

Anthropology Optional Strategy for UPSC 2025

Based on 'Toppers' Insights and Expert
Recommendations

Why Choose Anthropology?

- Scoring and concise subject
- Overlaps with GS papers (Society, Ethics, Essay)
- Static nature and predictable questions
- Ideal for both science and humanities backgrounds

Paper-wise Strategy

1 Paper I: Theoretical and General Anthropology

Important Topics

- Meaning, Scope, and Development of Anthropology
- Classical and Modern Theories
- Research Methods
- Human Evolution & Fossils
- Genetics and Race
- Primatology & Comparative Anatomy
- Archaeological Anthropology

Approach

- Build conceptual clarity with diagrams and flowcharts
- Correlate Paper I theories with examples from Paper II
- Use thinkers and theorists effectively

Resources

- *Physical Anthropology* – P. Nath / Das
- *Anthropological Thought* – Vidyanath / Makhan Jha
- *Ember & Ember* (for reference)
- VisionIAS/Vaid's Class Notes

2 Paper II: Indian Anthropology

Important Topics

- Caste, Tribe, Religion, Marriage, Family & Kinship
- Constitutional Safeguards
- Tribal Development Programs
- Ethnographic Notes (minimum 15–20 tribes)

Approach

- Quote government schemes (e.g., FRA, PESA)
- Use tribal case studies
- Link content with GS topics and current affairs

Resources

- *Indian Anthropology* – Nadeem Hasnain
- IGNOU BA/MA Notes
- India Year Book 2025
- PIB, Yojana, Kurukshetra (tribal issues)

Answer Writing Strategy

- **Structure:** Introduction – Body – Conclusion
- **Diagrams:** Skull types, tools, family trees, etc.
- **Case Studies:** Dongria Kondh, Baiga, Toda, etc.
- **Schemes:** Eklavya Schools, Van Dhan Yojana, TRIFED
- Practice Previous Year Questions (2013–2023)

Consolidated Booklist

Area	Source
Physical Anthropology	P. Nath / Das
Archaeological Anthropology	Ember & Ember / IGNOU
Socio-Cultural Anthropology	Ember & Ember / Vaid's Notes
Indian Anthropology	Nadeem Hasnain / IGNOU
Ethnographies	IGNOU + Toppers' Notes
Current Affairs	Yojana, PIB, India Year Book
Test Series	Evolution IAS / Sapiens IAS

5-Month Study Timeline

Month	Focus Area
Month 1	Paper I Basics – Evolution, Genetics, Theories
Month 2	Paper I Continuation – Thought, Research Methods
Month 3	Paper II – Social System, Tribes, Welfare
Month 4	Revision + PYQs + Answer Writing
Month 5	Full Tests + GS Integration + Diagrams

Tools & Tips

- Join Telegram channels for notes and discussion
- Make diagram notebook and revise weekly
- Keep 1-pager thinker summary for Paper I
- Use Notion or Evernote for short notes
- Regular revision and writing practice

Final Takeaways

- Anthropology rewards consistent effort
- Use diagrams in at least 70–80% of answers
- PYQs are crucial – UPSC repeats themes
- Test yourself regularly – evaluate strengths and gaps

Need more help? Ask for PDF notes, topper compilations, or a customized planner!