

College Test-Taking (How to Play the Game)

Before the Test

- During the last few days of class, you may find out a lot about the exam.
- Get an idea about what the test will cover and what type of test you'll be taking. If the test is partially or totally essay, try to predict essay questions and then practice answering them.
- Avoid the hypocrisy of talking more about studying than actually studying. Write down what you have to do, allocate your study time reasonably, then begin studying.
- Study actively, not passively. Recite, restate, or repeat information you need to master. Just looking over familiar material may be comforting, but such sight recognition is rarely sufficient for a good test performance. Remember, recite, don't reread. (i.e. flashcards, vocal studying, re-writing)
- Construct summary sheets or cumulative charts or diagrams.
- Try to get a decent amount of sleep the night before an exam.
- Eat high protein rather than high sugar meals.
- Be certain of time, place, and materials for the exam.

At the beginning of the test

- Arrive on time, but not too early.
- Avoid panicky classmates. Focus on your confidence to execute the exam.
- Put your name on the test and read instructions carefully.
- Preview test for organization and point distribution. Be sure to allow time at the end of the test period to check over the exam.
- On the back of the test paper, list any dates, theorems, etc. (Facts that you don't want to forget.)

During the test

- Lapses of memory are normal. Relax and go on to another question.
- Read each question carefully; accept them at face value. Don't read anything into or out of the question.
- Pretend you are the only person in the room.
- Do easy questions first.
- Give your full attention to the question you're answering now.
- Write legibly and leave blank space at the end of each answer for afterthoughts.
- If your handwriting is bad, take your time to make more legible writing.
- State the thesis in the first sentence.
- Underline any points.
- Use clear and simple organization.
- Allow time for editing.

At the end of the test

- Verify you have answered all the questions in the required form.
- Make sure each answer is properly identified or in the right space.
- Proofread. Don't let careless errors lower your grade.