# 7 Strategies for Success in Math

## 1 Manage stress

1. Math can be scary. Relax, be positive. Decide to do what it takes to be successful. Decide early in the semester. There’s lots of help. See Resources.

2. Math sucks? “Don’t let your negative attitude cause problems in your math course (attendance, motivation, procrastination).” Nolting (25)

3. “The cure for math anxiety:
   a. Do math every day.
   b. Study smart. The more you try different things, the more likely you are to find out what helps you most.
   c. Do NOT skip class.
   d. Be organized.
   e. Practice quizzing yourself.
   f. Replace negative self-talk with positive self-talk.
   g. Use your resources.” Bass (37-38).

4. Conserve your emotional energy. “…you (don’t) have to like math, you just have to pass. Tell yourself - I can become successful in math.” Nolting (124)

5. Google math study skills (37 million hits). Find some tips you like and use them.

## 2 Learn math vocabulary

To find explanations:
1. See Contents at the front of the book.
2. See section and chapter summaries.
3. See Index/Glossary at the back of the book.
4. See Vocabulary on Blackboard (TLC Math Bb Support).

## 3 Go to class

2. Prepare to ask questions. Participation increases your understanding.
3. You didn’t do the homework and didn’t read the text. Go to class anyway. It is more helpful than being absent. Catch up later. Do extra review.
4. If you are absent, study what you missed and prepare for the next class, too. Later, do extra review.

## 4 Ask questions

1. Classmates have the same questions you do.
2. Mark confusing parts. Write down specific questions you have.
3. Ask classmates and TLC tutors.
4. Ask the professor in class, or in e-mail, or during office hours (Go with friends. Go often. Don’t wait until just before a test.)

5. See Khan Academy Community Questions.

## 5 Be active

1. Before the next class, read the sections to be covered. Work through problems and practice explaining your processes out loud (to yourself, to TLC tutors, to classmates). See Reading the Textbook and Doing Math Homework on Blackboard.

2. In class, listen for the professor to clear up what is confusing. Listen for answers to the questions you have. If you don’t hear answers to your questions, then ask your questions. Classmates will thank you.

3. After class, compare class notes and the textbook. Note connections and things that are still confusing. Write down any questions you still have.

4. Practice doing additional, similar problems.

5. Review class notes regularly. See Use notes effectively on Blackboard. Use the system.

6. Make your own practice quizzes. Take them.

7. Join TLC study groups. Make appointments to work with tutors individually. Go to the TLC early, often, regularly. Practice explaining how you did problems. Explaining helps you remember.

8. Share contact info with a classmate.

9. Protect your investment of time and energy. Keep actively attacking math. Don’t wait to see how you did on the quiz or test.

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<td>Ace homework + quizzes ↓ tests</td>
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1. Get the highest grades you can on quizzes. Don’t miss any. Homework and quizzes are easier than tests and can help your average.

2. What you learn on quizzes and homework will help you on tests.

3. They can help you check your understanding and pinpoint questions you still have.

4. They can help you stay focused – Study math every day. Always be prepared. Do homework problems whether homework is assigned or not. Imagine there is a quiz every class.

5. Keep old homework, quizzes, and tests. Regularly review them.

6. On Blackboard see: Doing Math Homework, Taking Math Tests

### Ten Steps to Better Test Taking

Based on Math study skills workbook. Nolting (112-114).

1. Use a memory data dump. When you get the test, write down everything you might forget (formulas).

2. Preview the test. Mark easy questions.

3. Do a second memory data dump.

4. Develop a test progress schedule. Decide the best way to get the most points in the least time.

5. Answer the easiest problems first.


7. Review the skipped problems.

8. Guess at the remaining problems.


10. Use all the allowed test time. Review each problem by substituting the answer back into the equation or doing the opposite function required to answer the question. Fight the urge to leave early.

See also:

Six Types of Test-Taking Errors

Math study skills workbook. Nolting (116-119). On reserve in the TUJ library.

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