

General Test Tips

Bring needed materials	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bring pencil, paper, blue books, and/or calculator
Arrive on time	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Verify exam dates, times and locations Do not talk about the test with other students. The concerns of others tend to increase any worries you have or confuse you. If you arrive late, take a minute to relax and get organized. Ask your instructor for help if you feel confused.
Do a brain dump	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Write down formulas, processes or outlines as soon as possible. This clears your mind for thinking rather than simply storing information. It also eases the stress of worrying about forgetting.
Preview the test	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Note the total number of items. Identify point values. Judge the amount of time you should spend on each item. Spend the most time on questions that receive the most credit.
Read directions carefully	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> It is a mistake to ignore test directions. Directions provide information you need to get full credit and to mark answers correctly Underline key terms and number the steps in the directions.
Answer the easiest questions first	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This builds your confidence. It also triggers your memory for other information. If you run out of time you will have answered the questions you knew.
Expect memory blocks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mark questions you don't know and go on. Return to these questions when time permits, even if only to guess. Use positive self-talk to get through periods of anxiety.
Attempt every question	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> For many objective tests there is no penalty for guessing. For tests where problems are worked you may get partial credit.
Make your responses legible	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Do not use abbreviation or slang. Write neatly.
Mark through, don't erase, incorrect information	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Do not do this if you are using a scantron! This saves valuable test time.
Review the questions and your answers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Be sure you understood each question. Also check that you marked the correct response. It is not always better to stay with your first answer. Find out what's best for you by looking at one of your old tests.

Adapted from: Study Methods and Reading Techniques, Rhonda Atkinson and Debbie Longman (1993), West Publishing.

Examining Returned Tests

What do you do when a test is returned to you: do you throw it away or file it away, never to look at it again?

A review of your test provides information about both your study and test-taking skills. It helps you decide which of your study and test-taking strategies work and which do not. Use this information to improve future test performance and reduce the stress of taking another exam in the same course.

The form on the next page provides help in examining your test papers. To complete this worksheet, list each item you missed in the top row. Then mark an X by the description that best explains why you missed a question. You may mark more than one reason for a question. Next, add the number of X's by each reason. These numbers indicate the areas of study and test-taking strategies that need more attention.

