

Test-taking Strategies

Being well prepared for a test involves time management, high-quality note-taking, and regular reviews of material. There are three types of reviews that can better prepare you for test-taking: regular, weekly reviews; reviews just before the test; and posttest reviews of your test performance. Doing well on a test involves test anticipation, preparation, and analysis of performance.

Test Anticipation:

- What format will the test be? Multiple choice, short answer, essay, or a combination?
- How much is the test worth?
- How much time will you have to write the test?
- Are you allowed to use notes or text?
- What materials will be needed? A calculator, ruler, or a pencil?
- Have you regularly reviewed the notes for the test?
- How much study time will you need? When will you study and for how long each time?
- Were previous tests similar to this one? Were there quizzes on this material?

Test Preparation:

- Spread your study time over several days and take regular short breaks
- Study difficult or "boring" subjects first
- Schedule study time during your best time of day
- Study where you'll be alert (not in bed or in easy chairs or sofas where you can get too comfortable).
- Revise class and text notes
- Concentrate on remembering the main ideas and most important information
- Ask questions of yourself; provide yourself with elaborate explanations
- Study with a partner to compare notes and test each other
- Review main topics and subtopics

Posttest Analysis:

- Did you receive the grade you expected?
- Analyze the missing answers: Were they in your notes? In your text? On a quiz? Did you not provide enough detail?
- Analyze the type of questions: Did you perform better on a certain type of question?
- Did you have enough time to finish the test and to review your answers?