



Problem Solving Tests

Before the test	During the test	After the test
<p>Identify the major problem types and formulas from class notes and reading.</p> <p>Highlight topics and problems your instructor emphasized.</p>	<p>Before starting the test, jot down formulas, relationships, definitions, etc.</p> <p>Do a brain dump at the beginning of the test and create a cheat sheet for yourself that you can refer back to during the test.</p>	<p>Examine the points that you missed. Review your TA or professor's feedback on your essays. Investigate what areas you were not ready for.</p> <p>Determine from which chapters or lessons most of the questions appeared and create a strategy to tackle those areas in the next round.</p>
<p>Practice working problems out of sequence. This will reveal how problems relate to each other and simulate the test-taking experience.</p> <p>For example: <i>Work a problem from Chapter 7, Chapter 5, then Chapter 10.</i></p>	<p>Do not complete the test in chronological order. Begin with those for which you can identify a solution method quickly.</p> <p>Start with easier problems. Allow more time for high point value problems.</p>	<p>Determine the source of your errors and make a plan for next time.</p> <p><i>For example: Did my errors result from carelessness? Did I fail to carry a negative sign from one step to another? Could I produce the formulas, or did I recall them incorrectly? Did I consistently miss the same kind of problem? Was I unable to solve problems because I didn't practice similar ones before the exam? Did I fail to account for all the given data in my solution method?</i></p>
<p>Work with a time limit. Aim to solve as many problems as you will have on the test within the test time limit.</p> <p>For example: <i>Practice working 30 problems in 50 minutes.</i></p>	<p>If you get stuck on a problem, ask yourself some questions to get going.</p> <p>For example: <i>What concepts, formulas, rules and methods can I apply? Have I seen this problem before? Could I work this problem another way or simplify what I did? How does my solution compare with examples from the book and class?</i></p>	<p>If you had difficulty completing the test, try timing yourself while practicing solving problems as you prepare for the next exam.</p>