

# TOP 10 TEST-TAKING STRATEGIES

## 1. Manage your study time wisely

Set aside study time and plan to study throughout the semester. Utilize time management strategies such as the Intense Study Session and 3-part planning. Schedule an appointment with a Study Skills Tutor at USF's ASC for one-on-one help with time management.

## 2. Utilize appropriate study methods & alternate between subjects and methods

Alternate between subjects if possible. For example, one hour of Chemistry then one hour of Calculus.) Also, alternate between various study methods such as the PARROT Method for textbook reading, Concept Mapping, Note Cards, practice problems, etc. (do not study a subject in the same way for too long). Schedule an appointment with a Study Skills Tutor at USF's ASC for one-on-one help with study strategies.

## 3. Find a place to study that is comfortable for you

Select a location that allows you to stay focused and is free of distractions (no instant messages, cell phones, tv).

## 4. Continuously review your notes for completeness, organization and accuracy

Take notes methodically with 2-page Note Format, Concept Maps, and other organizational tools. Schedule an appointment with a Study Skills Tutor at USF's ASC for one-on-one help with these note-taking strategies. Make time for several review sessions (short and frequent is better than one long cram session).

## 5. Make connections to the subject that make sense

Relate the material to something you know about or in which you are interested in order to make real connections with the material.

## 6. Stay healthy – healthy mind and healthy body

Eating healthy prior to a test can improve your concentration. The night before do something to relax and get a good night of sleep. Before the test, visualize yourself doing well.

## 7. Do not cram

If possible do not study on test day (it can increase anxiety, which can lead to test anxiety and memory loss). Schedule several review sessions prior to the test - short but frequent is better than one long cram session. Review the main the main points the night before.

## 8. Look over the entire test first

Take a deep breath, relax, and forget about the people around you. Make sure to read directions carefully. Determine types of questions, how many points for each, whether you have a choice of questions to answer, etc. Adopt a time budget for each type of question, allowing extra time for checking. Answer the easiest questions first, then go back to more challenging questions.

## 9. Don't get frustrated when you get stuck.

Reread the question and make sure you understand what is being asked. Don't hesitate to skip the question, marking it with a circle so that you can come back to it later. If all else fails and guessing is an option, choose an answer that makes the most sense to you.

## 10. After the test

Reflect on how it went: what went well? What could have been improved? After the test is returned, assess the types of mistakes you made (didn't know the content, certain types of questions, silly errors?). Learn from your mistakes and make an effort to do something different next time.

