

# Before Testing Strategies

## **Be prepared**

Study the material in advance; do not leave cramming for the day before your test. Try to create a study schedule for the week or two before your exam.

## **Get plenty of sleep**

It is hard to function at your top most level when you are tired. Your brain needs time to reset in order to function.

## **Avoid the use of drugs and alcohol**

The clearer your mind, the clearer the material.

## **Exercise**

This can help increase your mental alertness and keep you focused.

## **Have a moderate breakfast**

Fresh fruits and vegetables help reduce stress; avoid caffeine, sugar and junk foods. These foods can increase anxiety and decrease focus.

## **Allow yourself time**

This one is a talent of timing. You want to arrive early enough to get settled. This way you do not feel rushed. However, you do not want to get to class too early and sit in the room listening to other people talk. Sometimes you can walk into a class and feel prepared and ready for the test, but you hear a classmate talking about the material in a different way, which makes you second guess your knowledge and makes you anxious. So find the right amount of time to get to class in order to be settled in, but not enough time to start second guessing all your studying.

## **Do not schedule important meeting immediately after the test**

This can be distracting for several reasons. First, it might cause you to lose focus because you are thinking about the next meeting. Or, you might be worried about rushing through your test, because you are worried about getting to your next meeting on time.

## **Choose a seat**

Find a seat in the classroom where you will not be easily distracted. This may mean the front row so no one is in front of you being distracting.

## **Reality Check**

How important is this exam in the grand scheme of things? Keep it in perspective.

## **No negative self-talk! Use positive affirmations**

Say a phrase to help keep things in perspective, "I've done this before, I can do it again."  
Or "I have all the knowledge I need to get this done.")