

Study Tips

Preparing to study:

Gather the materials that you need.

- What resources are available to help you study for the test?
 - Reading list
 - Study guide
 - Tutorials: online or CDs
 - Practice quizzes/exams
- Once you have the materials, schedule your study time. Choose blocks of time when you plan to study specific amounts of material.

Figure out what you need to study most effectively.

- A special chair? A clean, organized desk? No interruptions? Enough sleep?
- The same factors are not important to everyone.

Studying:

Any method of study requires:

- Repetition
 - Repeat the information in your own words or draw images.
 - Short, frequent study sessions provide ample time for repetition.
- Effort
 - Effort is making a conscious effort to understand and remember the information being studied.
 - Make up questions and write out the answers. Make flashcards. Work with a study group.
- Time
 - There is no quick and easy way to learn.
 - Do not wait until the last day to study!

Reading:

- When you read for a test, do not begin by reading every page of the text word-by-word starting with page 1, as you would read a novel or a magazine article.
 - First, look for an introduction, headings, subheadings, practice questions, conclusion, summary, etc.
 - If you try to read the material straight through, you may spend hours reading but then not have a clue about what you have read.
- Focus on key points and ask yourself questions about the material while reading.
- Visualize. Form mental pictures.
- It is great to highlight important information, but highlight only enough to remind yourself of the key information presented.

Studying with a friend or group:

Studying with others can be an added incentive that makes studying more pleasant, even fun!

- Before you meet, briefly review the material on your own to identify key terms and concepts.
 - Read chapter summaries, section headings, and bold type.
 - Inspect figures, tables, and charts and their headings.
- When you meet to study:
 - Divide the material and present summaries to the group.
 - Practice explaining terminology and concepts to each other.
 - Make up practice test questions for each other.
 - Keep other conversation and activity to a minimum.

Managing your time:

- Define your goals and determine the effort required to achieve them.
- Break your study time down into smaller parts.
- Short, frequent study sessions result in greater recall of information than one or two marathon study sessions.
- Do not procrastinate! Begin to review several days or weeks ahead of time. (Proper preparation for the ALAT exam involves about 6 months of study time.)

Dealing with worry or anxiety:

If you worry so much about doing well on tests that it interferes with your studying:

- Take a step-by-step approach. Begin to review well ahead of time.
- If you learn the material well, you can recall it even when you are stressed.
- Visualize success.

If you are nervous right before a test:

- Get a good night's sleep and eat a good meal before the test.
- Do not try to study a large amount of material right before the test.
- Arrive at the testing site on time but not too early.
- Avoid people who are spreading anxiety about the test.

If you feel nervous or worried during a test:

- Relax! Take long, deep breaths.
- Do not think about fear. Focus on the present task.
- Remember that you are doing your best. You feel anxious because you want to do your best and this can actually provide you with energy.