

Five Day Study Plan

Use this five-day study plan to get a jump on studying. By spreading your review over several days, you can avoid cramming and become a more successful test taker.

Begin by counting backwards from the exam date and setting aside time (60-90 minutes) each day for review during your most productive hours. Make a list of chapters, lecture topics, and outside readings to be covered on the exam. Then **divide the material into five sections** and review one section each day.

5 Days Before the Exam:

- Review your notes to discover if you are missing information from lectures or chapters. Complete your course readings and obtain any missing material.
- Locate your study guide—or create one of your own. This will be your checklist of all the material you need to review for your test.
- Review one section of the material, starting from the oldest to newest material. Be sure to use your textbook review questions and class lecture notes.
- Use active study strategies, such as creating flashcards for vocabulary or dates. Create a graphic organizer to sort information into visual categories or steps.

4 Days Before the Exam:

- Do a 10-minute review of the first section of material.
- Meet with a study group to review the second “chunk” of material.
- Use active study strategies, such as mimicking the format of the test. Create possible essay, short answer, or multiple-choice questions and then practice answering them alone or with a group.

3 Days Before the Exam:

- Do a 20-minute review of all of the material you’ve studied so far.
- Review the third section of the material and then quiz yourself on what you’ve studied.
- Use active study strategies, such as summarizing the chapters or concepts verbally or in writing. Try teaching or explaining a concept to a friend or a “stand-in.”

2 Days Before the Exam:

- Do a 30-minute review of the material you've studied so far.
- Review the fourth section of the material, creating mnemonic devices (memory tricks) to remember details.
- Practice using your mnemonic device in answering possible essay questions. Use active study strategies, such as creating mind maps or other visual representations of the material.

1 Day Before the Exam:

- Do a 30-40 minute review of all of the material you've studied so far.
- Now review the last section of the material.
- Use active study strategies, such as covering up the material and rewriting definitions from memory. Come up with an example of a key term or definition.
- Return to your study guide. Spend 10 minutes writing or talking aloud about the concepts of each of the five sections you have reviewed (50 minutes total).
- Go to bed early. Lack of sleep accounts for problems with concentration and memory.

Learning From Your Exams: Where Were Your Gaps?

When you get your test back, use these reflection prompts to determine where you need to supplement your review process for next time. If possible, review your exam with your professor or a tutor.

- I didn't understand the material when it was being explained in class.
- I did not study long enough or start early enough.
- I didn't study the right material.
- I studied the material but could not recall it for the test.
- I recognized the information but was unable to use or apply it.
- I memorized the definitions but was unable to use or apply concepts.
- I didn't know the meaning of some of the vocabulary used on the test.
- I didn't follow directions or record my answers correctly.
- I didn't use my time well during the test.
- I was too anxious/worried/upset/frustrated to concentrate.