

Studying Skills

Study often/learn the concepts first:

- Review new material frequently. Don't wait until the night before the exam to begin studying!
- Understand before you try to remember.
- First, learn the concepts; then, focus on the problems.
- Work on one thing at a time.
- Study by helping someone.
- Write and draw to learn and remember.
- Developing a mental picture will help you to remember.
- When doing problems, try to write down the pertinent equations without looking them up. Then check to make sure you wrote them down correctly. In this way, you will quickly remember all the important equations and won't have to "memorize" them.
- Go over homework keys.
- Study before you go to your study group, if you have one. Have questions and specific problems ready for discussion. Similarly, when going to an instructor's office hours, have questions and specific problems ready.
- If you don't understand something, get help!

During the week before the exam:

- Summarize your notes into a study guide. Group similar ideas together to aid remember, but pay attention to differences.
- Do more problems.
- Go over sample exam key.
- If you don't understand something, get help!

Study under exam-like conditions:

- Work problems fast and repeat many, many times. Set time limits when working problems in order to improve your speed.
- Once you've learned the material, test yourself both on concepts and numerical problems. Must be able to do the problems fairly rapidly!
- To make it more of a test situation, put all concepts and problems on index cards with answers on the back. Shuffle them. Answer each one quickly. If you cannot answer quickly or correctly then put it into the "I don't know pile." Once you've gone through the entire pile of cards, go over each card in the "I don't know pile" slowly: use your notes/text/keys to figure out how to do the problem, then immediately do the problem again without any help from your notes/text/keys. After going through all the cards in the "I don't know pile," shuffle them, and beginning testing

yourself on these cards again. Keep doing this until you can quickly answer each question/problem correctly.

- Study a topic until you can explain it to someone and until you can quickly work problems correctly.
- If you don't understand something, get help!

Before the exam:

- Get enough sleep, eat properly, and relax.
- Leave yourself one or two hours before the exam to relax.
- Make sure you get to the exam at least 5 minutes ahead of time.