



Top 10+ Common Test Taking Errors

Making errors on your tests at times has little to do with knowing the answers. Below are several common errors made by students that result in lower test scores along with tips on how to avoid making these errors yourself!

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Error #1—Did not follow directions: Always read directions carefully making sure you know what is being asked. Just because the instructor gave one type of test in the past does not mean it will always be the same.

Error #2—Failed to calculate how long it would take to answer all questions: Do some quick math when you see the exam. Divide the number of questions by the number of minutes available to take the test. Don't get stuck by spending too much time on questions you don't understand. Keep moving and come back later if time permits.

Error #3—Did not read questions carefully: Circle and underline key concepts in the questions to make sure all aspects of the question are answered.

Error #4—Did not go back and check answers: Always make sure there is time at the end for review for careless mistakes.

Error #5—Accidentally marked wrong item or box: ditto from above.

Error #6—Changed an answer from correct to incorrect after reconsideration: Do not change answers unless you are *positively certain* you have recorded a wrong answer. First impressions are more often correct than second guesses.

Error #7—Remembered going over the material but could not recall it: This is a sure sign that you did not sufficiently review the material. Multiple review moments increases retention for test taking.

Error #8—Did not understand a question and did not seek clarification: Ask the instructor for clarification of a question. They will either clarify or say no. What's the worst that can happen?

Error #9—Wrote lots of words but did not answer question: Same solution as # 3 above.

Error #10—An answer was disorganized: This has a direct connection to how well you study the material. If notes are disorganized, it is normal for test answers to be as well.

Error #11—Handwriting is illegible: Print.

Error #12—Made careless errors: See remedies for #3, #4 and #7

Error #13—Did not support points with evidence, facts, statistics, research or proof: Always have support for answers. Teachers want facts, not opinions in most cases.

Error #14—Did not know the subject matter very well: Taking good lecture notes and reviewing them on a regular basis before testing is important. Join a study group and getting tutored also helps. Taking responsibility for your learning is important and pays off in the long run.

What the mind of man can conceive and believe, the mind of man can achieve. -- Napoleon Hill