



Multiple Choice Test Preparation

Answering multiple choice questions is a skill all on its own. Often test takers expect that a multiple-choice exam will be easy – just a matter of recognizing true statements.

Multiple choice questions require you to choose between correct and nearly correct statements. So, you must read the questions very carefully.

Below are eight strategies for successfully tackling multiple choice questions.

1. Choose the answer which the test maker intended

- Try not to read into question interpretations not intended by the test maker, i.e. don't second guess the test maker's intentions. The questions are intended to demonstrate how much you know, not how the test maker can trick you.
- Keep in mind that the exam measures how well you know the material and how well you have been taught.

2. Anticipate the answer, and then look for it

- Read the question and anticipate what facts/aspects you think the answer will contain.
- Look for these among the possible answers.
- If the answer you anticipated is found among the options, it is probably correct.

3. Consider all the alternatives

- Read and consider all the options, even if you find your anticipated answer among the options.
- Remember that you must find the most correct answer.

4. Relate the options to the question

- When the answer you anticipated is not among the options, discard it and focus on the answers that are there. Consider how well each option answers the question.
- Although an answer provided may be a true statement, it must still be the correct answer to the specific question.
- Even though the answer may be an incorrect statement, it could be the correct answer in relation to the question, e.g. if the question asks, "Which statement is not correct?"

5. Balance options against each other

- When several options look good, or even if none look good, compare them with each other. If two options are highly similar, study them to find out what makes them different. One of these is likely the correct answer.
- Look for which answer is more likely in comparison not just with your own anticipated answer but with the other choices given.

6. Use logical reasoning

- Eliminate those options which you know to be incorrect as well as those which do not fit the requirements of the question.
- If you recognize more than one of the options as correct, choose one of the remaining options which combines both of these choices.

7. Look for key words

- True statements often contain terms such as "sometimes" or "usually".
- A statement which includes the words "always" or "never" must be true 100% of the time.
- For the statement to be true, each part of the situation described in the statement must be true.
- Always read all the choices given. There may be an important alternative such as "all of the above" at the end.



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8. Specific, detailed answers tend to be correct

- Although there will always be exceptions, options that are more detailed than others tend to be correct.
- Pay special attention to options that are extra-long or highly specific.

Additional Test-taking Hints: True or False?

Look at the hints below and decide whether they are true or false. Answers are below.

1. T/F ___ Multiple choice exams test your capacity to think and reason with the information you have. Do not expect to see the answer immediately. You have to work out the answer carefully.
2. T/F ___ Most of the time, changing your multiple-choice answer at the end of the exam is not a good idea unless you can clearly see that you made a calculation or reading error.
3. T/F ___ Never look for key words or numbers.
4. T/F ___ Do not look for familiar phrases.
5. T/F ___ It is always useful to look for a pattern in the order that correct answers are given.

Answers: 1. T 2. T 3. F 4. F 5. F

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