

Tips for Reducing Test Anxiety

Test anxiety is when a student excessively worries about doing well on a test. This can become a major hindrance on test performance and cause extreme nervousness and memory lapses among other symptoms. The following are tips on reducing test taking anxiety.

- Prepare for the exam ahead of time. “Cramming” is a big culprit of test anxiety.
- Think positively while preparing for and taking the test. Attitude has a surprising effect on your behavior and performance.
- Get plenty of rest and sleep before the test.
- Stay relaxed, if you begin to get nervous take a few deep breaths slowly to relax yourself and then get back to work.
- Read the directions slowly and carefully. If you don’t understand the directions on the test, ask the teacher to explain it to you.
- Skim through the test so that you have a good idea how to pace yourself.
- Write down important formulas, facts, definitions and/or keywords in the margin first so you don’t worry about forgetting them.
- Do the simple questions first to help build up your confidence for the harder ones.
- Don’t worry about how fast other people finish their test; just concentrate on your own test.
- If you don’t know a question, skip it for the time being (come back to it later if you have time), and remember that you don’t have to always get every question right to do well on the test. Plus you may get clues from other test questions.
- Focus on the question at hand; don’t let your mind wander onto other things.
- Avoid listening to others or discussing the test with others while waiting for the test. The anxiety of others can “rub off” and suddenly you begin to doubt yourself.