



# Countdown to Finals

---

Use this handout to help you thoroughly prepare for your upcoming final exams. Start preparing for final exams 3 weeks before. We've created a series of tips to follow each week to guide you.

## 3 Weeks Before Your Final Exam

---

*Focus on organizing.*

- Ask instructors about the content and format of final exams.
- Organize your notes for systematic review.
- Answer questions from tests that you didn't know the first time.
- Determine what you know and understand and what you do not know and understand.
- Set aside a specific time each day that you dedicate to finals prep.

## 2 Weeks Before Your Final Exam

---

*Focus on mini-review sessions.*

- Conduct short reviews of course material. Review old tests for cumulative finals.
- Develop summary sheets and/or mind maps of important material.
- Create note cards to increase (ensure) understanding of details and concepts.
- Create a study task list of all material to be reviewed, including textbook chapters, notes, study questions, problems to be practiced, etc.
- Develop a study schedule by estimating how much time each item on your study task list will take to complete.
- Block out time for each activity. *This is your plan of action!*

## 1 Week Before Your Final Exam

---

*Focus on intensive studying.*

- Follow your study schedule from the previous week.
- Focus on comprehension—summarize course concepts in your own words.
- Increase retention by linking new information to things you already know.
- Apply the concepts! Ask—what's an example of this? How and when would I use this?
- Use study strategies like creating mnemonic devices, flash-cards, outlining, or working practice problems
- Take breaks! For every hour of intensive studying, include a 10-minute break.
- Remember: even if the online exam allows you to use your notes, you should prepare the same as an in-person exam.

## Exam Week

---

*Focus on reviewing and resting.*

- Take time to relax! Get plenty of sleep, eat well, and stay active!
- Reduce test anxiety by avoiding last-minute cramming right before your exams.
- Review summary sheets and/or mind maps. Recite and summarize information aloud. Create and take self-tests.
- Continue to review the textbook by skimming important information like headings and topics.
- Remember: for an online exam, practice using the technology before you need it to avoid problems. Set up a hard-wired connection, if possible, because it's more stable than wi-fi.