

Test Taking Without Fear

Most of us don't enjoy taking tests, but by keeping up with reading assignments, noting important facts, and keeping good notes, students can learn how to take the anxiety out of test day.

Fear is natural. We all react with **fear** in the face of danger, and to many, test taking presents potential danger.

Tests are important measures of our learning and usually compose a high percentage of our final grade in a class; therefore, it is normal to feel some anxiety about test-taking.

However, **excessive anxiety** or **irrational fear** can be crippling and make matters even worse.

It is possible to avoid this type of fear and anxiety by following a simple set of guidelines:

1. Start practicing good study habits with the first day of class.

- **Keep up** with all reading assignments and **make notes** of important facts.
- Maintain good class notes and **highlight points** that your teacher emphasizes.
- **Never throw away** returned quizzes, worksheets or themes; these are **good study sources**.

2. Be well-prepared.

- **Find out** from your teacher what **type of test** will be given. (i.e. essay, fill-in-the-blank, multiple-choice, etc.)
- If you're taking an **aptitude** or **achievement test**, find out:
 - **when** and **where** the test will be
 - **whether or not you might be penalized for guessing at an answer** - some tests do deduct points, and it may be best to leave a blank if you don't know the answer.

3. Be organized.

- Plan to **arrive** at a test a few minutes **early** to get settled and glance back over your notes.
- **Have all** the necessary **supplies** permitted by your teacher ready **beforehand** (i.e. pens, scratch paper, calculators, etc.).

4. **Pay attention to the situation.**

- **Listen to the instructions** given by your teacher and to those found on the test. Students often make needless mistakes because they haven't **read instructions carefully**.
- **Determine** how much time you will have so you can **budget it effectively**.
- **Read the instructions** on your test **before starting**.
- **Skip** questions that you **can't answer**. **Return** to them **later**.
- **Concentrate** on your test and **avoid time-wasters** such as looking up at the teacher, checking the progress of classmates, and watching the clock.

5. **Check over your test before turning it in.**

6. **Keep a file of all of your tests.**

- **Don't ever throw a test away** once it has been graded and returned.
- **Old tests are good study aids** and analyzing them will help you develop better test-taking strategies.

7. **Keep a positive outlook.**

- Know that **you are in control** of your study habits, and therefore, **you are in control** of your test-taking.
- See tests as opportunities to **prove yourself** and your abilities.
- Lastly, if you do well on a test, **give yourself credit** and know that you have the ability to perform well again.