

Managing Test Anxiety

What is test anxiety?

Test anxiety is a type of performance anxiety. People can experience test anxiety for a number of reasons. While it can be caused due to a lack of preparation, even well-prepared students can experience test anxiety.

Test-Taking Suggestions:

- Skim the entire test before you start:
 - o Look at how the test is organized (multiple choice, essay, etc.)
 - o See how the points are valued by each section and plan accordingly
- Read all the directions and questions carefully
- Do the easiest sections and questions first; save the hard items for last
- If you are unsure, guess (unless there is a penalty for incorrect answers)
- Ask the instructor questions for clarification if something is unclear
- Reread and review the exam before turning it in:
 - o Make sure all questions were answered completely
 - o Do not change an answer unless you are certain the original answer was incorrect

See tips for specific types of questions on the next page (multiple choice, essay, etc.)

Extra Tips for Test Day:

- Make a to-do list the day before; list everything you need to bring for the exam
- Do not stay up too late trying to study; it is better that you get a good night's sleep
- Arrive to the exam location early
- Eat a snack and drink some water before the test
- If there is no clock in the classroom, wear a watch
- Be prepared for the temperature of the room

Stress Reducing Techniques:

- **Breathing Exercise:** Can be done during the test as it is not a distracting technique.
 - o Slowly inhale through the nose, hold your breath for three seconds, and slowly exhale through the mouth. Repeat.
- **Meditation:** Clears your mind and calms your thoughts. Good for general stress/anxiety as well.
- **5-4-3-2-1 Technique:** This is a grounding technique. In your immediate surroundings, think of...
 - o 5 things you can see
 - o 4 things you can feel
 - o 3 things you can hear
 - o 2 things you can smell
 - o 1 thing you can taste