

Test Taking Self-Assessment

Circle **True** or **False** for Each Statement

True or **False** 1. I am always anxious when taking tests, no matter what the subject or class.

True or **False** 2. Even though I prepare and self-assess, I “freeze up” and forget what I know when test time arrives.

True or **False** 3. Even when I am in a class that I consider “my best subject” and I know the material, I still get nervous when taking a test.

True or **False** 4. Test taking always causes me to feel nervous.

True or **False** 5. I have never been a good test taker, even in high school.

If you responded “true” to the majority of the statements, you may have general test anxiety. **General Test Taking Anxiety** affects test taking in all content areas regardless of material mastery or preparation.

If you responded “false” to the majority of the statements, you may have situational test taking anxiety. **Situational Test Taking Anxiety** affects test taking in situations such as specific classes or in instances where the test taker does not understand the material or how to prepare for the test.

It's important to understand that a certain amount of nervous energy when test taking is natural and even desirable.

PEACE

PEACE is a general test taking strategy that combines techniques to prepare for tests and to re-duce or eliminate test taking anx-iety.

Learning and using strategies, then adapting strategies to your preferences, allows you to create a personal study plan that will help you reach your goals.

Be at **PEACE** when taking tests.

Take charge of your learning and your success!

For more detailed information and strategies for test taking and test taking anxiety, visit us in the Office of Teaching and Learning.



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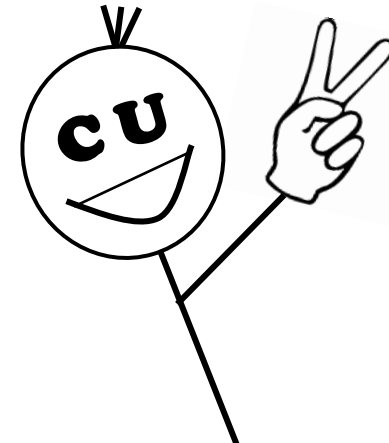
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SKILLS & STRATEGIES
FOR *YOUR* SUCCESS

Prepare
Expect
Anticipate
Complete
Evaluate

PEACE



Test Taking
Strategies

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Step One: Prepare

To perform successfully on any test (or in any academic endeavor), you must prepare your mind and body. If you don't prepare, your opportunity for success is limited, and you will only compound your test taking apprehension.

Rest, Eat Healthy Food, and Exercise:

A healthy body reflects a healthy mind. You must take care of your body to perform at your best.

1. Sleep seven to eight hours each night.
2. Eat a balanced diet.
3. Exercise on a regular basis.

Basic Guidelines for Test Preparation:

1. Attend your classes.
2. Practice active listening.
3. Take notes using an effective note taking strategy such as Cornell Note Taking.
4. Ask questions.
5. Complete homework.
6. Read the material using an active reading strategy such as SQ3R.
7. Review notes. Consistent review is the only way to commit material to long term memory.
8. Join a study group.
9. Use learning labs.

Before the Test:

1. Begin preparation early. "Cramming" is not effective.
2. Make sure you understand what material is going to be tested. Review your syllabus. Ask your professor. Use online helps such as My Math Lab.

Note: There is no substitute for preparation.

Step Two: Expect

Expect to be Successful:

1. Eliminate negative thinking by replacing negative thoughts with positive thoughts. For example, replace "I am so nervous; I never do well on math tests," with "It's natural to be a little apprehensive; however, I have prepared and I'm going to practice good test taking strategies and do the best I can."

Expect that You May Experience Anxiety:

Some nervousness or anxiety can actually benefit you. Your adrenaline flows and helps your focus. However, if your anxiety is limiting your performance and not enhancing it, practice strategies to reduce anxiety.

Ways to Decrease Anxiety on Test Day:

1. Close your eyes, breath deeply, and slowly.
2. Starting at your feet and working through your body, tense your muscles and relax.
3. Close your eyes and visualize your study sessions. Remember what you know.
4. Close your eyes and visualize yourself taking the test. See yourself taking the test confidently, carefully, and competently.
5. Repeat positive affirmations. For example, "A test is an opportunity to demonstrate my understanding. I am calm and relaxed."

Step Three: Anticipate

Before Test Day:

Anticipate what is going to be on the test. One of the most effective strategies for test preparation is self-assessment. Self-assessment is anticipating test questions and testing yourself.

Ways to Self-Assess:

1. Think like the professor and write test questions. Take your test.
2. Create flashcards that test key pieces of information such as vocabulary, formulas, and memory cues. Test yourself.

3. Take practice tests. Time yourself.
4. Pretend you are a teaching a new student the material, out loud.

Step Four: Complete

Basic Guidelines for Test Taking:

1. Act confident. Stand tall, put your shoulders back, and assume the "Power Pose."
2. Arrive on time with all necessary materials such as pencils, pens, Scantrons, or bluebooks.
3. As soon as you receive your test, do a "memory dump." Write all formulas, key definitions, acronyms, etc. at the top of the page.
4. Survey (look over) the entire test.
5. Read directions carefully.
6. Make a "game plan." Try to estimate the time needed on different sections of the test.
7. Go through test and answer all questions that you know.
8. Go back to questions that you skipped and try to eliminate distractors (wrong answers). Your first impulse is usually your best impulse.
9. Go back and make sure you answered all questions.

Step Five: Evaluate

After taking your test, assess your performance. Understand that your success is a work in progress. You may experience a setback from time to time, but that's part of the growing experience. As you understand what works for you and what does not work, try new strategies and create your personal success plan.

Ways to Evaluate:

1. After the test, journal or reflect on your performance. Decide what strategies worked.
2. When your test is returned, go through it and try to assess where you did well and why. Then, try to assess where you faltered and why.