

10 Steps To Help You Prepare For your Next Test

As unpleasant as taking a test can often be, it actually does more than just show your teacher what you know: it can actually help you learn.

Studies have shown that students who are tested regularly actually learn more content and retain it longer than students who have not been tested. Frequent testing has even been shown to help decrease test anxiety.

Not sure how to study for a test? Follow these study tips to make your best grade!



1. Get informed

Don't walk into your test unprepared for what you will face. Before you start studying, find out:

- textbook chapters and topics the test will cover
- test format

Will there be multiple-choice questions or short answers? Will you write an in-class essay? The goals and layout of the test will determine how you tackle learning the material.

2. Think like your teacher

Your homework assignments, quizzes, handouts, daily notes, and classwork are all indicators of what your teacher thinks is important about the information and what might appear on the test.

3. Make your own study aids

When it comes to learning, a [2013 study](#) showed that practice tests work BETTER than simply highlighting or re-reading your notes. So, turn your notes into flashcards or use a flashcard app for memorizing Spanish vocab. Ask your friends to quiz you or write your own practice test.

4. Practice for the inevitable

Outline essays ahead of time. For math tests, do plenty of practice problems similar to ones that you KNOW will appear. Make a list of questions that you think might show up on the test (and then make sure you can answer them!).

5. Study every day

If you have a test in a week, studying a little each day will help you identify tough concepts or weak areas in your knowledge in advance. Can't figure out factoring? See your teacher or an NHS tutor for additional help well before the test date.

6. Cut out the distractions



Distractions make it difficult to pay attention to what you're doing, which in turn makes it harder to commit facts to memory. Give yourself a leg up by turning off your cell phone or computer or sticking to instrumental music while you study (so you're not tempted to sing along!). Taking a break every 45 minutes or so will also help you stay focused.

7. Divide big concepts from smaller details

If you're studying a big topic—like the Civil War or cellular processes—try breaking the material you need to study into chunks. Study one battle at a time or one chapter section at a time—and then quiz yourself. Ask yourself questions about what you've just studied, and even write your answers down. If a parent or sibling is handy, ask them to quiz you on the information.

8. Don't neglect the “easy” stuff

Even if you've been acing a certain subject or concept all year and think the test will be a breeze, you should still give it a review before the big day. You don't want to lose points for careless errors or forget to memorize a key geometry formula.

9. Don't skip school

Missing classes automatically puts you at a disadvantage. Make sure you go to class (especially during the week leading up to the test) and attend any review sessions your teacher holds. Did you have to miss an important class? You can always ask your teacher to meet before or after school for help catching up.

10. Review the day of the test

Before you take the test, give yourself time for a quick review. Shuffle through those flashcards a couple of times or re-read your chapter outline. This will ensure the material is fresh in your mind.

- Developed from material available at [Princeton Review](#)