There is no doubt about it — exams are stressful! The night before the exam can be especially tricky as you try to fall asleep, worrying about whether you have prepared enough or if you could have done more.

In having such thoughts, you are only stressing yourself out! Instead, you can choose to follow some of these best practices the day, night and morning before an exam so that you can remain calm, wake up feeling refreshed, and enter your assessments ready to do your best.

**The day before your exam**

During the day you can continue with your studying to fit in some final revision before your exam. It’s a good idea to get up early and plan out your day before you get going – you’ll get much more done if you break it up and work out exactly what you need to know.

There’s no way you’ll be able to cover everything in one day, but there are some ways you can make this time count for more:

* Use active revision techniques. Active revision means engaging with you study material instead of just staring at it. You might summarise your notes in your own words, quiz yourself with flashcards, explain concepts to a friend, or applying your knowledge in different contexts. It’s all about making your brain work and really sticking those facts and ideas in there!
* Find the right environment. As much as we wish it weren’t true, you really won’t get much done from your bed or sofa. You’ll be a lot more productive in an environment that you associate with working. So, set yourself up at your desk or spend a few hours [studying on campus](https://studentnews.manchester.ac.uk/2023/01/12/secret-study-spaces/)or at the Library.
* Take regular breaks. The last thing you want to do the day before your exam is burn yourself out. Try to get out and get some fresh air or get some snacks to help fuel your brain.

**The night before your exam**

The instinct to pull an all-nighter and cram the night before a test can be tempting. However, having your brain active right before bed doesn’t lead to the quality sleep you need the night before an exam.

You might want to cast your eye over your revision notes or get someone to test you on something for one last time. However, it’s not the time for hard-core brain works and you should schedule in some time to wind down before bed.

Here are some of the things that you could be doing:

* Double checking you have everything you need for tomorrow’s exam ready to go in the morning, including where you need to be and at what time
* Having a nutritious and healthy meal
* Getting some exercise or fresh air
* Do something you find relaxing and shut your brain off before before bed
* Getting an early night
* Set your alarm and try to get up a bit earlier so that you have some time to spare in the morning.

**The morning of your exam**

You wake up on the morning of your exam, and you’ve already done all you can to study. But, how do you get your mind and body ready for test day?

Start the day with a good breakfast, and give yourself plenty of time to get to your exam. Avoid going over topics and discussing your revision with others as this is only likely to stress you out. Once in there, stay focused and calm:

* Take a few minutes to read the instructions and questions before getting started
* Plan how much time you’ll need for each question. Do not panic if you get stuck on a question, but try to leave yourself enough time at the end to come back to it.
* Once the exam is finished, try to forget about it. Do not spend too much time going over it in your head or comparing answers with your friends, as this is only likely to stress you out.