

Test-Taking Strategies

Proven strategies to help you perform your best on every math test. Print this out and review before each exam.

Before the Test

- Create a study schedule at least 3 days ahead
- Practice under timed conditions
- Know the test format (multiple choice, free response, or both)
- Review your mistake log for patterns
- Get a good night of sleep

Time Management

- Quickly scan the entire test first
- Allocate time per section based on points
- Do not spend too long on one question
- Leave 5 minutes at the end for review

Multiple Choice Strategies

- Eliminate obviously wrong answers first
- Plug answer choices back into the problem
- Estimate before calculating
- Watch for answers that are too easy

Free Response Tips

- Show all your work, even if it seems obvious
- Label your answers clearly with units
- Check that your answer is reasonable
- Write neatly so the grader can follow your logic

Common Traps to Avoid

- Misreading negative signs or minus symbols
- Forgetting to include units in your answer
- Simple calculation errors from rushing
- Not reading the entire question before answering
- Changing a correct answer out of doubt

If You Get Stuck

- Skip it and come back with fresh eyes
- Try a simpler version of the problem
- Work backwards from the answer choices
- Draw a diagram or number line
- Re-read the question for missed clues

Tests measure what you know, not what you are worth. Stay calm, use your strategies, and trust the preparation you have done.