

Tips for Reducing or Controlling Test Anxiety

- Prepare well in advance.
- Be physically ready to take the test (well-rested, proper nutrition and hydration, etc.).
- Monitor your thoughts when preparing for exams. Study calmly and confidently. If we practice stress out and anxious, we are likely to perform similarly on exam day.
- Give yourself a practice exam. Rehearse the material.
- Don't go to class too early.
- Don't quiz each other just before the exam.
- Admit that you will not know all the answers and avoid perfectionistic thinking.
- Allow yourself time to "warm up." Try not to panic if you don't know the first few answers.
- Pay attention to the test, not to yourself or others.
- If you notice you are not thinking well, relax yourself physically during the exam (use stress management, visualization, bio-feedback techniques).
- Don't hesitate to ask for clarification.
- Read over the test and plan your approach first.
- Utilize good test taking skills.
- Practice good time management and study skills techniques.
- Meet with a Counselor to discuss ways to reduce test anxiety, if needed.

Short Answer Test Tips

- Use flashcards, writing the key terms, dates and concepts on the front, and the definition, event, and explanations on the back.
- Try to anticipate questions that will be asked on the test to prepare for them. Usually what your instructor emphasizes in class will be on the test.
- Try not to leave an answer blank. Show your work/write down your thoughts, even if you don't get the exact answer, partial credit may be awarded.
- If you don't know the answer, mark it and come back to it after you finish the rest of the test and make an educated guess. Other parts of the test may give you clues to what the answer may be.
- If you can think of more than one answer for a question, ask the instructor what to do.
- Read the question carefully and make sure that you answer everything that it asks for. Some short answer questions have multiple parts.

True-False Test Tips

- Usually there are more true answers than false answers on most tests.
- If there is no guessing penalty, then guess. You have a 50% chance of getting the right answer.
- Read through each statement carefully, and pay attention to the qualifiers and key words.
- Qualifiers like "never, always, and every" mean that the statement must be true all of the time. Usually these types of qualifiers lead to a false answer.
- Qualifiers like "usually, sometimes, and generally" mean that the statement can be considered true or false depending on the circumstances. Usually these types of qualifiers lead to an answer of true.
- If any part of the question is false, then the entire statement is false, however, just because part of a statement is true does not necessarily make the entire statement true.

Multiple Choice Test Taking Tips

- Read the question before you look at the answers.
- Come up with the answer in your head before looking at the possible answers, this way the choices given on the test won't throw you off or trick you.
- Eliminate answers you know aren't right.
- Read all the choices before choosing your answer.
- If there is no guessing penalty, always take an educated guess and select an answer.
- Don't keep on changing your answer, usually your first choice is the right one, unless you misread the question.
- In "All of the above" and "None of the above" choices, if you are certain one of the statements is true don't choose "None of the above" and if you are sure one of the statements is false don't choose "All of the above."
- In a question with an "All of the above" choice, if you see that at least two correct statements, then "All of the above" is probably the answer.
- A positive choice is more likely to be true than a negative one.
- Usually the correct answer is the choice with the most information.

Essay Test Tips

- Read the directions carefully. Pay close attention to whether you are supposed to answer all the essays or only a specified amount) i.e. "Answer 2 out of the 3 questions").
- Make sure that you understand what the question is asking you. If you're not, ask your instructor.
- Make sure that you write down everything that is asked of you and more. The more details and facts that you write down, the higher your grade is going to be.
- Budget your time and don't spend the entire time on one essay.
- If the question is asking for facts, don't give your personal opinion on the topic.
- When writing your essay, try to be as neat as possible; Neater papers usually receive higher marks.
- Make an outline before writing your essay. This way your essay will be more organized and fluid. If you happen to run out of time, most instructors will give you partial credit for the ideas that you have outlined.
- Don't write long introductions and conclusions. The bulk of your time should be spent on answering the question(s) asked.
- Focus on one main idea per paragraph.
- If you have time left at the end, proofread your work and correct any errors.
- Budget your time. If you have an hour to write 3 essays, spend no more than 20 minutes on each essay, and then if you have time left over at the end you can go back and finish any incomplete essays.
- If you aren't sure about an exact date or number, use approximations (i.e. "Approximately 5,000" or "In the late 17th Century").
- If you make a mistake, simply draw a line through it, as that is much neater and quicker than erasing it.