

# Multiple-Choice Test Tips

One way to improve scores on multiple-choice exams is to do what “A” students do. Below are 9 tips for earning better scores from students who earn high grades. Keep in mind that the number ONE test-taking tip is to know your subject well.

1. Evaluate each possible answer in relation to the question or statement and NOT in relation to other answers unless choosing the best answer among several correct ones.
2. If the correct answer isn't obvious, **read the question along with each answer**. It's easier to spot a match this way.
3. **Analyze questions and code answers.** For example, mark obviously incorrect answers with a “-” or “no” and possibly correct answers with a “+” or “**poss**” and then choose among the “+” or “**poss**” options.
4. If the correct answer to a question is not known, code the question to be considered later (possibly with a large? in the margin) and **skip the question for now**. Look for clues to this answer in later questions and answers. Jot these clues in the margin to use when reconsidering skipped questions.
5. **Before turning in an exam, reread each question and answer.** Unless you are ABSOLUTELY CERTAIN an answer is wrong, **DO NOT CHANGE IT**. First impressions are more often right than wrong.
6. If you have to guess, **avoid choosing options you never heard of or options with absolutes in them** such as always, never, only, none, ever, etc.
7. **Circle “Key Words”**. “Key words” reveal the subject of a question and what to look for in an answer. Example - **Which is a false statement about the nucleolus?**

The “Key Word” **false** tells you to look for a *wrong* answer while the word **nucleolus** tells you the subject to which the false statement relates.

8. Budget time for each question. **Divide the number of minutes available**

**for taking an exam by the number of questions plus one.** This way you'll know approximately how much time to spend on each question and leave time to re-check answers. Allow more time for essay answers.

9. The **NUMBER 1** test taking technique is to **KNOW YOUR FACTS COLD.** There is no substitute for knowing your subject well when taking a test. All the test taking techniques in the world won't help much if you don't know your material.