

APPENDIX A – MATH STUDY TIPS

We have already discussed some of these tips at the beginning of this study guide. But they are important to know.

GIVE YOURSELF PLENTY OF TIME TO PREPARE FOR THE MATH COMPETENCY EXAM

You really need to allow yourself as much time as possible to effectively prepare for the math competency exam. We recommend at least six weeks. For those who find the material in this guide too easy may not need as much time, but don't kid yourself when it comes to studying the material. If you don't know it, study it.

DON'T BOTHER CRAMMING FOR THE EXAM

Cramming may work for other subject matter, but it doesn't help in math. Your brain needs time to fully grasp the material and cramming overnight does not give it the time. That's why we recommend spending six weeks preparing so each day the brain has a chance to put take the material from its short-term memory and place it in the long-term memory.

PICK A DATE TO TAKE THE MATH COMPETENCY EXAM AND CREATE A SCHEDULE

This may seem obvious, but many students begin studying for the exam and then choose a date when they feel ready. By choosing a date first, it gives you a target and forces you to prepare for it every day. It will also help in creating a study schedule.

Remember to set aside some time every day to go over part of this guide or just the examples. It doesn't need to be hours. Even 20 minutes here and there is better than not doing any math.

MAKE SACRIFICES

This doesn't apply to everyone, but we all have many demands on our everyday life. You might need to DVR your favorite show or cut a few minutes hanging out with friends. Try to understand that this is only temporary. You'll be able to dedicate more time to other things once you take the math competency exam. Decide what you can sacrifice, study hard, pass the exam, and move on to the next stage in your life.

PRACTICE MAKE “MUCH BETTER”

Body builder don't get their muscular bodies by working out once in a while. They are in the gym every day and push themselves even when they are tired. Math is the same way. You need to practice to get better. Get your hands on as many problems as you can and work them out. Work the math department's practice exam several times. Read over this manual several times. The more practice you get, the better you will become and the more confident you will be for the exam.

DON'T USE A CALCULATOR

You won't be able to use a calculator on the exam. And some of the classes won't let you use a calculator either. You must learn how to do the problems manually. The problems on the math competency exam were designed so you would not need a calculator. So you need to stop using the calculator as a crutch and prepare for the exam without using it.

A MARATHON, NOT A SPRINT

It will take some time to learn a lot of the material presented to you in this study guide. It is not expected that if you read it once, you'll be an expert at it right away. Don't compare yourself with other people. It may seem that other people are picking up on the material really quick while it takes you more time to understand it. Everyone is different and their brains work in different ways. As Aesop said, "Slow and steady wins the race."