

How to Study Math

How do you study for math tests? The same way you learn how to shoot free throws - **PRACTICE!** For example, a basketball coach would show the athlete how to shoot a free through, give some verbal instructions and then the players would practice a few. The coach would probably give some feedback on form and have the athlete keep practicing. Based on if the free throw was successful or not, the athlete and coach would know how the skill is progressing. A coach wouldn't expect the players to learn a skill the night before a big game. It requires daily practice.

Math class works in a similar manner. Teachers demonstrate skills in class and some examples are given. Students and teachers work some together and then the students are assigned homework. No, homework is not given as a punishment, but as a time where the student is asked to independently practice and apply what they saw someone else do. Feedback is given the next day in class or even in the form of "back of the book" answers. This feedback is critical to making adjustments to see how the skills are progressing. By practicing, students are actually studying math. Studying math is not something that should just happen the night before a quiz or test. Below are a few tips to make this process go smoothly.

Throughout the Unit:

1. Actively participate in class
 - Be engaged in the activities and examples done in class.
 - If you are stuck, ask a question
 - Don't just copy the notes without thinking, think through what is presented
 - Try problems on your own. Make mistakes! You won't do it again then on the test! 😊
2. Take notes
 - If the teacher writes it down, so should you!
 - Here is where teachers might cover extra material that's not in the section and you won't remember it days later if you don't write it down when it's presented.
 - Many examples are worked out step by step- jot down the verbal explanation too, especially if you were confused at first
 - Keep your notes organized so you can find them later.
3. Do quality homework assignments.
 - Don't just put numbers down to get credit. Follow notes and examples from class as a guide.
 - Memorize the key formulas, rules, properties, etc. Learn the symbols and the meaning too!
 - Check your homework carefully so you get feedback.
 - Highlight problems you got wrong or ones you needed to get help on so you go back and study them
4. Come in for help as soon as you realize you don't understand something

Right Before a Test/Quiz:

1. Review notes and worksheets from class. It's not always content from the book that you'll see on the exam
2. Review the problems you couldn't do on your own at first from the homework
3. You must get **independent practice** without using your notes.
4. Do the assigned review problems or study guide. If you need more problems, rework previously done examples from your notes or book or try some additional ones that have answers in the back.
5. See your teacher with last minute questions- errors you can't catch. Now is not the time to learn major skills!

Remember: Studying Math = Daily Practice You might understand concepts when your teacher shows you, but doing the problems on your own is much more challenging without practicing the content. Make mistakes while you practice. Good luck!!!