

Test Taking Strategies

Before you take another test (such as the PSAT, SAT, Pre-ACT, or ACT), review these helpful tips and strategies! Using these study methods can make a difference in your results and also help you feel prepared on the day of your test!

Take plenty of time to prepare for the test

- Mark your calendar for the day of the test and schedule study time in advance.
- If possible, try to start studying 3-6 months before your test date.
- Make a study schedule. If you have free time to practice over the summer, try to start studying!
- Start with studying 1-2 hours per week, and slowly increase your study time.
- Spread your study time over several days, weeks, or even months.
- Prepare your study area. Keep it free of distractions such as cell phones, noise, and clutter.

Get comfortable with the test

- Take the practice tests as often as possible. Test experts suggest taking at least two practice tests before you take your exam- take the first practice test before you officially start studying, and a final practice test closer to your test date. Familiarize yourself with the instructions and types of questions for each test section.
- Time yourself! Practice taking the tests in the designated amounts of time. Learn how to pace yourself.
- Know your strengths and weaknesses. Focus your studies on improving areas of weakness.

Diversify your study methods

- Students retain and remember information best when they vary the ways they learn.
- Use both written/print practice guides and test prep books, and on-line resources such as the Learning Express Library website- <https://www.phoenixpubliclibrary.org/browse/eLibrary/Pages/eLearning/eLearning.aspx>
- Take notes while reading study guides and subject matter. Keep your notes organized!
- Put together a study sheet to focus on concepts or things that you need to focus on most.
- Make some flashcards for memorizing test material.
- Use the website quizlet.com for flashcard games and other study techniques!
- If you don't understand something, ask for help. You may consider getting a tutor. You can also form a study group or team up with a study buddy who you can review things with. Working together will make studying easier!

Improve your skills

- Take challenging courses throughout your high school career.
- Ask questions and take notes in class.
- Use school tutoring if you are having trouble with your coursework.
- Read, read, and read some more! Read newspapers, magazine articles, non-fiction, and fiction books to build your vocabulary. If you ever see an unfamiliar word, make sure to look up its definition!

On the day of the test

- Make sure to get a good night's sleep, eat a good breakfast, and have all materials ready for the day of the test.
- Take a snack with you so you don't get hungry in the middle of the test!
- Arrive early on the day of the test so you do not feel rushed.
- Ask for clarification if you do not understand the test directions.

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