

# Preparing for Tests

1. Keep up with your reading assignments so that studying for a test will involve the reviewing of familiar material. Frantic last-minute cramming of new material usually results in faulty remembering. Have a regular review schedule. Set aside 15 minutes each week to review each subject. Review class notes, homework, reading assignments to get the overview and keep track of the direction the course is taking. By the time exams come along, material from early in the semester will not be stone cold!
2. To avoid completely re-reading textbook assignments, prepare them for reviewing by underlining key words and phrases and outlining the underlined material.
3. Do not be afraid to ask questions about material you do not understand. You cannot remember something unless you first understand it. Professors like to find students who really want to understand.
4. In reviewing, spend the most time on material that is least familiar, and review briefly the material that is most familiar.
5. In reviewing, prepare a list of likely test questions and make certain that you can give the correct answers in your own words. If you have trouble with essay tests, spend some of your study time actually writing complete answers to questions. Students often have a great gap between thinking an answer and actually putting it on a page in writing.
6. Keep, correct, and review returned quizzes and exams. Check with your instructor if you are uncertain about the correct answer to a question that you missed. Even if a professor does not return the test, ask if you can look at your in his/her office and jot down the mistakes you made. Professors often ask the same questions on the next test to see whether students learn from past mistakes.
7. Study your instructor's "test technique" so that you will know what type of questions he/she favors and thus anticipate your study method. Concentrate on remembering specific details (*who, what, when, where*) when studying for an objective test; concentrate on understanding broad concepts (*what, why, how*) when studying for an essay exam.
8. Study and practice questions from your textbook, previous exams, the instructor, as well as questions you and other students make up.
9. Where possible, ask the instructor what material will be covered on the exam — textbook, lectures, laboratory experiments, etc.
10. Take a break during intensive study times. Ten to fifteen minutes will refresh you and keep your mind active.
11. Review for problem solving tests by memorizing formulas and equations, as needed, and working examples of each type problem likely to appear on the test.
12. Review with other students after studying alone.