

# Top 5 Strategies to Review for Exams

- 1) **Get Organized:** Throughout the semester, some of us just throw papers into random binders and notebooks.\* If this is the case for you, then this is your first step. Make a pile for each course. Go through all of your binders, notebooks, folders, etc and put papers into the piles noted for each course. Once that is complete, organize each pile into logical piles. These may include: notes, handouts, homework, assessments, projects, etc.  
\*If this is not the case for you, then you can skip this step.

- 2) **How to determine what is on the exam:** I hear many students say they need a study guide to determine *what* is on the exam. If the exam is cumulative, meaning it covers everything, then EVERYTHING you just organized is fair game. This can be overwhelming to think about. So to help narrow it down, look at your grades online!

9/9/2016	<a href="#">Function Notation Quiz</a>	10/26/2016	<a href="#">Add, Subtract, Multiply Polynomials Quiz</a>
9/22/2016	<a href="#">Function Mastery</a>	11/4/2016	<a href="#">Polynomials COOL (test)</a>
9/27/2016	<a href="#">Polygraph Domain &amp; Range</a>	11/17/2016	<a href="#">Linear vs Non Linear Quiz</a>
9/29/2016	<a href="#">Function COOL (test)</a>		
10/10/2016	<a href="#">Naming Polynomials Quiz</a>		

For example, this student learned about function notation, functions in general, domain & range, naming polynomials, how to add/subtract/multiply polynomials, and determine if a function is linear or non linear. All of this can be determined by looking at the list of assessments.

To analyze this list even further, notice the dates. Generally speaking, when a teacher writes an exam, it is proportional to the amount of time spent on a topic. Assuming the school year started in the middle of August, it looks like Functions took about 6 weeks. This is in contrast to Polynomials which took about 3 weeks. Therefore, there should be about twice as many Function questions as there will be Polynomial questions. Knowing this type of information can help you determine your focus.

- 3) **Where can I get sample questions for the exam:** Again, analyze your grade. What assignments were given? What pages? What questions? Finding these assignments are a great place to start determining what types of questions are asked on each of these topics. Also, your old assessments are a great resource. Many teachers use old assessment questions to create the exam.
- 4) **Easy vs Hard:** This is still a lot of information. So now it is time to prioritize. As you go through all of these sources, start making a list of what topics are EASY for you and which ones are HARD. When it comes time to study, spend your time on the topics that give you the most trouble. Then if you have time left, you can use it to review the easy topics.
- 5) **Be Active:** To truly review successfully, you have to be an active participant. As you work through the strategies above, generate your own study guides or use the templates provided to you. Actively engage yourself in the process rather than passively reading through your notes. Focus on what you need the most. Work your way to being like Allison who ended up not needing her cheat sheet. Because, after all, there are many situations in life where you just have to know your stuff and not be reliant on looking it up.