

## Multiple Choice Test Taking Tips

Multiple Choice tests can be challenging. The goal is to choose the “best” answer. This tip sheet is meant to help you approach your multiple choice test with a strategy and focus so you can make educated guesses when you’re unsure of the “best” answer.

Before you go into your test, make sure you take steps to keep test anxiety at bay. Make sure you get 7-8 hours of sleep the night before the test. Exercise the night before and/or morning of the test to burn off anxiety and keep you focused. Eat a solid breakfast the morning of your test. Don’t go into your test with low blood sugar. Avoid too much caffeine before the test. Too much can make you jittery and anxious. Get pumped! Listen to music, give yourself a pep talk, get a hug from your Mom, etc. Think positive! Avoid alcohol and any other recreational drug use especially the night before your test.

### **Read the directions before you begin and make sure you understand them.**

Directions might ask you to choose a certain number of questions to answer. Don’t be afraid to write down, circle, or cross out anything that helps you clarify or understand the directions.

### **Get it out of your mind and onto paper.**

Use a scrap piece of paper to write down notes to yourself if necessary as you go through the test. When you first receive the test, splashdown! Use a scrap piece of paper to write down the last few facts that are on your mind from your last minute cramming session. Write down any formulas or acronyms you’ve had to memorize.

### **Look through the entire test before starting it.**

When you first receive the test, briefly look through each page to see how many questions there are and to get a feel for the questions.

### **Answer the easy ones first!**

Go through the entire test and answer the questions you are sure you know. Check off these questions. Circle any questions you don’t know right away. Once you’ve made it through all the questions on the first go around, go back and try to answer the questions you didn’t know. Make educated guesses on the ones you think you might know. Save the ones you have no idea about until the end.

### **Read each question twice. Focus on the “tricky” words that are meant to confuse you.**

Make sure you understand and process what is being asked. Multiple choice questions are sometimes written to trick you. You should focus on tricky words like “never,” “always,” and “not.” Circle or cross out any tricky words.

### **Try to answer each question in your head before looking at the answer options.**

Use a piece of paper or flashcard to cover the answer options. Ask yourself the question. Then test yourself and try to think of the answer. Slowly reveal the four answer options. If you have already thought of an answer and you see it in your four options, chances are, you’ve got this question correct.

### **Read all of the answers.**

This sounds pretty simple but make sure you read ALL of the answers before choosing the best one. Have questions? Contact the Manager of Student Learning Support & Disability Resources.

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### **Eliminate the wrong answers first.**

If you're not sure of the answer, cross out the ones you know are wrong.

### **For questions where "all of the above" is an answer, you only need to make sure that more than one answer is correct.**

If more than one answer option is correct, and you have the option of a, b, and c, and d, all of the above, you can choose "all of the above."

### **Once you've narrowed it down to two possible answers, think about which answer is wrong.**

If you're not sure what the right answer is, and you've got two choices, can you make a case for why one answer might be wrong? If so, then this answer probably is wrong. Choose the other answer.

### **Select the best answer.**

One or more answers may be correct, but you must select the best answer. It's sometimes so tricky! Try to think like your instructor. What would they choose? Do you remember hearing them emphasize certain concepts, words, or ideas?

### **Answer every question!**

Even if you run out of time, go through and make educated guesses on every question. Make sure you answer every question as you just might be able to get some points! If you leave questions unanswered, you have absolutely no chance of getting any points.

### **Trust your gut.**

Go with your first inclination unless you go back through the question and know for sure that you have initially chosen the wrong answer.

### **Don't change your answers!**

Resist the urge to go back through the test and change your answers. Your first choice is usually the answer you should stick with. Second-guessing yourself can lead to lost points.

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