

How to Prepare for an Exam

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Are you nervous about the chemistry exam coming up? Or do you feel unprepared for that English test you've been dreading? Well, I got you covered! At the end of this paper, my goal is to have you feel confident and prepared to take any exam in just three simple steps. The three important strategies to prepare for an exam are to review and study weeks ahead and in short sessions, get a good night's rest the night before the test, and eat a nutritious breakfast the morning of the test.

First and foremost, review and study weeks ahead and in short sessions. Based on an experiment in 2009, students showed better test results studying in spaced-apart sessions (Kowalski, 2021). If you try to sit and study for hours straight right before an exam, your brain won't retain as much of the information. Instead, you should schedule short sessions 20-30 minutes long every day for several weeks before the exam. If you feel comfortable to schedule multiple sessions in a day, make sure to break at least 10-15 minutes in between. This allows the brain to rest and process the information you just studied.

Second, get a good night's rest the night before the test. It is recommended to get at least 8 hours of sleep the night before. Cramming information late at night is more likely to hurt than help your performance the next day. *A Study Guide to Getting Sleep During Final Exams* (Ryan, 2021) states when you cut your sleep time, you cut down REM time which is critical for our cognitive performance. REM is when our brains process new information and commit it to memory. So, try to go to bed a little earlier than normally the night before the test to assure REM.

Finally, eat a nutritious breakfast the morning of the test. We all have heard the saying, "Breakfast is the most important meal of the day." This, in fact, is true, especially right before a

test. In the article, *Benefits of Eating Breakfast for Students* (Boyers, 2018), it explains the importance of eating a nutritious breakfast before a test and how it fuels the body and brain. Skipping breakfast can lead to hunger which can cause those distracting stomach growls. So, be sure to eat a hearty breakfast to improve your concentration.

Test taking can be a bliss if you prepare the right way. Study weeks ahead and in short sessions, sleep at least 8 hours the night before the test, and eat a hearty and nutritious breakfast the morning of the test. I hope these three strategies help you feel more confident and prepared for that anticipated exam.

Work Cited

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