

Top 5 Ways to Ace Your Next Physics Exam

Have a physics test or exam coming up? Use any or all of these strategies to get a better grade!

1. PREPARE YOUR CHEAT SHEET ASAP

Being familiar with your formula sheet helps you use it more effectively during your exam. Students who write exams in their lecture room perform better. Although you can't control the room for your exam, you can bring a familiar cheat sheet – but you need to create it early and use it often.

Do this:

- Start your formula sheet now, and add to it whenever something new comes up
- Always use the same formula sheet when solving physics problems
- Tweak it, if needed, as early as possible

2. GET SAMPLE EXAMS

Students who use practice exams do better on the actual exam. Exam problems are often harder than homework problems; sometimes they combine ideas from multiple chapters, and other times the prof just increases the difficulty 2 steps.

Do this:

- Ask your prof for practice exams
- Try to write each exam on your own as if it's a real exam – don't look at the solutions until you have tried each problem

3. DON'T STUDY PHYSICS – PRACTICE PHYSICS

Physics exams test your ability to solve physics problems, and the best way to learn to solve problems is to **practice solving problems**.

Do this:

- Always set up each problem the way your prof wants
- If your prof didn't specify, try this:
 - List given info
 - List unknown info
 - Draw a diagram including given and unknown values
 - Briefly write how to solve the problem

4. DON'T ERASE ANY BIG MISTAKES ON THE EXAM

Erasing takes valuable time, and it can be very discouraging to realize that what you erased was actually okay.

Do this:

- If you make a big mistake, cross it out and start fresh in a new space
- Ask for more paper if you need it
- If you later realize it was okay, briefly explain that you crossed it out by mistake

5. STRATEGIZE YOUR EXAM

Following your pre-exam routine sets you up for success on each exam. During the exam, use your time effectively for maximum grades.

Before your exam:

- Get at least 6 hours of sleep
- Take your normal amount of caffeine
- Practice your ritual

During your exam:

- Immediately write any information that was not allowed on your formula sheet
- Skim over every question before starting
- Jot down the approximate time per question beside each question



You can find a free training video explaining these tips in more detail at:

<http://redmondphysicstutoring.com/ace-your-next-physics-exam/>

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