



How to Keep Calm During Tests

1. **Prepare well in advance.** Keep up every day if you can, but don't judge yourself harshly if you don't. Avoid last-minute cramming. Don't go without sleep the night before.
2. **Know the time and place** of the test and what you need to bring. Be on time, neither too early nor too late, with blue books or supplies. Don't rush.
3. **Don't talk about the test** with classmates immediately beforehand, especially if you know this sort of thing raises your anxiety level.
4. Read over the test and **plan your approach.** Ascertain point values per part, time limits for each section, which question you'll start with to boost your confidence, etc.
5. Don't hesitate to **ask for clarification** from the professor, teaching assistant, or proctor if you have questions about instructions, procedure, etc.
6. **Be clear about your job.** A test is a thinking task, and your job during an exam is to think as clearly as possible based on what you currently know. Focus on your job (the thinking process) and practice letting go of what you don't control (the grading). Approach the test determined to think to the best of your ability, but also the limits of what you currently know as a beginner.
7. **Reduce anxiety with activity.** If your mind goes blank and you can't think of anything to write, go on to another question or part of the test. On an essay, jot down anything you can recall on scratch paper to stimulate your memory and get your mind working.
8. **Relax yourself physically** during a test, especially if you notice that you are not thinking well or your muscles are tight. Pause, put your test down and take several slow, deep breaths. Tense and release your muscles. Do this in particular if you notice you are worrying excessively about one problem, not reading carefully, and unable to recall information you know.
9. **Pay attention to the test,** not to others. Don't waste time on wondering how other people are doing.