

PREPARING FOR A TEST

Do you:

- _____ 1. *Set up a place to study that minimizes potential distractions and where you do nothing but study?* Use a desk or table, not your bed or an extremely comfortable chair. This location should become associated with studying so that it “triggers” this activity, just as a mouth-watering smell elicits hunger.
- _____ 2. *Avoid cramming?* Be prepared by keeping assignments and readings up-to-date and reviewing regularly. Last minute preparation can easily induce anxiety, an emotional state that blocks memory.
- _____ 3. *Space your learning?* If you distribute your practice periods, you actually learn and retain more. The final review should occur as close as possible to the day and time of the test BUT stop studying at least 30 minutes before so that you free up your *working memory* for the test.
- _____ 4. *Practice the kind of thing you will do during the test?* Try to predict questions and make up practice questions. Concentrate first on vocabulary, next on basic facts, and then on general concepts (always keeping your instructor’s focus in mind!)
- _____ 5. *Use some form of recitation?* This is one time when it’s okay to talk to yourself 😊! Do not simply read and reread the material.
- _____ 6. *Overlearn?* Psychologists believe that overlearning improves retention. Most of us, however, tend to overestimate how much we know. Yes, you may understand a chapter as you read it, but by devoting extra time to testing yourself and reviewing what you *think* you know, you’ll remember more when it comes time to take a test.
- _____ 7. *Prepare your brain for optimum functioning by maintaining your body?* Prior to a test, get a good night’s rest, eat well-balanced meals, and keep up with regular exercise.