

STUDY GUIDE FOR THE AP HUMAN GEOGRAPHY EXAM

There's no one right way to study for a test. If you're looking for a surefire shortcut, there simply isn't one. However, if you're reading this, you're already on the right track—you're putting in the three key resources for successful study habits: time, energy, and focus. The following study guide features a few suggested ways to tackle the AP Human Geography Exam, depending on whether the test is just around the corner (**1 Week Cram**) or if you've got more time to practice (**7 Week Stretch**).

Remember that these plans are simply suggestions; everybody learns in their own way and at their own pace. When choosing where to begin, use what you know about your own study habits. If cramming for a test hasn't been effective for you in the past, perhaps it's time to try spreading out your practice over a longer period of time. On the other hand, if you find yourself forgetting key material just before the test, you might want to try an intense refresher in the week leading up to the exam.

If you're not sure how best to prepare, we recommend using Practice Test 1 (page 9) as a diagnostic, which means giving yourself enough time to mirror what will be allotted to you on test day (2 hours and 15 minutes), and then working in a quiet and uninterrupted environment. When you're done, check answers against the key on page 30 and tally your free-response score on page 47, and then turn to "Designing Your Study Plan" (page 57). If you're happy with your score, you might just spend a week focusing on the specific section for which you had wrong answers. On the other hand, if you're struggling across the board, you may be best served by building up those content gaps over the course of a few months. Here are our recommendations.

1 Week Cram

The following schedule is an extremely abbreviated way of gaining maximum exposure to the course. It involves reinforcement over a limited amount of time, so you'll be touching on each bit of content four times—once when you skim the chapter to get a general sense of the ideas within, again when you read the summary to remind yourself of what you're expected to have learned, a third time when you test your knowledge against the drill questions, and finally when you mark key terms that you remain unfamiliar or uncomfortable with. If you have extra time on any given day, we recommend reading the portions of each content chapter that you feel least comfortable with.

Day 0, Sunday [2 hours]

Take **Practice Test 1**. Over the next week, especially as you review sections that you did not score as highly on as you'd have liked, continue to look over the answer explanations. This will help you reinforce the positive choices you've made in your approach to test-taking and avoid the repetition of specific mistakes.

Day 1, Monday [2 hours]

- Read “Part III: About the AP Human Geography Exam.”
- Skim Chapter 3, “Thinking Geographically.”
- Familiarize yourself with Chapter 1, “How to Approach Multiple-Choice Questions.”

Day 2, Tuesday [2 hours]

- Familiarize yourself with Chapter 2, “How to Approach Free-Response Questions.”
- Answer and review the Chapter 3 Drill Questions (pages 139–142)
- Skim Chapter 4, “Population and Migration Patterns and Processes.”

Day 3, Wednesday [2 hours]

- Review the Chapter 3 Key Terms (pages 136–137).
- Answer and review the Chapter 4 Drill Questions (pages 184–187).
- Skim Chapter 5, “Cultural Patterns and Processes.”

Day 4, Thursday [2 hours]

- Review the Chapter 4 Key Terms (page 181). Make sure you know the Demographic Transition Model (shown on page 150) and the concepts of population density and sustainability (pages 175–177).
- Answer and review the Chapter 5 Drill Questions (pages 237–240).
- Skim Chapter 6, “Political Patterns and Processes.”

Day 5, Friday [3 hours]

- Review the Chapter 5 Key Terms (pages 233–234). Make sure you can distinguish between the major world religions (pages 207–211).
- Answer and review the Chapter 6 Drill Questions (pages 276–278).
- Skim Chapter 7, “Agriculture and Rural Land-Use Patterns and Processes.”
- Skim Chapter 8, “Cities and Urban Land-Use Patterns and Processes.”

Day 6, Saturday [5 hours]

- Review the Chapter 6 Key Terms (pages 273–274). Make sure you can distinguish between units of political organization (page 242).
- Answer and review the Chapter 7 and 8 Drill Questions (pages 311–314 & 352–355).
- Skim Chapter 9, “Industrial and Economic Development Patterns and Processes.”
- Take **Practice Test 2**. Review the Answers and Explanations. Circle any questions that you missed.

