

Test Taking Strategies for the Math Compass Test

The compass test is a self-adjusted multiple choice exam that is taken on the computer. That means that the answer to the current question will determine the next question. It is important to take care at the beginning of the Compass test. The test starts in college level algebra, and if you go into basic math, that is where you will stay. So here are some general tips or strategies for success:

1. There is no substitute for practice. Go to the Testing Center Website: http://www.actstudent.org/sampletest/math/math_01.html, and complete the practice problems.
2. The Compass Test is given on a computer, but the computer is very user friendly. You do not need any computer background to be able to take the test. If you have any questions or problems, someone will be there to help you.
3. Read the directions carefully, and listen to the instructions by the Testing Coordinator. If you have a problem or do not understand something, be sure and ask.
4. When you begin testing on the computer, read each question carefully.
5. Don't try to figure the problems on the Compass Test out in your head. Work the problems out with paper and pencil. The Compass Test is not timed, so there is no reason to rush.
6. Try to answer the problems without looking at the possible answers on the computer monitor. See if your answer matches what is on the screen. If not, recheck your work.
7. If it has been more than one year since you have taken a math course, you really want to review some basic math and algebra by getting a book at the library. The higher your test score, the better chance you have of getting into a math course that will count toward your major.
8. Remember that practicing and staying calm can possibly improve your chances of testing into a higher math class. You don't want to work against yourself by not preparing adequately, and by allowing your anxiety to get out of control.