a Paragraph, paragraphs form a Chapter, chapters form a Book.

Answer → 1.Word 2.Sentence 3.Paragraph 4.Chapter 5.**Book**.



This notebook covers every **SSC arrangement type**: dictionary order, process/event sequence, size & rank hierarchy, ascending/descending shortcuts, the elimination trick & spelling traps — each with a solved example.



Tip → underline the keyword in the question — “dictionary” or “meaningful” — before touching the words; picking the wrong type wastes time.

② Dictionary / Alphabetical Order – Basic Rule

Rule

Compare words **letter by letter**, exactly like a dictionary. Compare the 1st letters first; if tied, compare the 2nd letters; keep going until a difference appears. If one word is a **prefix** of another (all its letters match the start of the longer word), the **shorter word comes first**.

Worked example – Habit, Habitat, Habitual, Habitation

Step 1 — all four start “H-a-b-i-t”; Habit itself has no 6th letter → it's the shortest prefix → comes **first**.

Step 2 — letter 6: Habitat='a', Habitation='a', Habitual='u'. Since 'a' < 'u', the Habitat/Habitation pair comes before Habitual.

Step 3 — Habitat (7 letters) is itself a prefix of Habitation (10 letters) → Habitat before Habitation.

Answer → 1.Habit 2.Habitat 3.Habitation 4.**Habitual**. 

③ Same Starting Letters – Go Column by Column

Rule

When 2 or more letters already match, don't stop — keep comparing the 3rd, 4th, 5th letters... until the words split apart.

Worked example – Precise, Precaution, Predict, Preserve

Step 1 — letter 4: Precise='c', Precaution='c', Predict='d', Preserve='s' → order of groups: c < d < s.

Step 2 — inside the 'c' group, letter 5: Precaution='a', Precise='i' → 'a' < 'i' so Precaution before Precise.

Answer → 1.Precaution 2.Precise 3.Predict 4.**Preserve**. 



When 3+ words share the same first letters, write them **stacked vertically** and compare column by column — far faster than re-reading each word from the start.

④ Logical Sequence – Process & Events

Rule

The words describe stages of a **natural or manufacturing process**. Arrange them from the very **first** stage to the very **last** using real-world knowledge — not the alphabet.

Worked example – Seed, Sapling, Plant, Flower, Fruit

Step 1 — recognise this as the life-cycle of a plant.

Step 2 — a Seed is sown, grows into a Sapling, matures into a Plant, produces a Flower, which turns into Fruit.

Answer → 1.Seed 2.Sapling 3.Plant 4.Flower 5.**Fruit**. 

Worked example – Cotton, Yarn, Thread, Cloth, Shirt

Step 1 — this is a manufacturing chain, raw material to finished product.

Step 2 — Cotton is spun into Yarn, yarn is twisted into Thread, thread is woven into Cloth, cloth is stitched into a Shirt.

Answer → 1.Cotton 2.Yarn 3.Thread 4.Cloth 5.**Shirt**. 

More common process chains — memorise these

Birth→Childhood→Youth→**Old Age**

Egg→Larva→Pupa→**Butterfly**

Milk→Curd→Butter→**Ghee**

Application→Interview→**Joining**



For process questions ask “what must exist before this can happen?” — the earliest requirement always comes first.

⑤ Logical Sequence – Size, Age & Hierarchy . . .

Rule

The words are units of measurement, settlements, or ranks — arrange from **smallest/lowest to largest/highest** (or reverse, as the question specifies).

Worked example – Gram, Kilogram, Quintal, Tonne

Step 1 — these are units of mass, increasing in size.

Step 2 — $1000\text{ g} = 1\text{ kg}$; $100\text{ kg} = 1\text{ quintal}$; $10\text{ quintal} = 1\text{ tonne}$.

Answer → 1.Gram 2.Kilogram 3.Quintal 4.**Tonne**. ✓

Try this – settlement size

Village, Town, City, Metropolis — increasing size of human settlement.

