

How to Prepare for and Take a Math Test

Begin Early

- Start at least a week before the exam.
- Ask about a review sheet.
- Ask what WILL be covered on the test.
- Ask what will NOT be covered.
- Ask if previous tests are available.
- Attend ALL classes week 10.

Create an Outline

- List the title of each section you will be tested over.
- Identify the main topics in each section.
- List any formulas or figures that go with each main topic.
- Expect one or two test questions from each section.

Make and Take a Practice Quiz

- Use review materials provided by your instructor plus returned quizzes and exams.
- Practice homework problems.
- Practice section examples.
- Practice chapter review questions.
- Practice chapter test questions.
- Get help if needed.
- Self-test without study aids.

Make a Cheat Sheet

- List formulas - group by use.
- List vocabulary words and definitions.
- Write reminders you wish you could have with you.
- Write out the thing you always forget.
- Make flash cards.

Review Session

- Attend the review session.
- Study before the session so you know what you struggle with.
- Ask questions!

- Study with a partner in the Learning Center.
- Listen and watch for clues from the instructor (emphasis, repetition, homework references).
- Follow up after class with the instructor.

Get Physical

- Get a good night's sleep.
- Eat nutritious food.
- Exercise.
- Bring what you need: pencils, erasers, calculator, beverage, snack.
- Arrive early and relax.
- Review flash cards while waiting.
- Visualize taking the test successfully.

During the Test

- Write down any formulas or notes you might forget during the exam.
- Look over the entire exam before you begin.
- Determine how much time you have for each problem.
- Read the instructions carefully so you do only what is asked.
- Work through any questions you know how to do first.
- Do not allow yourself to sit and stare.
- Ignore what others are doing.

What If You Forget?

- Draw figures and label as much as you can.
- List any formulas that might apply.
- Write notes about what you think you should do.
- Ask your instructor for clarification.
- Use all the available time for the exam.
- With any extra time, be sure to check your work.

How to Prepare for Math Tests.

To succeed in math one needs to be an active learner. Your being here is a first step in being that active learner. The following is an outline of strategies to help you become more effective at studying for math tests.

Studying for a math test begins the first day you walk into class.

Take good notes - this can happen if you make sure to read the section to be covered prior to the lecture. Ask questions during class if you don't understand a concept being covered. **Label your notes** from each lecture with a date and the sections covered. If you don't know what sections you're covering be sure to ask the instructor. Generally, your syllabus will contain a calendar of lecture topics and sections. Compare your notes with classmates - study group to fill in any blanks and make corrections.

Keep up with the homework; work ahead if you can. Always do your work neatly and show all appropriate steps since you can use your homework to study from. "*The single most important way to study for exams is to master the homework.*"¹ Pay attention to how the homework instructions are worded, they are often worded the same way on the test.

Remember, the general rule of thumb for college level courses is a *minimum* of 2 hours of study time outside class for every hour inside class. That means for a 4-credit course you need to plan on *at least* 8 hours a week of study and homework time outside of class - possibly more prior to a test.

Begin active studying for a test at least a week prior to the test date.

Just as you can't swallow your whole dinner in one mouthful, you can't study for a math test in one sitting. You need many forkfuls - sittings - for success!

Make sure you're clear on which sections/topics are to be covered on the test.

Plan on studying a couple hours a day in a place where you won't have a lot of distractions. Actually put pencil to paper and work out LOTS of problems.