





How to prepare for an exam

The best time to start preparing for an exam is the first day of class. Your learning will be most effective when you frequently review in short spurts. This strengthens memory pathways in your brain. **The best way to be prepared for an exam is to develop a regular routine of review.**

Develop a Routine of Study	
<p>Go to class and pay attention</p> 	<p>The research says that class attendance matters. It makes sense. When you miss class, you miss key learning. However, it is not enough to physically be in class—you need to pay attention.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Identify the main ideas your professor is drawing attention to in the lecture. These are likely to be on an exam.▪ Learn to “read” your professor. Many of them will subtly emphasize key points or drop sly hints about what will be on an exam.▪ Take notes. Review your notes regularly. This develops a routine of review, decreasing the amount of time you will need to prepare for an exam. It also results in real learning.
<p>Read course materials</p>	<p>C_t. What is the missing letter? It’s likely your brain filled the blank with an ‘a’ to make ‘cat.’ That’s because you have the needed background knowledge to make sense of the blank. But what if you didn’t have that background knowledge?</p> <p>In higher education, we experience lots of new information. Sometimes it is completely new. To fill in the background knowledge, you need to read your textbooks. Going to class without reading is like getting the c_t version. It won’t make sense unless you fill the blank in with the reading materials.</p>
Preparing for the exam	
<p>What kinds of questions will be on the exam?</p>	<p>The type of exam impacts how you study.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Multiple Choice: This type of question requires recall and understanding. More attention is given to detail.▪ Listing/Matching: This is a recall question. Use mnemonic devices to help you memorize items.▪ Short Answer: Short answer questions require you to remember without prompting. Requirements can vary from recall, to application of information, to analysis and evaluation.▪ Essay: Essay questions require a broad understanding and an ability to connect and evaluate information.

<p>Use a Study Guide</p> 	<p>What if your professor doesn't provide you with a study guide?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> List all the main ideas from your lecture notes and reading notes. Highlight ones that keep recurring. Predict what types of questions will be asked—does the main idea you wrote down lend to an essay question or a list? Turn your list of main ideas into questions. Practice answering your questions either orally or in writing. Prioritize your time to focus on the main ideas. Spend more time on what you don't know or find more challenging.
<p>Study to Learn</p>	<p>The goal of studying should be to learn. Passing your exam is a pleasant byproduct of the learning that has taken place. Follow these tips to maximize learning.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Create flashcards or use Quizlet to review memory type questions. Study with a friend and test teach other Use a shared Google Doc to compile notes with friends Teach the information to someone else Develop concrete examples of key concepts Create a mind map that shows connections between concepts Develop mnemonic devices to help you remember (silly rhymes, images, acronyms, etc.) Combine psychical activity with review (e.g. pace while self-testing) <p>Anything you can do to <i>actively engage</i> with your course material is helpful. Do not rely on reading your notes over and over again.</p>
<p>Outside the box tips</p> 	<p>There are a few pieces of sage wisdom regarding memory that may seem rather strange but actually work. Consider experimenting with these:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Study in the room where you will take the exam (if possible). Place can jog memory. Chew the same flavour of gum while you are studying and while you take the test. Some recommend mint.
<p>Day of the Exam</p>	
<p>Get your Game Face on</p>	<p>Are you an athlete? What do you do to prepare for a game? Many of those same rituals can apply to exam preparation.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dress professionally. Taking the time to dress well can increase confidence and attentiveness. Eat breakfast! Your brain needs fuel.

<p>Get your Game Face on</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Sleep well the night before. Sleep is necessary for memory functions. ▪ Visualize. Picture yourself doing well on the exam. Don't go in worrying about failure. ▪ Breath. Deep breaths increase oxygen in your brain and calm you. ▪ Pray. View your exam as a spiritual act. You are offering a product of your learning to the Lord.
<p>Tackling the Exam</p> 	<p>Preview the exam</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Read over the whole exam once you receive it. 2. Highlight or underline important directions—such as “choose 5 of the following 7 questions.” 3. Choose your essay or short answer questions. If multiple choice questions come first, there may be something that will jog your memory. 4. Determine how much time you need to spend on each section. Give yourself ample time for short answers and essays. <p>Take the exam</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Mark or highlight questions you don't know and plan to go back to them. 2. Eliminate choices on a multiple-choice question that you know are not the right answer. 3. Answer all questions, even if you must make an educated guess. 4. Outline essay questions. It helps to make sure you cover all your points. 5. Look at questions for clues about the answer or what needs to be included in the answer. <p>Review your exam</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Go back through the exam and answer any marked questions that you were unsure of. 2. Make sure that every question is answered. 3. Proofread your essays for clarity and neatness.
<p>Combatting Test Anxiety</p>	<p>If you follow the above tips, you are already on your way to overcoming test anxiety. Also, consider <i>getting to the exam room early</i> to give yourself time to focus. <i>Stay positive.</i> Remember all your hard work and preparation. <i>Dive into the exam</i> right away to build your confidence. <i>Keep your focus</i> on what is right in front of you. Don't be concerned with what others are doing. You've got this!</p>