

ACT Test Taking Strategies and Tips

How do I prepare for test material?

Going to class, taking notes, and doing the homework is important - but it's only the first step to being prepared for a test. You need to prepare for tests! Make a study plan to review and practice your class topics so they are fresh and familiar in your mind for test day.

Instructions: Learn what topics are on the exam (ask an instructor or look at your syllabus). Then, map them out on the grid below to plan time to review and practice each one. There are tips for each day for your daily life that can help support a successful test day.

Days Until Test	Class Topics to Study	Assignments and Handouts	Tips	Done ?
7			Plan how long you will study each day and what you will study!	
6			Take 10 minutes to review test taking strategies for the test day	
5			Eat some fruits and vegetables. Stop by the NWTC pantry for free groceries	
4			Reassess your study plan and see if you are missing anything or need more time on a specific topic	
3			Ask your instructor any questions you have. Be sure they are specific and not an entire topic!	
2			Take 30 minutes to simply relax after you finish studying	
1			Try to get 8 hours of sleep	
0	Test Day!		Eat breakfast and give yourself time to relax before the test	

What do I do on Test Day (strategy)?

- Get good sleep for about 8 hours the night before and eat a good meal.
- Wake up with time to relax before your test, eat breakfast, and get hydrated.
- Think positively – You *can* take this test well and you *know* the material because you studied! Think: “I am smart”, “I am going to pass the test”, and “I know the class material”.
- Know how much time you have for the test. When you begin your test, take a look at the whole test so you can plan your time. Use the clock in the room to watch your time.
- Read questions carefully. Be sure you understand the question and have read each of the answers. Look for words like “always, never, sometimes, only, must” or other keywords specific to your class.
- If you do not know the answer immediately, eliminate incorrect options. Read the answers for familiar terms or ideas from your class material. Don’t overthink the question!
- Do not spend too much time on any one question. If a question is taking very long, choose an answer and then mark the question so you can come back to it after you finish the other questions.
- If there are essay questions or short answers, plan what you are going to write. Make a quick list on the back of your test to organize your thoughts before you start writing. Make sure you are answering the prompt clearly with specific examples.
- Remember to breathe and focus on the test ahead of you. Keep your thoughts in the moment and not on future results or distractions.
- You CAN be successful on tests and in your class with preparation before test day!