

50+ GUESSTIMATE WORKBOOK

96% +

SUCCESS IN TOP
JOBS & ADMITS

Master Market Sizing and
Estimation Questions for
Consulting & Strategy
Interviews



RoleEdge
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WHY GUESSTIMATES MATTER IN CONSULTING INTERVIEWS

- Guesstimates test your ability to **think logically, structure problems, and stay calm under pressure**. Recruiters don't care if your number is exact—they care about your approach.
- Example: If asked *"Estimate the number of ATMs in India"* and you blurt out a random guess, you fail. If you segment logically (population → banked households → ATM demand per household), you impress.
- Consulting firms like McKinsey, BCG, and Bain use guesstimates to filter candidates who can **simplify ambiguity into structure**.
- **Exercise:** Write one recent time you had to make a quick estimate at work or in daily life.



The MECE Framework for Estimation

MECE = **Mutually Exclusive, Collectively Exhaustive**. Break problems into non-overlapping parts that together cover the whole.

Example: *Estimate pizza consumption in India.*

- Break by **population** (urban vs rural).
- Break by **frequency** (occasional vs regular eaters).
- Break by **size** (small vs medium vs large).

MECE keeps you from double-counting and ensures logical coverage.

👉 **Exercise:** Pick a guesstimate (e.g., number of Uber rides in Mumbai). Write your MECE breakdown.



Step 1: Break Down Populations and Segments

Every guesstimate starts with populations. Break them into **manageable, logical buckets**.

Example: *Number of toothpaste tubes sold annually in India.*

- India's population ~1.4B.
- Assume 70% urban + semi-urban usage = ~1B people.
- Avg. person uses 4 tubes/year.
- = 4B tubes annually.

👉 **Exercise:** Pick 1 consumer good and estimate annual demand in your city.



Step 2: Identify Key Drivers & Assumptions

Assumptions drive estimates. State them clearly.
Example: *Estimate number of flights landing in Delhi daily.*

- Drivers: Number of passengers, avg. plane capacity, % seat utilization.
- If Delhi handles ~200,000 passengers/day, planes average 200 seats, 80% occupancy → ~1,250 flights/day.

👉 **Exercise:** Write 3 assumptions you'd need to estimate car washes in Mumbai.



Step 3: Apply Back-of-the-Envelope Math

Quick math is essential. Round numbers smartly.

- Instead of 1.38B $\rightarrow$ 1.4B.
- Instead of ₹47,000 $\rightarrow$ ₹50,000.

Clarity > Precision. Communicate your math as you go.

👉 **Exercise: Estimate the number of coffee cups sold daily at Starbucks in India.**



Step 4: Validate with Sanity Checks

Always sanity check. If your result seems absurd (e.g., “100B pizzas annually in India”), revise assumptions.

Methods:

- Compare to known data.
- Use ratios (“1 ATM per 10,000 people”).
- Check per capita feasibility.

✎ Exercise: Take your coffee estimate and sanity check it against store counts.



10 Classic Guesstimate Questions

1. How many ATMs are there in India?
2. Estimate the number of Uber rides in Mumbai per day.
3. How many toothpaste tubes are sold annually in India?
4. Estimate the annual demand for air conditioners in Delhi.
5. How many Starbucks outlets can India sustain profitably?
6. Estimate the number of elevators in New York City.
7. How many cricket bats are sold in India annually?
8. Estimate the number of Ola drivers in Bangalore.
9. How many laptops are sold annually in the US?
10. Estimate the number of pizzas eaten per day in Mumbai.

👉 **Worksheet Prompt: Solve 1 question fully with MECE + assumptions.**



10 Market Sizing Questions

1. Estimate the size of the online grocery market in India (2025).
2. Size the electric vehicle market in Europe.
3. Estimate annual SaaS spend by Indian startups.
4. Size the OTT video streaming market in the Middle East.
5. Estimate the wearable tech market in the US.
6. Size the organic food industry in urban India.
7. Estimate the online ed-tech market in Africa.
8. Size the global luxury watch market.
9. Estimate the Indian insurance premium market.
10. Size the cross-border remittance market in Southeast Asia.



10 Product Demand Questions

1. Estimate iPhone sales in India (next year).
2. How many washing machines are sold annually in Brazil?
3. Estimate annual demand for two-wheelers in Indonesia.
4. How many premium coffee machines are sold in Europe annually?
5. Estimate the demand for VR headsets in the US.
6. How many microwaves are sold annually in India?
7. Estimate demand for electric scooters in Vietnam.
8. How many cars are sold annually in Germany?
9. Estimate annual demand for bottled water in Dubai.
10. How many footballs are sold annually in Spain?



Case Study: BCG Interview Guesstimate

A candidate was asked: *"Estimate the number of gas stations in Delhi."*

- Broke Delhi population (~20M) into households.
- Assumed 40% own vehicles → ~8M vehicles.
- Avg. vehicle fills 40L monthly → 320M liters/month.
- Avg. station dispenses 400,000L/month → ~800 stations.
- Actual: ~850. Recruiter said: "Great structure!"

Lesson: **Structure > Accuracy.**



Common Mistakes

- ✗ Diving into math without structure.
- ✗ Forgetting sanity checks.
- ✗ Freezing under pressure.

✓ 90-Day Guesstimate Prep Plan:

- **Week 1-4:** Practice consumer goods (toothpaste, soap, coffee).
- **Week 5-8:** Practice services (rides, hotels, flights).
- **Week 9-12:** Practice market sizing (EVs, OTT, SaaS).



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