Answer → 1.Village 2.Town 3.City 4.**Metropolis**. ✓

Try this – administrative units

Village, Tehsil, District, State, Country — smallest local unit to whole nation.

Answer → 1.Village 2.Tehsil 3.District 4.State 5.**Country**. ✓

More hierarchy gallery

Second → Minute → Hour → **Day**

Constable → Inspector → **SP**

Peon → Clerk → Manager → **Director**

mm → cm → m → **km**



Hierarchy questions often reverse for “descending order” — always confirm ascending or descending before locking your answer.

⑥ Ascending/Descending & Word-Length Order ☐

Rule

Some questions ask you to arrange words by **letter-count (length)**, or ask for a **descending** version of a sequence you already found — in that case just **reverse** your answer, never re-solve from scratch.

Worked example — ascending order of length

Words: Ox, Cat, Lion, Tiger, Elephant

Step 1 — count letters: Ox=2, Cat=3, Lion=4, Tiger=5, Elephant=8.

Step 2 — sort smallest to largest count.

Answer → 1.Ox 2.Cat 3.Lion 4.Tiger 5.**Elephant**. ☒ (if two words tie in length, break the tie by dictionary order)

Try this — the reverse-it shortcut

Q asks for **descending** dictionary order of: Mango, Apple, Banana, Grapes.

Step 1 — find ascending order first (it's more intuitive): Apple, Banana, Grapes, Mango.

Answer → simply flip it: **Mango, Grapes, Banana, Apple**. ☒ Never compare letters twice.

Quick checks

Sun, Star, Moon, Sky → length 3,4,4,3 — tie broken by spelling

Ant, Bee, Ox, Cow → shortest first: **Ox**(2)



"Descending" = ascending answer written backwards. Solve ascending first — it's more natural — then flip only if the question demands it.

⑦ Steps of a Task – Procedural Sequence

Rule

The words/phrases describe an everyday or office task. Picture yourself **physically doing the task** — the sequence matches common sense, no memorisation needed.

Worked example – making tea

Boil Water, Add Tea Leaves, Add Milk & Sugar, Strain, Serve

Step 1 — recognise this is a kitchen preparation task.

Step 2 — you must boil water before adding leaves; add leaves before milk/sugar; strain before serving.

Answer → 1.Boil Water 2.Add Tea Leaves 3.Add Milk & Sugar 4.Strain 5.**Serve**. 

Worked example – bank loan process

Application, Verification, Approval, Disbursement, Repayment

Answer → 1.Application 2.Verification 3.Approval 4.Disbursement 5.**Repayment**. 

Try this – morning routine

Wake Up, Bathe, Get Dressed, Eat Breakfast, Go to School → already in the natural order — each step needs the one before it.



If a step needs another step to be possible first, that other step comes earlier — test each pair with “can this happen without that?”

⑧ Fast Elimination Trick →

Rule

Options list ready-made word-orders (e.g. "3,1,4,2,5"). You rarely need to solve fully — find just the **first word** and **last word** of the correct order, then eliminate every option that disagrees.

Worked example — Kingdom, Genus, Species, Phylum, Class, Order, Family

Step 1 — you know Kingdom is always **first** in classification → eliminate any option not starting with Kingdom's position.

Step 2 — you know Species is always **last** → eliminate any option whose last position isn't Species.

Step 3 — with first & last fixed, usually only one option survives — pick it without checking the middle.

Answer → 1.Kingdom 2.Phylum 3.Class 4.Order 5.Family 6.Genus 7.**Species**. ✓

⑨ Traps — Near-Identical Spellings ∞⊗

Examiners plant words that differ by just one or two letters (Precede/ Proceed, Desert/ Dessert) to test careful reading — read **every** letter, don't skim.

Words: Precede, Proceed, Precedent

Letter 3: Precede/Precedent='e', Proceed='o' → 'e' < 'o' so the Precede-group comes first; Precede is a prefix of Precedent → Precede before Precedent.

Answer → 1.Precede 2.Precedent 3.**Proceed**. ✓



"Precede" and "Proceed" look similar at a glance but differ at the 3rd letter (e vs o) — never rely on the "shape" of a word, compare letter by letter.

