

SUCCESS CENTER: Taking Tests

Eat sensibly and drink water before the test.

Arrive early so you can settle in and make yourself as comfortable as possible.

Place pen/pencils on your desk and a blank piece of paper if permitted for personal use during the test.

Once it has been handed out, **briefly scan the test** to find how many and what type of questions are included. Also, check to see if there are questions or sections that have more weight, such as essay or short answer questions.

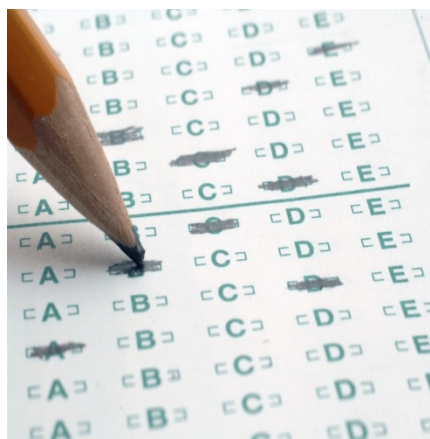
Determine how to allocate your time. How much of the test should be completed by the halfway point?

Read the directions carefully and completely. If you are allowed to write on the test, underline key words in the instructions and questions, or write them on your scrap paper.

Do not hesitate to **ask your instructor to clarify** if you are confused about what is expected.

Maintain Focus

1. **Remind yourself:**
"I have studied; I am prepared. I will do well on this test."
2. **Breathe slowly through your nose and exhale more slowly** to stimulate the parasympathetic nervous system reaction to calm down.
3. Maintain a **positive mindset**.
4. **Repeat**



Answer easy test questions first to build confidence. Next, answer the questions with the most point value.

If you feel tense or go blank, take a moment and breathe deeply and slowly. Repeat to yourself, "I have studied; I am prepared. I will do well on this test."

Skip questions that cause initial confusion, but make a note to remind you to return to them before submitting your exam.

Guess if there is no penalty and you have some reason for the answer you provide. Use hints from other questions you know the answer to.

Ignore other students. Someone leaving early is no proof they successfully answered every question, nor is it a sign that you are 'behind.' Refocus your thoughts on the work in front of you.

Review your answers if you have time. Make sure you answered all questions fully. If you notice that you misread a question, change your response. Add more detail to essay or short answer questions if needed.

Sources:

Ellis, Dave. *Becoming a Master Student*. Houghton Mifflin, 2006.

Image of test answer sheet. www.pbs.org/newshour/rundown/act-expand-computer-based-testing/. Accessed 22 Jun 2017.

NPR Morning Edition "Just Breathe: Body Has A Built-In Stress Reliever," Gretchen Cuda, reporter. 6 Dec 2010

www.npr.org/templates/transcript/transcript.php?storyId=131734718

Shushan, Jamie. *The Pocket Guide to College Success*. Bedford/St. Martin's, 2014

"Tips for Better Test Taking." *Testing With Success Series, Study Guides and Strategies*, www.studygs.net/tsttak1.htm. Accessed 16 Jun 2017