

Studying for Chemistry

Skills Enhancement & Tutoring Center

Reading the text:

- Do it before the relevant lecture; be prepared to re-read afterwards
- Read with a notebook; take notes on things you think are important
- When you study, make connections between important topics from lecture
- Repetition, repetition, repetition. Just because you read it once does not mean you are prepared for the test
- Work through sample problems
- Repeat the chapters or sections if confused

Doing homework:

- Do it before the relevant lecture
- Do it! It may be time consuming, but it is very helpful in testing your understanding of the material
- Strongly recommend doing the homework even if it is not assigned
- Try to attempt all problems since the concepts could be on the exam
- If you encounter a hard problem, use the information given and try to interpret it from there. Use class notes and reading notes for guidance
- If a problem is still complicated, skip it and come back later since new questions could spark ideas for that problem
- Work with other people, but everyone should confirm that it is strictly for doing homework
- If possible, accessing a solutions manual may be helpful since it outlines steps for each problem

Studying for and taking exams:

- Review class and text notes as well as past quizzes and sample problems
- Study several days ahead so that the day before the exam can be used to refresh certain topics
- Chapter review summaries are beneficial for understanding some concepts but in depth reading is required to understand all concepts
- Group study sessions are helpful but should establish some ground rules
- Do all the studying prior and use the group sessions to fill unclear answers
- Take a deep breath and realize that it is only a test
- Be calm and relaxed; don't worry about others who have already completed the test

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You really need to nail down:

- The basic parts of the periodic table
- Understand bond types and how they occur
- Lewis dot structures since bonds are derived from this concept
- How to balance equations
- Concepts converting to different variables
- Stoichiometry
- The concepts behind the reactions of various products
- Valence electrons and its relation to the octet rule and charges
- Redox reactions
- Be able to differentiate between gas laws

Other thoughts:

- Use resources around campus: professor, TA's, other students, tutoring center, chemistry columns, internet, the computer software that comes with your text
- It can be an interesting course, but you must spend time reading and studying since new concepts are continuously being presented
- Tests can be challenging and time consuming, but they test you on the important ideas of chemistry
- If you feel that you did poorly on a test, just come to the realization that it is done; being hard on yourself will not change the results. Everyone has good and bad days. Talk to the instructor.
- If you happen to receive the grade that you did not desire, retake the class since you can only gain more knowledge another time around

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→ *Figuring it out together*

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