10 Alphabet Position Chart & Advanced Comparison

Keep this position reference handy for quick eyeballing when two letters are far apart — you don't need to count from A every time.

A=1	B=2	C=3	D=4	E=5	F=6	G=7
H=8	I=9	J=10	K=11	L=12	M=13	N=14
O=15	P=16	Q=17	R=18	S=19	T=20	U=21
V=22	W=23	X=24	Y=25	Z=26		

Worked example — Statement, Statute, Statistics, Static

Step 1 — letter 5: Statement='e', Statute='u', Statistics='i', Static='i' → order of groups: e < i < u.

Step 2 — between Statistics & Static (letter 6): Static='c', Statistics='s' → 'c' < 's' so Static before Statistics.

Answer → 1.Statement 2.Static 3.Statistics 4.**Statute**. 

Zone shortcut for quick elimination

A-G → **early** zone

H-N → **mid** zone

O-U → **mid-late** zone

V-Z → **late** zone



Eyeball the zone first to quickly rank words whose first letters are far apart — save the letter-by-letter method only for words that start the same.

11 Rank & Administrative-Geographic Order ∴

Rule

These “general knowledge” hierarchies (official ranks, geography, time units) appear repeatedly in SSC papers — **memorise** the common lists rather than reasoning them out each time.

Worked example — police ranks

Inspector, Constable, Sub-Inspector, Head Constable

Step 1 — recall police hierarchy from the lowest rank upward.

Answer → 1. Constable 2. Head Constable 3. Sub-Inspector 4. **Inspector**. ✓

Standard hierarchy lists to memorise

Judiciary: Munsif → Civil Judge → District Judge → High Court → **Supreme Court**

Police:

Constable → SI → Inspector → DSP → SP → IG → **DGP**

Army: Lieutenant → Captain → Major → Colonel → **General**

Geography: Village → District → State → **Country**

Time: Second → Minute → Hour → Day → **Week**

Classification: Kingdom → Phylum → ... → **Species**



Write each list on a small revision card — ranks and geography rarely change and can appear directly, word-for-word, in the exam.

How to Attack ANY Arrangement Question

- 1→ Read the words — do they share a **meaning link** (process/size/rank)? If yes, use logical order; if no, use dictionary order.
- 2→ For **dictionary order**, compare letter by letter, column by column; a shorter prefix always comes before its longer extension.
- 3→ For **logical order**, find the very first stage/smallest unit and the very last stage/largest unit first.
- 4→ Use the **elimination trick** — match just the first & last item against the option-codes to cut choices fast.
- 5→ Watch for **near-identical spellings** and re-check the question wording (ascending vs descending) before marking your final answer.



Common traps → skimming instead of reading every letter; forgetting the shorter-prefix rule; mixing up ascending/descending; and guessing hierarchy order instead of memorising it.

Quick Pattern Gallery — one-glance revision

Dictionary: letter by letter, prefix first

Size: Gram→Kg→Quintal→**Tonne**

Task steps: follow real-life order

Trap words: check every letter, no skim

Descending: reverse the ascending answer

Process: Seed→Sapling→Plant→**Fruit**

Length order: Ox→Cat→Lion→**Elephant**

Elimination: match first & last only

Rank: memorise standard lists

Zone shortcut: A-G, H-N, O-U, V-Z

Exercise – Arrange the Words

Real SSC-style questions — solve, then check the Answer Key on the next page. Options are option-codes (word numbers in order).

