



Student Learning Services

Test Taking Strategies

Anticipating test content

- **Pay particular attention to any study guides** that the instructor hands out in class before the exam, or even at the beginning of the course! For example: key points, particular chapters or parts of chapters, handouts, etc.
- **Ask the instructor what to anticipate on the test** if he/she does not volunteer the information
- **Pay particular attention--just prior to the exam--** to points the instructor brings up during class lectures
- **Generate a list of possible questions** you would ask if you were making the exam, then see if you can answer the questions
- **Review previous tests** graded by the instructor
- **Confer with other students** to predict what will be on the test
- **Pay particular attention to clues** that indicate an instructor might test for a particular idea, as when an instructor:
 - says something more than once
 - writes material on the board
 - pauses to review notes
 - asks questions of the class
 - says, "This will be on the test!"

Information used with permission from: <http://www.studygs.net/tsttak1.htm>

To schedule an appointment to learn more about Test Taking, Note Taking, Time Management, or any Study Skill contact Lindsey Hinds-Brown at 615-297-7545 ext 441 or Darcy Rowe at ext 470 or visit us in the Student Learning Services area, Room 110.



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Create and use study tools

Create study checklists

Identify all of the material that you will be tested on-- list notes, formulas, ideas, and text assignments you are accountable for.

This checklist will enable you to break your studying into organized, manageable chunks, which should allow for a comprehensive review plan with minimal anxiety

Create summary notes and "maps"

Briefly map out the important ideas of the course and the relationships of these ideas. Summary notes should display lists and hierarchies of ideas.

Creativity and a visual framework will help you recall these ideas.

Record your notes

and significant portions of text on audio tapes so you can review material with a walk-man.

Having a tape of important information will enable you to study while walking or relaxing in a nonacademic environment

Create flashcards

for definitions, formulas, or lists that you need to have memorized--put topics on one side of the card, answers on the other.

Flashcards will enable you to test your ability to not only recognize important information, but also your ability to retrieve information from scratch

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Organize and plan when to study

- **Begin reviewing early**
This will give your brain time to get comfortable with the information
- **Conduct short daily review sessions**
You can ease into a more intense review session prior to major exams
- **Read text assignments before lectures**
This will help you identify concepts that the professor considers important and that are already somewhat familiar
- **Review notes immediately after lectures**
This will help you identify information that you do not understand while the lecture is still fresh in your memory--and other students' memories as well. When you review immediately, you'll have time to clarify information with other students
- **Review with a group**
This will enable you to cover important material that you may overlook on your own
- **Conduct a major review early enough** to allow for a visit to the instructor during his office hours if necessary
- **Break up the study tasks into manageable chunks,** especially during major reviews prior to exams.
Studying three hours in the morning and three in the evening will be more **effective** than studying at a six hour stretch. *Studying while you are mentally fatigued is usually a waste of time. Remember to take 10 min breaks between each hour of study.*
- **Study the most difficult material when you are alert** *(the daylight hours are considered as the best time to study)

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Successful test taking avoids carelessness.

Read the directions carefully

This may be obvious, but it will help you avoid careless errors.

If there is time, quickly look through the test for an overview

Note key terms, jot down brief notes

Answer questions in a strategic order:

1. **Answer easy questions first**

to build confidence, score points, and mentally orient yourself to vocabulary, concepts, and your studies. It may also help you make associations with more difficult questions.

2. **Then difficult questions** or those with the most point value

With objective tests, first eliminate those answers you know to be wrong, or are likely to be wrong, don't seem to fit, or where two options are so similar as to be both incorrect.

With essay questions, broadly outline your answer and sequence the order of your points.

Review

Resist the urge to leave as soon as you have completed all the items.

Review your test to make sure that you

- have answered all questions
- did not miss-mark answers
- did not make simple mistakes

Decide on and adopt study strategies that work best for you

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