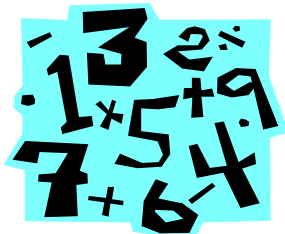


5. Realize that when you're taking a test, it no longer matters whether you studied enough or too much, whether you studied the right material, or even what your grade will be. It only matters that you do what you can do for those 50 minutes.
6. At the end of the test, don't dwell on it. You've given it your best shot and now it's done. Use the test as a learning device as well as a grading device to spot special trouble areas to work on. Go over the test as soon as you can. Ask an instructor about any mistakes you don't understand.

SIGNS OF MATH ANXIETY: "Your Number's Up."

Common reactions of math anxiety include the following:

1. **BLOCKING OUT:** Suddenly everything goes blank. You forget the math skills you know. You may be unable to understand the problem, to do even the simplest addition, or to decide what to do next. It is as if a large curtain is drawn down separating you from all your knowledge and abilities.
2. **PANIC:** There is a feeling of coming disaster. Your pulse races and you perspire heavily. You're sure the problem cannot be done, your feeling of defeat takes control.
3. **TENSION:** You may begin working the problem but feel your body tightening up. Your neck or back is stiff, your hand may shake, and your breathing may become strained.



4. **PARANOIA:** You suspect that everyone knows how stupid you're feeling. You think, "It's an easy problem; probably everyone in the room can do it except me."

5. **TUNE OUT:** When numbers come up or math is mentioned, the rest of the conversation is lost on you. You fail to hear what the person is saying. If you're reading a math book, at the end of the page you have no idea what you have read.

6. **GUILT:** You may feel even your ability in the little bit of math you can do is a fraud. You've been faking what you can do and sooner or later the deception will be discovered. Maybe you suspect that it's really your fault you have the problem.

7. **PHYSICAL REACTIONS:** When you deal with math you may get a headache, become nauseous, have stomach cramps, experience blurred vision, lose your ability to concentrate, or get very sleepy.

8. **AVOIDANCE:** Sometimes the most comfortable way to deal with a problem is to avoid it. You may try hard to stay out of situations where you encounter math.

**For more information about
Test & Math Anxiety
Contact the Counseling Center
650-3164**



HOW TO DO WELL ON MATH TESTS

STUDYING

1. Study for at least a half-hour but not more than 1½ hours without taking a break.
2. Take breaks around 10 minutes long. It's refreshing to do some stretching and mild exercising during breaks, but also use the time for calling friends, daydreaming, and snacking, etc. Discipline yourself so your breaks don't stretch out to be too long. It's better to take several short breaks while studying than one long break.
3. Complete and understand all assigned problems. Work out related problems. Make up your own too! That's the best way to understand the principles.
4. Try to study when you are most alert. Late night or all night studying may have diminishing returns.
5. Find a quiet place to study so once your concentration becomes established it won't be broken.
6. Have a place that's reserved for studying and nothing else, and keep it neat and distraction free. You will become conditioned to concentration and will study better there.

7. Take care of yourself—eat well and exercise. You'll be able to concentrate better and longer if you're in good physical shape.
8. Study Math everyday--don't save it up for right before the test.
9. If you are having difficulty with the course, get help early in the quarter. Bring in the work you have done so the instructor can see you have tried.
10. There are tutors available to help you. Remember that in math, learning builds on learning so don't fall behind!

TEST TAKING STRATEGIES

Before the Test:

1. Find out all you can about the format and content of the test. If possible talk to students who have had the course to get a feel for what the professor emphasizes.
2. If possible, have friends in the class or a tutor make up a sample test utilizing the information you gained in #1 above.
3. When taking a sample test or just studying, time yourself. Get used to 50-minute time blocks so that during the real test you won't have to look at the clock.
4. Notice the directions for each problem set. They will tell you what to do with the different types of problems. The directions for the problems on a test are often the same as those that were in the text.



During the Test:

1. Read directions carefully. On word problems read the entire problem first, identify what they want you to do, then reread the entire problem with that in mind.
2. Look over the entire test before you start. Try to get an idea of the relative difficulty and value of questions. Start with those that seem easiest or those that build up your confidence, the latter is the most efficient.
3. If you get stumped, go on and come back later. Just by working other problems you may get a clue to a difficult one. When you return to it think about everything you know related to that problem and try working whatever parts you can.

HANDLING TEST ANXIETY

1. Schedule time for a review as exams approach. Don't try to redo all the problems assigned when you review. Do a few problems of each type to remind yourself of the patterns. Panic sets in not when a student makes a mistake on a problem, but when they see one they don't know how to handle at all.
2. Don't try to cram all your review in the night before the test. Cramming often results in little sleep or restless sleep so you are exhausted and extra tense as you walk into the exam.
3. If you begin to panic over the amount of review to be done, make a list of problems covered. As you do a few problems of each type, cross that off the list. Breaking the overall task down into smaller tasks gives you a sense of control.
4. Worry is understandable, but it prevents you from focusing on the material to be studied. When you find worrying is interfering with studying, remind yourself that worrying isn't constructive. Take a deep breath and let it out slowly in order to relax. Do this a few times, then focus your attention once again on the task at hand.

If you begin to tense up during an exam, try these techniques:

1. Find the negative things that you might be saying to yourself, these often increase anxiety. Examples include: "Everyone else seems to be writing faster than I am." or "I must be stupid if I can't figure out this problem." These kinds of thoughts keep you focused on areas irrelevant to the test itself and only serve to make you more anxious.
2. Once you've identified your negative thoughts, refocus your attention to the questions or problems you are able to answer.
3. Take time out! Most students can spare 30 to 60 seconds during a test to sit back, take a breath, and relax.
4. Often students who are nervous about an exam will spend half their time worrying about time. Looking at the clock to see how much time is left will not help you do any problems. Do what problems you can, go back and work on the ones that stumped you, then look at the clock. If you use the strategies outlined earlier, you'll be amazed at how much more time you have for the test, and your concentration will remain where it should be, on the problems.



