

# 5-Day Countdown to Acing the Exam

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## Objectives

This worksheet is designed to help you plan and implement a 5-Day Study Plan to help you do well on exams. You will learn:

- How & Why the 5-Day Study Plan Works
- How to Set Up a 5-Day Study Plan
- Active Preparation and Study Strategies

## How it Works

When mid-terms or final exams roll around, we are often overwhelmed by the task of preparing for them. This method breaks up the studying into pieces and helps you divide your time between preparing and reviewing material.

**Note:** It takes between 8-10 hours of active study to earn an A or B on an exam. BUT, the great thing about this method is that it can be expanded to more days if the course is particularly difficult. Likewise, if there is a large amount of material on the exam, you may want to begin earlier and spend more days studying.

**Spread it Out!:** You are more likely to remember the material for the long term if you distribute your studying over time, in this case 5-days.

**Chunk It!:** Take a look at the materials covered in the exam and divide them into 4 manageable chunks (chapters, concepts, etc.). Chunking helps the brain remember related material.

**Prepare & Review:** You will spend about 2 hours per day studying. Each day, you spend time preparing one chunk and reviewing the others. **\*\* Start with the hardest material first so you have the most time to master it.\*\***

**Don't Zone Out!:** The key to this method is engaging with the material in an active way such as writing and reciting information.

**Feedback Loop:** Monitor your progress by testing yourself.

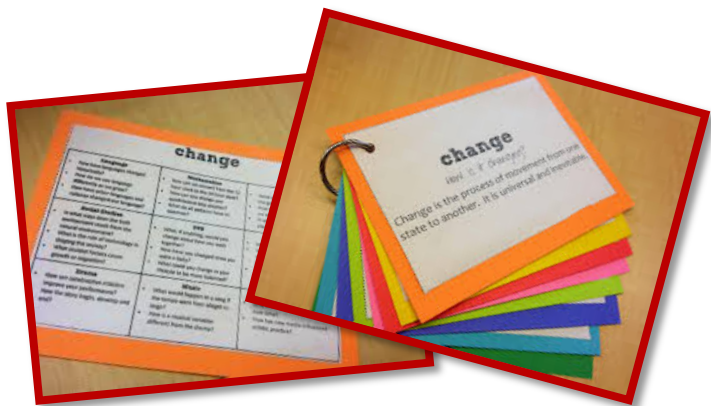


## The Countdown

- DAY 5:** Prepare 1<sup>st</sup> Chunk **2 hours**
- DAY 4:** Prepare 2<sup>nd</sup> Chunk  
Review 1<sup>st</sup> Chunk **2 hours**  
**30 minutes**
- DAY 3:** Prepare 3<sup>rd</sup> Chunk  
Review 2<sup>nd</sup> Chunk  
Review 1<sup>st</sup> Chunk **1.5 hours**  
**30 minutes**  
**15 minutes**
- DAY 2:** Prepare 4<sup>th</sup> Chunk  
Review 3<sup>rd</sup> Chunk  
Review 2<sup>nd</sup> Chunk  
Review 1<sup>st</sup> Chunk **1 hour**  
**30 minutes**  
**15 minutes**  
**10 minutes**
- DAY 1:** Review 4<sup>th</sup> Chunk **30 minutes**  
Review 3<sup>rd</sup> Chunk **20 minutes**  
Review 2<sup>nd</sup> Chunk **10 minutes**  
Review 1<sup>st</sup> Chunk **10 minutes**  
Self-Test
- EXAM DAY:** Feel confident and prepared as you do your best!

Day 1	Day 2	Day 3	Day 4	Day 5
Prepare Part A: 2 hrs	Prepare Part B: 2 hrs Review Part A: 30 min.	Prepare Part C: 1.5 hrs Review Part B: 30 min. Review Part A: 15 min.	Prepare Part D: 1 hour Review Part C: 30 min Review Part B: 15 min Review Part A: 15 min	Review Part D: 25 min Review Part C: 15 min Review Part B: 10 min Review Part A: 10 min Self-Test on A,B,C,D: 1 hr
<b>TOTAL: 2 hours</b>	<b>TOTAL: 2.5 hours</b>	<b>TOTAL: 2 hr, 45 min</b>	<b>TOTAL: 2 hours</b>	<b>TOTAL: ~2 hours</b>
Prepare: > > >	Prepare: > > > Review: > > >	Prepare: > > > Review: > > >	Prepare: > > > Review: > > >	Review: > > > Self-Test

Source: <https://i.pinimg.com/>



Example of Concept Cards  
<https://sonyaterborg.com/>

## Active Preparation Strategies

Each day, plan **how** you will prepare your chunks. Here is a list of several strategies you can use to actively prepare. It's OK to fall back on ones that you know but use new ones, so you stay engaged. Tailor the strategy to the information you are trying to learn.

### Make Flash Cards

- Word cards
- Question cards
- Formula cards
- Problem cards

### Create Your Own Essay Questions

- Predict essay questions
- Plan essay answers
- Write essay answers

### Use the Textbook

- Focus on vocabulary words in boldface
- Answer questions at the end of the chapter

### Use Graded Quizzes

- Use as a self-test
- Re-do the problems
- Take notes on missed problems
- Make self tests by changing variables on the quiz

### Create

- Study sheets
- Outlines
- Charts of related material
- Concept maps
- Study guides
- List of steps in the process
- Materials for study group

### Predict

- Make a list of 20 topics that might be on the exam and define them

### Summarize Material

## Active Review Strategies

Active review is not just shutting the book and reciting what is there (although there is some of that going on for sure). Here are several strategies to remain an active learner while reviewing your notes and the textbook each day. Again, tailor the strategy to the information you are trying to learn. Mix it up to stay alert and engaged.

### Share what you know – Out Loud to your self or someone else

#### Recite

- Study sheets
- Flash cards (all types)
- 20 topics
- Main points from materials
- Steps of a process
- Summaries
- Formulas
- Essay answers
- Study guide

#### Re-Create from Memory

- Concept Maps
- Charts
- Formulas
- Essay answers

#### Self-Test

Cover notes or close text. From memory, try to recite all the material in that section. Make note of things you missed.

Adapted from *The Five-Day Study Plan*, Cornell University Learning Strategies Center, <http://lsc.cornell.edu/wp-content/uploads/2015/10/The-Five-Day-Study-Plan.pdf>

## We're Here to Help

Remember, you do not need to do this alone. For help with Time Management, visit with your Academic Advisor, College Success Counselor, or Student Success Services.

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you've  
got this