

Five Tips to Ace Your Multiple Choice Exams

Which of the following is the most effective strategy for multiple choice tests used by students?

- A. When in doubt, the answer is C
- B. The longest answer is the correct answer
- C. Eeny, meeny, miny, moe
- D. Always pick "All of the above"
- E. None of the above

Those strategies may have worked on some of your high school tests, but they won't be effective in university. Studying, practicing problems, and going to class are some of the best ways to make sure you do well on tests, but did you know there are also in-test strategies? Use these five tips to help you ace the multiple choice questions on your tests and exams.

1. Read the questions carefully

Make sure you understand what the question is asking. As you read, underline words like "not" and "always" since they change the meaning of the question.

2. Answer the question without looking at the options

Coming up with the answer yourself will help you identify what the correct option should say. Compare your answer to the options. Look for the same ideas and key terms.

3. Eliminate the incorrect options

Read each of the options and eliminate the ones that are wrong. They may not be related to the question or may be completely off. If you still have remaining options, read the question again, think of the answer you made up, and try eliminating again. It's okay to restart the question if you think you do not have the correct answer.

4. Answer all the questions

Don't waste your time on a question if you don't know what the answer is. Skip the question and come back to it later. Give your brain more time to think about that question as you tackle other problems.

Even if you don't know an answer, make an educated guess. There is a chance you might get the marks. If you don't try, you are guaranteed to get zero.

5. Manage your time

Budget your time to answer each question, review your answers, and transfer them to your answer sheet. Before you start writing the test, look at the test to see how many questions there are and divide your time accordingly. For example, if you have 50 questions in a one-hour test, you could budget 50 minutes for answering them and 10 minutes for checking your work.

More resources for multiple choice questions

Do you want to practice and discuss multiple choice exams? Book an appointment with an Instructor: <http://www.utm.utoronto.ca/asc/appointments-undergraduate>.

Check out these resources to get more help and information on multiple choice exam strategies:

Multiple Choice Tests – Cornell University
<http://lsc.cornell.edu/multiple-choice-tests-2/>

Multiple Choice Exams – University of Guelph
<https://guides.lib.uoguelph.ca/MultipleChoice>

Multiple choice exams – The University of Queensland Australia
<http://www.uq.edu.au/student-services/learning/multiple-choice-exams>

Looking for more learning strategies? Visit us at: <http://www.utm.utoronto.ca/asc/>