

Test Anxiety Causes and Strategies

CAUSE	DESCRIPTION	STRATEGIES
UNDERPREPARED	You feel nervous because you know you did not put as much time and/or effort into studying as you could have.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Set a goal to improve for the next test ▪ Time-Management ▪ Learn more about memory strategies ▪ Review info consistently so you don't have to cram before the test ▪ Use the 5-day study plan
PAST EXPERIENCES	You have struggled with tests in the past. Because of this, you think you will never do well on tests. You have little confidence in yourself.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Use positive self-talk ▪ Set goals and reward yourself for improvement ▪ Try visualization ▪ Complete class assignments and readings on-time and congratulate yourself for doing so ▪ Work with a tutor or study group ▪ Develop an internal locus of control.
FEAR OF FAILURE	You have high personal expectations. You don't want to disappoint others. You have pressure to maintain high grades in order to keep a scholarship or athletic eligibility. You would be embarrassed if you did not do well. You have placed a lot of importance on this test.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Get a clear understanding of athletic or scholarship guidelines ▪ Review the syllabus to see how grades are calculated, and what percentage of the grade is determined by test scores. ▪ See your instructor or a counselor to create a plan of action. ▪ Increase performance in other areas of the class, such as homework. ▪ Determine what is most important to you.
LACK OF TEST-TAKING SKILLS	You don't have a lot of experience with the test format. You are struggling to finish the test in time. You have trouble reading the directions or questions correctly.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Try the Common Sense in Test-Taking program in the ALC lab ▪ Try writing your own test questions and practice answering them. ▪ Find out more about strategies for taking tests. See someone at the ALC or visit the links on our website.

Source: Wong, Linda. Essential Study Skills. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 2006.