



Test Taking Tips

Open book tests

Put self-stick notes or bookmarks in your textbook to help you locate information quickly. If you are allowed to use your notes, do the following.

- ▶ Make sure the most important information in your notes is highlighted.
- ▶ Have all of the information you know you're going to need on one sheet of paper.

Math tests

- ▶ Show all of your work and write numbers neatly.
- ▶ If you're having difficulty with a problem, try drawing a picture or diagram.
- ▶ Before you begin to solve a problem, estimate the answer.
- ▶ Don't spend too much time on any one problem. Finish the test; then go back to difficult problems.
- ▶ Go over your work and look for careless mistakes. If you have time, do the problems again and see if you come up with the same answers.

"The measure of who we are is what we do with what we have." Vince Lombardi

Reduce Test Anxiety

A little anxiety before a test improves your concentration and alertness. Excessive worry or test anxiety, however, can lower your test scores.

Having test anxiety is like not having the password to your computer. The information is there—you just can't get to it.

To reduce test anxiety, study enough to feel confident that you know the material. Then try to replace the worry and negative thinking with thoughts that are positive and relaxing.

Tips to help reduce test anxiety

- ▶ Start studying early. Cramming only increases test anxiety.
- ▶ Mentally practice going through the test. Visualize yourself taking the test, answering the questions correctly, and getting the grade you want.
- ▶ Try these relaxation techniques.
 - 1) Take a deep breath. Then slowly release your breath, along with any tension.
 - 2) Starting at the top of your head, flex, and then relax each part of your body.
 - 3) Think of a place where you feel relaxed and calm. Close your eyes and visualize being in that place.

The more you practice relaxation techniques, the better you'll get. If you continue to have problems with test anxiety, talk to a counselor.



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Study Skills InfoGuide



Taking Tests

- ▶ Do you get nervous when you take tests?
- ▶ Do you have a hard time answering essay questions?
- ▶ Do you sometimes run out of time?
- ▶ Are your test grades lower than you want them to be?

If you answered yes to any of the above, you may want to work on improving your test-taking skills.

To do well on any test, you need to know the material and be prepared. You also need to be a smart test taker.

Smart test takers know strategies that improve their confidence and help them choose the right answers on tests.

Using a few simple test-taking strategies can help you become a better test taker—and get higher grades!



Test-Taking Tips

Get off to a good start

- ▶ Get a good night's sleep and eat a good breakfast.
- ▶ Have everything you need for the test when you go to class.
- ▶ As soon as you get your test, write anything you want to remember at the top (names, formulas, dates, etc.). Read the directions carefully.

Develop a plan

Before you begin answering questions, quickly look over the entire test. Decide how much time you want to spend on each section or question.

For example, if a test has 25 multiple choice and 2 essay questions, you could plan to spend 10 minutes on the multiple choice questions and 20 minutes on each essay.

Don't get stuck on difficult questions

Put a dot or a light mark by any answer you aren't sure of. After you have gone through all of the questions, go back to the ones you've marked and try them again. *If you're not sure of an answer, go with your first instinct.*

Check your answers

If you have time, check all of your answers, even the ones you know are correct. You may have made a careless mistake. Use all of the time you're given.



Test-Taking Tips

Multiple-choice questions

- ▶ Try to come up with the answer in your head *before* you look at the answer choices.
- ▶ Read all of the answer choices. If you're not sure which answer is correct, cross out the choices you know are wrong and make an educated guess.

True / False questions

- ▶ Look for key words. For example, statements with *all, always, never, every, and none* are usually false.
- ▶ If you have no idea if a statement is true or false, go with true. Research has shown that true is correct more often than false.

Essay questions

- ▶ Read each question and start with the easiest one.
- ▶ Before you start writing, brainstorm. Jot down the key words, ideas, and points you want to cover.
- ▶ Use complete sentences and write neatly.
- ▶ In the opening paragraph, tell the reader what he/she can expect to learn from your essay.
In the middle paragraph(s), present examples, facts, and details to support the points you're making.
In the final paragraph, restate the most important points, draw conclusions, or write a brief summary.