

- ◆ Be aware what type of answer the question requires. Watch for action verbs. (See below.)
- ◆ Present your answer in a standard format. Include: Introduction, Body, and Conclusion.
- ◆ Get down to business. Include the most amount of point-earning information in the least amount of time.
- ◆ Write legible, complete sentences and paragraphs.
- ◆ Leave space for additional information.
- ◆ Re-read your answers. Correct spelling and grammatical errors as neatly as possible.
- ◆ If you run out of time - outline the remaining information. You may receive partial credit.

### Action Verb List

- Analyze** - Break into separate parts and examine, discuss, or interpret each part.
- Compare** - Examine two or more things. Identify similarities and differences. Comparisons generally ask for similarities more than differences.
- Contrast** - Show differences. Set in opposition.
- Criticize** - Make judgments. Evaluate comparative worth. Criticism often involves analysis.
- Define** - Give meaning, usually a meaning specific to the course or subject. Determine the precise limits of the term to be defined. Explain the exact meaning. Definitions are usually short.
- Describe** - Give a detailed account. Make a picture with words. List characteristics, qualities, and parts.
- Discuss** - Consider and debate or argue the pros and cons of an issue. Write about any conflict. Compare and Contrast.

**Illustrate** - Comment upon, give examples, describe relationships, or events.

**Enumerate** - Give your opinion of an expert. Include evidence to support the evaluation.

**Prove** - Support with facts (especially facts presented in class or in the text.)

**State** - Explain precisely.

**Summarize** - Give a brief, condensed account. Include conclusions. Avoid unnecessary details.

### Stay Focused

One technique that helps students stay focused during a test is to take a blank sheet of paper and cover up the test except for the question you are working on. This helps you concentrate on one question at a time.

### References

<http://www.mtsu.edu/~studskl/> Academic Resource Center, Utah State University, [www.usu.edu/arc](http://www.usu.edu/arc)

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## Pathways to College Success



## ► Test Taking Skills



## Test Taking Tips

Taking tests is one of the most stressful aspects of the college experience. **The best way to decrease your test anxiety is to be prepared by having good study skills and effective time management.** This pamphlet provides additional information that will assist you in eliminating stress due to test taking.

## General Information

- ◆ Give yourself plenty of time to travel to the test site.
- ◆ Dress comfortably.
- ◆ Eat something prior to testing.
- ◆ Arrive early. Avoid discussing the test with other students.
- ◆ Read all the directions and make sure you understand them.
- ◆ Budget your time. Be aware of time limits and the number of questions.
- ◆ Read each question carefully.
- ◆ Ask for help from the instructor if you do not understand the question.
- ◆ Do not be concerned if students finish before you.
- ◆ Do the easiest questions first.
- ◆ Think positive thoughts.
- ◆ Do not panic.
- ◆ Check your work.
- ◆ Beware of changing your answers! Make sure you have a good reason to change your first answer.

## One Week Prior to the Test

- ◆ Plan a strategy to study portions each day.
- ◆ Use a calendar to schedule study times as well as reward time.
- ◆ Make sure you stay with the schedule.

## The Day Prior to the Test

- ◆ Review in small increments of time.
- ◆ Remind yourself that you are ready and confident.
- ◆ Do something that you enjoy.
- ◆ Relax before going to sleep.
- ◆ Go to sleep at a reasonable hour.

## Objective Tests

### Multiple Choice

- ◆ Answer questions in order.
- ◆ Read the questions carefully. Watch for negative wording such as "not," "seldom," "never," "most," "best," and "worst."
- ◆ Place a check by the questions you are unsure of and then go back and answer them later.
- ◆ Watch for grammatical inconsistencies between the stem and the response.
- ◆ If not sure of answer - eliminate the wrong answers, choose from remaining answers.

### Matching

- ◆ Work one column at a time on matching questions. Mark off the used answers.

## True/False

- ◆ Be aware of absolute words that imply no exceptions. Never - none - always - all - every- only.
- ◆ Be aware of qualifiers that limit meaning and allow exceptions and possibilities. Some - few - often - many.
- ◆ Double negatives tend to show a positive statement.
- ◆ The word "not" does not always make a statement false.
- ◆ Be aware of limiting phrases. Names, dates, and places are often used as the key to making a statement false.
- ◆ If any part of the statement is false, the answer is false.

## Problem Tests

- ◆ Read all questions first. Write down formulas, rules, and equations while they are fresh on your mind.
- ◆ Answer the easiest questions first.
- ◆ Be neat and show all your work.
- ◆ Leave spaces between answers. You may need to add something later.
- ◆ Never leave a blank answer.
- ◆ Check your work.

## Essay Tests

- ◆ Read all questions before beginning.
- ◆ Make an outline of what you want to include in the essay to keep you on track and not forget any important information. Check off information in outline as you write.