

Ten Tips for Test Taking

1. Come prepared; arrive early for tests

- Bring all the materials you need, such as, pencils and pens, a calculator, a dictionary, and a watch.

2. Stay relaxed and confident

- Remind yourself that you are well prepared and are going to do well.
- Don't let yourself become anxious; if you feel anxious before or during a test, take several slow, deep breaths to relax.
- Don't talk to other students before a test; anxiety is contagious.

3. Be comfortable, but alert

- Choose a good spot to take the test.
- Make sure you have enough room to work.
- Maintain an upright posture in your seat.

4. Preview the test (if it is not timed)

- Spend 10% of your test time reading through the test carefully, marking key terms and deciding how to budget your time.
- Plan to do the easy questions first and the most difficult questions last.
- As you read the questions, jot down brief notes indicating ideas you can use later in your answers.

5. Answer the test questions in a strategic order

- Begin by answering the easy questions you know, then those with the highest point value.
- The last questions you answer should:
 - Be the most difficult,
 - Take the greatest amount of writing, or
 - Have the least point value

6. When taking a multiple choice test, know when to guess

- First eliminate answers you know are wrong.
- Always guess when there is no penalty for guessing or you can eliminate options.
- Don't guess if you have no basis for your choice and if you are penalized for guessing.
- Since your first choice is usually correct, don't change your answers unless you are sure of the correction.

7. When taking essay tests, think before you write

- Create a brief outline for your essay by jotting down a few words to indicate ideas you want to discuss. Then, number the items in your list to indicate the order in which you will discuss them.

8. When taking an essay test, get right to the point

- State your main point in the first sentence.
- Use your first paragraph to provide an overview of your essay.
- Use the rest of your essay to discuss these points in more detail.
- Back up your points with specific information, examples, or quotations from your readings and notes.

9. Reserve 10% of your test time for review

- Review your test; resist the urge to leave as soon as you have completed all the items.
- Make sure you have answered all the questions.
- Proofread your writing for spelling, grammar, and punctuation.
- Check your math answers for careless mistakes (e.g., misplaced decimals). Match your actual answers for math problems against quick estimates.

10. Analyze your test results

- Each test can further prepare you for the next test.
- Decide which strategies worked best for you.
- Identify those that didn't work well and replace them.
- Use your tests to review when studying for final exams.