

Rutgers Learning Centers

At Camden Campus

TESTS: TEN TIPS FOR TERRIFIC TEST-TAKING

1. **COME PREPARED.** Arrive early for tests. Bring all the materials you will need such as pencils and pens, a calculator, a dictionary, and a watch.
2. **STAY RELAXED AND CONFIDENT.** Don't become anxious. Don't talk to other students before a test; anxiety is contagious. Instead, remind yourself that you are well-prepared and are going to do well. If you feel anxious before or during a test, take several slow, deep breaths to relax.
3. **BE COMFORTABLE BUT ALERT.** Choose a good spot to take the test. Make sure you have enough room to work. Maintain an upright posture in your seat.
4. **PREVIEW THE TEST.** Spend 10% of your test time reading carefully through the test. Mark key terms and decide how to budget your time. Plan to do the easy questions first, and the most difficult questions last. As you read the questions, jot down brief notes indicating ideas you can use later in your answers.
5. **ANSWER THE TEST QUESTIONS IN A STRATEGIC ORDER.** Begin by answering the questions you know, then those with the highest point value. The last questions you answer should be the most difficult, take the greatest amount of writing, or have the least point value.
6. **WHEN TAKING A MULTIPLE CHOICE TEST, KNOW WHEN TO GUESS.** First eliminate answers you know are wrong. Always guess when there is no penalty for guessing or when you can eliminate options. Don't guess if you have no basis for your choice or if you are penalized for guessing. Since your first choice is usually correct, don't change your answers unless you are sure of the correction.
7. **WHEN TAKING ESSAY TESTS, ALWAYS THINK BEFORE YOU WRITE.** Create a brief outline for your essay by jotting down a few words to indicate ideas to discuss. Then number the items in your list to indicate the order for discussion.
8. **WHEN TAKING ESSAY TESTS, ALWAYS GET RIGHT TO THE POINT.** State your main point in the first sentence. Use your first paragraph to provide an overview of your essay. Use the rest of your essay to discuss these points in more detail. Back up your points with specific information, examples or quotations from your readings or notes.
9. **REVIEW YOUR TEST.** Reserve 10% of your test time for review. Make sure you have answered *all* the questions. Proofread your writing for spelling, grammar, and punctuation. Check your math answers for careless mistakes (e.g. misplaced decimals.) Match your actual answers for math problems against quick estimates.
10. **ANALYZE YOUR TEST RESULTS.** Each test can further prepare you for the next test. Decide which strategies worked best for you. Identify those that didn't work well and replace them. Use your tests to review when studying for final exams.

For more information, visit or call your nearest Rutgers Learning Center, or visit our website:<http://rlc.rutgers.edu>

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