Q1. 1.Habit 2.Habitat 3.Habitation 4.Habitual
(1) 1,2,3,4 (2) 1,3,2,4 (3) 2,1,3,4 (4) 1,2,4,3

Q3. 1.Fruit 2.Seed 3.Flower 4.Sapling 5.Plant
(1) 2,4,5,3,1 (2) 2,5,4,3,1 (3) 2,4,3,5,1 (4) 4,2,5,3,1

Q5. 1.State 2.Village 3.District 4.Tehsil 5.Country
(1) 2,4,3,1,5 (2) 2,3,4,1,5 (3) 4,2,3,1,5 (4) 2,4,1,3,5

Q7. 1.Precise 2.Precaution 3.Predict 4.Preserve
(1) 2,1,3,4 (2) 1,2,3,4 (3) 2,3,1,4 (4) 1,2,4,3

Q9. 1.Inspector 2.Constable 3.Sub-Inspector 4.Head Constable
(1) 2,4,3,1 (2) 2,3,4,1 (3) 4,2,3,1 (4) 2,4,1,3

Q11. 1.Hour 2.Second 3.Day 4.Minute
(1) 2,4,1,3 (2) 2,1,4,3 (3) 4,2,1,3 (4) 2,4,3,1

Q2. 1.Precede 2.Proceed 3.Precedent
(1) 1,2,3 (2) 1,3,2 (3) 3,1,2 (4) 2,1,3

Q4. 1.Tonne 2.Gram 3.Quintal 4.Kilogram
(1) 2,4,3,1 (2) 2,3,4,1 (3) 4,2,3,1 (4) 2,4,1,3

Q6. 1.Cloth 2.Cotton 3.Shirt 4.Thread 5.Yarn
(1) 2,5,4,1,3 (2) 2,4,5,1,3 (3) 5,2,4,1,3 (4) 2,5,1,4,3

Q8. 1.Elephant 2.Ox 3.Tiger 4.Cat 5.Lion
(1) 2,4,5,3,1 (2) 2,4,3,5,1 (3) 4,2,5,3,1 (4) 2,5,4,3,1

Q10. 1.Statement 2.Static 3.Statistics 4.Statute
(1) 1,2,3,4 (2) 1,3,2,4 (3) 2,1,3,4 (4) 1,2,4,3

Q12. 1.Serve 2.Boil Water 3.Strain 4.Add Tea Leaves 5.Add Milk & Sugar
(1) 2,4,5,3,1 (2) 2,5,4,3,1 (3) 4,2,5,3,1 (4) 2,4,3,5,1



Solve every question on paper first — identify type (dictionary/logical), find first & last item — then flip the page to check.



Answer Key

- Q1 → 1,2,3,4 — Habit is a prefix of all others; then Habitat < Habitation (prefix) < Habitual (letter 6 'u').
- Q2 → 1,3,2 — Precede, Precedent, Proceed (letter 3: 'e' before 'o'; Precede is prefix of Precedent).
- Q3 → 2,4,5,3,1 — Seed→Sapling→Plant→Flower→Fruit (plant life-cycle).
- Q4 → 2,4,3,1 — Gram→Kilogram→Quintal→Tonne (increasing mass).
- Q5 → 2,4,3,1,5 — Village→Tehsil→District→State→Country (administrative units).
- Q6 → 2,5,4,1,3 — Cotton→Yarn→Thread→Cloth→Shirt (manufacturing chain).
- Q7 → 2,1,3,4 — letter 4: Precaution/Precise='c' < Predict='d' < Preserve='s'; within 'c', Precaution ('a') before Precise ('i').
- Q8 → 2,4,5,3,1 — ascending length: Ox(2)<Cat(3)<Lion(4)<Tiger(5)<Elephant(8).
- Q9 → 2,4,3,1 — Constable→Head Constable→Sub-Inspector→Inspector (rising police rank).
- Q10 → 1,2,3,4 — letter 5: Statement='e' < Static/Statistics='i' < Statute='u'; Static ('c') before Statistics ('s') at letter 6.
- Q11 → 2,4,1,3 — Second→Minute→Hour→Day (rising time units).
- Q12 → 2,4,5,3,1 — Boil Water→Add Tea Leaves→Add Milk & Sugar→Strain→Serve (making tea).

Score yourself

10–12 correct → **excellent**, arrangement is your strength! 6–9 → **good**, revisit pages 2–9. Below 6 → **redo** the “How to Attack” steps on page 10 slowly.

☆ Spot the order, crack the code! ☆

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