

Online Exam Tips for Students

Here are 8 helpful tips and strategies for writing exams online. Remember that planning and preparation will help you to arrive at your exam with much less stress!

1. Plan ahead

Planning ahead can help ensure a smooth exam writing process. Well in advance of the exam:

- Review Camosun's [Exam Preparation Tips](#). They contain some great resources on how to prepare for an exam.
- Notify your instructor if you have exam accommodations with the Centre for Accessible Learning (CAL). Review the [CAL exam guidelines](#) for more information. Send a brief reminder email to your instructor to remind them you are registered with CAL.
- Know the process to connect with your instructor during an online exam in case you have real-time questions. If you don't know, ask.

2. Check your computer

There's nothing more discouraging than when your computer is not working properly. Prior to the exam:

- Ensure your computer is working and meets the [Camosun minimum technical](#) requirements.
- Ensure you have a strong Wi-Fi or hardwired connection.
- Give yourself time to get another computer or travel to an alternative Wi-Fi access point if necessary.

3. Find a good spot to take the exam

A good location can be key to taking a successful exam. Try the following strategies:

- Make sure you've turned off all distractions - TV, phone, music, social media, and all notifications - including asking your roommates to keep the noise down.
- Consider taking your exam at the Camosun library. You can book a table and/or computer (workstation) through the [library homepage](#).
- Make sure the set-up is comfortable for an extended period of time.
- Have on-hand all the required items you need and are allowed to complete the exam: books, notes, pens/pencils, calculator, water bottle and a snack.

4. Make sure you read & understand the exam instructions

- Check and recheck the test time and date.
- Make sure you understand the instructor's expectations. Can you take the exam anytime within a certain window of time? Do you need to complete the exam in one chunk? Or can you take breaks and come back later? How long will you have to complete the test? What materials are you allowed to consult – Google, textbook...If you need to ask for clarification once you've started who do you contact?

5. Study & Prepare study notes

Even if your exam is "open book," you need to be familiar with the material so you don't waste time hunting for it. One great trick is creating study notes with reference to the course material so you can easily access it during the exam. Here are a few ways you can structure study notes:

- Start by preparing good study notes from the lecture notes/slides, course readings, and other course materials.
- Identify the course objectives. What do your professors say that they would like you to understand by the end of the course?
- Can you sum up the main idea(s) or guiding principle(s) of the course?

6. Practice

Effective studying goes beyond just reading through your notes. Here are some other ways to prepare yourself for the exam:

- Anticipate potential questions and then test yourself by writing answers to those questions.
- Try writing out flashcards and use them to quiz yourself.
- They say when you teach it you learn it. Try teaching a course concept or sample problem to someone else. Even your dog!

7. Time management

- How much time do you have to complete the exam? Plan the time you have per question based on grade/weighting and total time allocated.
- Keep track and set a timer when you have 15 minutes left. If you get stumped on a question, move on to the next one (take note of which questions to return to). You may be able to come back and work on the questions that require more thought later if the exam permits.

8. Technical problems?

It can be really stressful if something technical goes wrong during a test. Don't despair, but do take screen shots and notify your instructor right away or contact [eLearning Support](#).