Math Test Taking Strategies

Studying For the Test

- Avoid studying at the last minute. Set aside time to study for the exam a little everyday over an extended period of time. This is the best technique for memorization and recall.
- Review lecture notes, homework assignments, and old quizzes. Similar problems often re-appear on the test. Go over each section in your Math book and work through sample problems to refresh your memory.
- Memorize the specific steps, formulas, and techniques you will need to master the material you learned in class.
- Form a study group. One of the best ways to study Math is to explain the rules and concepts to other students.
- Recreate the test taking environment. Complete a timed practice exam in a quiet place using only the same resources permitted for the actual test.
- Attend your instructor’s exam review.
- Meet with your instructor, TA, and/or tutor to ask last minute questions and review any difficult concepts.

Taking the Test

- Reduce external distractions which can break your concentration. This includes sights, sounds and even smells. If possible, sit in a seat away from doors, windows, and other unnecessary distractions.
- Reduce internal distractions. Practice using positive self-talk. Set realistic goals for your performance, and combat anxiety during the test by taking short breaks and utilizing breathing techniques.
- Look over the entire exam before you start. Determine how many problems there are, and approximately how much time you have to complete each problem (Example: 20 problems, 60 minute exam; you can dedicate about 3 minutes to each question).
- Work as quickly and continuously as possible. Do not spend too much time on any one problem.
- Mark and skip problems you may not know how to complete. Come back to them later. Do not miss out on points you could easily earn on problems you know how to do simply because you ran out of time.
- If you are unsure of any step on a multiple step problem, complete the remaining steps and explain in words the step you skipped for the opportunity to gain partial credit.
- **SHOW YOUR WORK!** Even if you cannot complete the problem, you may receive partial credit.
- If you finish early, use the remaining time to check your work, and complete any problems you skipped.

For additional study skills resources, visit the ODI Tutoring Program website at [http://go.osu.edu/odi-tutor](http://go.osu.edu/odi-tutor).