

PREPARING FOR A TEST: 10 STUDY STRATEGIES

- 1. Start early:** allow enough time to ask teacher for help and to review material more than once
- 2. Review all materials:** textbook, notes, study guides, past quizzes
- 3. Highlight/underline** key concepts
- 4. Fill in Study Notes form:** make sure key concepts are supported by details
- 5. Review Study Notes covering up each side of the paper:** talk through ideas with someone else
- 6. Come up with mnemonics** (acronyms, visualizations, graphs, rhymes) – any gimmicks to help you remember details
- 7. Identify questions** that need clarification from teacher
- 8. Review, review, review**
- 9. Get a good night sleep** the night before
- 10. Avoid last-minute “cramming”** – especially with others who might confuse or stress you

TRUST YOURSELF!!

20-Minute Test Prep-Adapted. The habit of starting to prepare for exams on the first day of classes may be hard to get into, so at least starting it two weeks prior to the exam

would be a good start. The following is an adaptation of the 20-Minute Test Prep strategy. Begin to do the following steps during the two weeks prior to the test.

When to Do	What to Do
1. Two weeks before the exam	Create an outline of the topics that will be covered on the exam from your syllabus.
2. During the week, review in 20-minute segments for each topic.	Create study aids, for example, study sheets, flash cards, outlines, and summaries, and anticipate 5-10 test questions from your class or reading notes, depending in the major source of information. Make a note of need-to-learn information. Remember, always review by topic.
3. At the end of this week you should have reviewed each topic 2-3 times	Base your review on topics that need more time and ones that need less. This is a perfect time and task for a study group; using the topic outline, each member of the study group creates questions for a different topic and answers them. By sharing the task, each member gets a complete set of questions and answers for each topic. Study group meetings allow the group members to discuss the topics and add essential material not included in the answers shared.
4. One week before the exam	Develop a study schedule assigning each topic to specific days and or times. The length of time for each topic should relate to the amount of review you need. Review by topic!
5. Leave the last 2 days before the exam	To do a final review of all the topics or just the ones that are most difficult for you.

20-Minute Test Prep.

If you use it as it was intended, then you would begin using it on

the first day of classes and develop the habit of ongoing review.

When to do it	What to do
After each class	Spend approximately 20 minutes reviewing that day's material. As you review, create study aids, for example, study sheets, flash cards, outlines, summaries.
At the end of each week	Spend approximately 10 minutes reviewing the week's work in each course. Then spend 10 minutes anticipating 5-10 test questions you think your professor will ask on the test covering that material. Later, answer your questions.
One to two weeks before the exam	Create a topic outline from your test questions or syllabus. Then, review one topic at a time.

How to Prepare for Exams

This chart provides suggestions for what to do in order to prepare for a test

and why that particular strategy is effective.

What to Do	Why It Works
1. Find out when the exam will be given.	1. It organizes you. You know when your preparation needs to be done.
2. Find out what material the exam will cover and its format: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • comprehensive or cumulative exam; • sources of information to review (textbook chapters, outside readings, lecture notes, handouts, etc.); • essay, objective, or both types of questions and how many of each. 	2. It organizes you. You identify the "what" and "how" to study.
3. Identify all the sources of information and the topics that will be covered on the exam in those sources.	3. It organizes you. You identify where the material is that you need to review.
4. Divide the material into sections by topic rather than source. Use the topic outline in the syllabus if it is detailed and add material not noted.	4. It organizes you. It helps you consolidate the information into one place.
5. Set up a study schedule within your current schedule, assigning each topic to a specific block of time.	5. It organizes you. It helps you avoid cramming and makes test preparation more manageable.
6. Prepare study sheets, index cards, or other review tools for each of the topics.	6. You are actively studying. You reinforce your learning while creating portable study tools that can be used anywhere.
7. Using the review tools, predict test questions and answer them during the scheduled study time.	7. You are evaluating what you know. Your preparation is in the format of your test, therefore lessening your test anxiety.