

Strategies for Taking Multiple Choice Tests

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General Test Taking Strategies

1. Read each question carefully and thoroughly.
2. Pace yourself if the test is timed. At the start, glance through to determine how many questions are on the test.
3. Go through the test from beginning to end and answer the easy questions first. As you go through, circle the questions you can't answer immediately.
4. Before answering each question, look at all of the answer choices.
5. Take advantage of extended time if you are allowed to have it.
6. Keep your mind open as you read test items. A question or answer for one item can trigger your knowledge about another test item.

Answering Options

1. Use a "cover-up" strategy: try to answer a question before looking at the choices.
2. Treat each answer choice as a true or false response. Select the "most true" answer.
3. Complete the question with each answer to decide on the best fit. Be sure the answer is grammatically correct.

Eliminating Choices on Difficult Questions

1. When you are unsure of an answer, try to eliminate as many answers as possible. Eliminating one or more choices increases your odds!
2. Use prior knowledge of word prefixes, suffixes, and roots to make intelligent guesses about unknown terms. Terms that are completely unfamiliar to you have a greater likelihood of being incorrect.
3. Beware of how negative terms (such as none, not, never) are used.
4. Be aware of absolutes in answer choices, such as all, never, always, and only. Answers that contain qualifiers (sometimes, some, may be, could) may be a better choice.

Guessing Strategies

Try to make an educated guess.

Always use the process of elimination as a first step.

Use the wording of the question or answer as a clue to eliminate possibilities.

Choose the most precise answer.

Avoid answers that seem out of context.

Choose a numerical answer from the middle of the range, not from either extreme.

Final Test-Taking Advice

1. Be prepared! Study ahead of time.
2. Get a good night's sleep and eat breakfast every day during exam period.