Day 7, Sunday [3 hours]

- Review the Chapter 7, 8, and 9 Key Terms (pages 308–309, 349–350, 392–393).
- Take **Practice Test A** (download from your Student Tools).
- Compare any circled Drill questions or Key Terms to the questions you got wrong or felt unsure about on the practice tests. Spend any remaining time reviewing the content in these areas. Go back to “Geographers to Know” (page 135): are you comfortable discussing all of these people?

This may be your last chance to study before the test, and that comes with a lot of pressure. But take a moment to pause, look back, and realize how hard you’ve been working this week. Don’t burn yourself out by pushing for more than two hours. Rest is an important part of studying, too: It’s when the mind processes everything.

7 Week Stretch

This schedule doesn't break things into a day-to-day calendar, but helps to establish what you should aim to accomplish within a given week. For some, that may be a matter of evenly distributing the reading material across the week. For others, it may be to spend one day studying, one day reviewing, and one day testing. We have arranged the material by EARLY, MID, and LATE week.

Week 1

- EARLY: Read Chapter 3.
- MID: Review Key Terms for Chapter 3 (pages 136–137).
- LATE: Read Part IV. Answer Chapter 3 Drill Questions (pages 139–142) and check the explanations.
- OPTIONAL: Take Practice Test 1 (page 9). Do this now if you are planning to use the test diagnostically. Otherwise, if you want to gauge your improvement after first reviewing course material, take this during Week 6.

Week 2

- EARLY: Read Chapter 4.
- MID: Review Key Terms for Chapter 4 (page 181).
- LATE: Answer Chapter 4 Drill Questions (pages 184–187) and check the explanations. Read Chapter 5.

Week 3

- EARLY: Review Key Terms for Chapter 5 (pages 233–234).
- MID: Answer Chapter 5 Drill Questions (pages 237–240) and check the explanations.
- LATE: Read Chapter 6.

Week 4

- EARLY: Review Key Terms for Chapter 6 (pages 273–274).
- MID: Read Chapter 7.
- LATE: Answer Chapter 6 Drill Questions (pages 276–278) and check the explanations.

Week 5

- EARLY: Read Chapter 8.
- MID: Review Key Terms for Chapter 7 (pages 308–309). Answer Chapter 7 Drill Questions (pages 311–314) and check the explanations.
- LATE: Read Chapter 9.

Week 6

- EARLY: Review Key Terms for Chapter 8 (pages 349–350). Answer Chapter 8 Drill Questions (pages 352–355) and check the explanations.
- MID: Take **Practice Test 1** (page 9). (If you took Practice Test 1 during Week 1, take Practice Test 2 now instead of during Week 7.)
- LATE: Read Answers and Explanations for Practice Test 1; use Key Terms to identify and review any sections that you feel uncomfortable with.

Week 7

- EARLY: Review Key Terms for Chapter 9 (pages 392–393). Answer Chapter 9 Drill Questions (pages 396–399) and check the explanations.
- MID: Take **Practice Test 2** (page 403). Read the Answers and Explanations for Practice Test 2. Review any sections you feel uncomfortable with, especially those you got wrong on Practice Test 2.
- LATE: Take **Practice Test A** (download from your Student Tools). Read the Answers and Explanations for Practice Test A. Review any sections you feel uncomfortable with, especially those you got wrong on Practice Test A.

FINAL NOTES

Don't feel as if you have to limit yourself to one of these templates. This is your test and your book; the most effective practice is likely to be that which you feel most comfortable with and able to commit to. That said, a few final pointers for adapting the book:

- Spread out the practice tests so that you can track progress and learn from mistakes.
- Really review the answer explanations; don't just gloss over them or simply look at the answer key. Educated guessing is a valid strategy, and nobody will ever know if you got a question right by accident, but the point of reviewing is to try to ensure that you can later replicate these results on purpose.
- Don't use the multiple parts of each chapter—content, drill questions, and key terms—all at once. Your goal isn't just to cram and remember material for a single day—unless you're taking the test tomorrow—so the more that you can check back in on how much you remember from a section over the course of your review, the better.
- Feel free to use other resources! We've given you the best content review and practice tests at our disposal, but if you're still struggling over a difficult concept, and your teacher can't help, another perspective can only help. (Just make sure you fact-check the source!) A particularly useful site is that of the AP itself, where you can read through free-response questions from previous years, as well as find some sample multiple-choice problems. <https://apstudent.collegeboard.org/apcourse/ap-human-geography/exam-practice>