

# Test Taking Strategies

Before

- Start active studying days in advance. Remember studying is more than reading your notes! Practise questions done in class and for homework
- Get a good night sleep the night before.
- Try to avoid talking to students in other classes to get information about the test. This only makes it more stressful!
- EAT! Make sure you have eaten on the day of the test.
- Be confident in your own studying! Don't worry about feeling a little nervous...it's natural!



During

- Read through the ENTIRE test before you begin so you can:
  - Determine how much time to spend on each question
  - Underline/Highlight key words in questions
  - See all the work you have to do so you can budget your time
- Start with the questions you know best (the ones you find easier). This will help boost your confidence.
- Don't spend too much time on any one question. Come back to it later if it is taking too long.
- If you come across questions to which you don't know the answer, skip them and come back to them later.
  - Your brain will still process the information while you are working on other questions and when you return it might make more sense
- **Avoid** leaving questions blank! Remember you are showing what you have learned; try to write something related to the question so you may receive part marks.
- Leave some time at the end to read over your answers.

After

- Put the test in perspective. A test does not indicate your self worth!
- As hard as it might seem, when the test is over try not to think about it until you get it back. You can't change your answers so don't waste your energy worrying about it.
- When you get it back, make sure you know where you went wrong and correct your test.



## Suggestions for...

---

### Multiple Choice Questions

- Try to come up with the answer before looking at the choices
- Eliminate answers you know are incorrect
- If there is no penalty, always take an educated guess and select an answer. Don't leave questions blank
- Don't keep on changing your answer; usually your first choice is the right one
- Avoid looking for a pattern in the answers!
- If you are stuck, mark or star the question and come back to it later
- Do not change an answer that comes to mind first unless you are **absolutely** sure it is wrong
- Look for words that provide a clue to the correct answer; "generally", "always", "usually", "only", and so on



---

### Short Answer Questions

- Try to anticipate questions that will be asked on the test and prepare for them. Topics on which you spend a lot of time in class usually appear on tests!
- Read the questions carefully. Make sure you are answering the question that is asked
- Underline or highlight key words (i.e. Draw, Explain, Calculate)
- Try not to leave an answer blank. Write down your thoughts and ideas
- Check the number of marks allotted to a question and budget your time accordingly
- If the question involves a calculation, make sure your answer is reasonable

---

### Essay Style Questions

- Brainstorm your ideas or plan an outline on a scrap piece of paper
- Underline key words (i.e. compare, explain, summarize...)
- Don't write long introductions and conclusions (unless you are being specifically tested on essay writing).
- The majority of your time should be spent on answering the question(s) asked.
- Be sure to use evidence to support your ideas

