



reCAPS

Counseling & Psychological Services
University of California, Santa Cruz

Top Exam-Taking Tips

Most people don't love exams. They can be stressful, but with a little preparation, you can give yourself the best chance of doing well. Here are CAPS' top tips for exam day:

1. Be awake and alert—get a good night's sleep the night before. (Of course, this means studying ahead of time, not staying up all night cramming!)
2. Eat a small but nutritious breakfast. Nutritionists say that a combination of complex carbs (e.g., whole grain toast) and protein (e.g., milk, nuts, cheese, yogurt, soy, eggs, peanut butter) can give you energy to focus.
3. Get to the exam site a little early but not too early—say, 5 to 10 minutes—to prevent stressing over being late.
4. Avoid talking to stressed-out/stressful people before the exam. Listening to someone freak out is not going to help you!
5. Bring exam aids if allowed (e.g., calculator, notes); bring other stuff you might need, like an extra pen or pencil, tissues, cough drops or water.
6. Use the restroom before the exam to minimize distractions.
7. Visualize yourself doing great on the exam. Imagining a good outcome can actually improve your performance and confidence.
8. Be aware of the time allotted for the exam and pace yourself accordingly. Make sure to read all instructions and questions before starting the exam.

Wear headphones if it allows you to avoid getting stuck in a pre-exam freak-out session with an anxious classmate.

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All About CAPS

Counseling & Psychological Services (CAPS) offers confidential mental health services to registered UCSC students all year:

- Helpful workshops, trainings, and self-help tools
- A variety of therapy and support groups
- Let's Talk drop-in consultations
- Brief individual, couples, and family counseling
- Medication services
- Referrals to on- and off-campus resources
- Crisis services in person Mon–Fri 8 am–5 pm and by phone 24/7 at (831) 459-2628

To make an appointment, call (831) 459-2628 or stop by (Student Health Center, East Wing, 2nd floor) weekdays between 8 am and 5 pm. To learn more, visit our [website](#), check out the [CAPS blog](#), and like us on [Facebook](#)!



Do your best, Slugs!

Blow off some steam by coloring! Print the page below, and break out your favorite pens, colored pencils, or crayons.



Dear CAPS,

I won't be spending the holidays with family. What are some things I can do instead?

—Seeking Celebration

Some students don't spend the holidays with family. Maybe they're too far away or the relationships aren't great. Whatever the reason, it can be good to have a plan for what to do during the holiday season. Below are a few ideas. Remember that if you live on campus, you'll need to make arrangements for where to stay when campus is closed over winter break. Talk to housing staff if you need help with this.

- Check online for free holiday-related things to do: parades, street

performances, festivals ... there is often something fun and free or low cost going on. And, if you are struggling to pay for food, many food pantries and churches offer special holiday meals.

- Plan a meal or gathering with friends. It doesn't have to be fancy to be festive. Eat out, or shop and cook together. Play games. Sing. Wear ugly holiday sweaters.
- Volunteer. It's a great way to feel good while helping others.
- Treat yourself to something you've been wanting to do but put off because you've been too busy: See that movie, play that video game, take that day trip, go on that hike.
- Get crafty and make things for friends or relatives.
- Explore: Are there places in Santa Cruz or beyond you've never seen? There are many beaches, parks, and interesting towns to check out on the Central Coast.
- Create a holiday ritual that is meaningful to you: Maybe it's a way to focus on gratitude, honor late family members, or set intentions for the new year. Get creative, and do it solo or with friends.
- Send hand-written letters to friends or loved ones who are far away.
- Remember that even though it may seem like "everyone else" is with family for the holidays, it's not so. Take comfort in knowing you're not the only one.

DIY: Make a Broiled Banana Split

Although it's not a traditional winter or holiday dessert, a banana split is a classic that can be fun any time. Try this easy (and pretty healthy) version—the cranberries make it festive! This recipe serves four. Double the recipe if you have a bigger group of friends to feed. It's good self-care to have a treat now and then and to have fun with friends!

Ingredients

1 tablespoon brown sugar
1/2 teaspoon cinnamon
Pinch of salt
4 bananas
1 tablespoon butter or margarine
Vanilla frozen yogurt or nondairy frozen dessert

Handful of toasted almonds

Handful of carob chips

Handful of dried cranberries

Directions

Combine the brown sugar, cinnamon, and salt in a small bowl. Peel and halve the bananas lengthwise; brush with 1 tablespoon melted butter and sprinkle with the brown sugar mixture. Place bananas on a baking sheet or in a shallow oven-safe dish and broil in a toaster oven or on the top shelf of a regular oven until golden brown, about 3 minutes. Top two banana halves with a scoop of frozen yogurt (or other frozen dessert). Sprinkle with toasted almonds, carob chips, and dried cranberries. Enjoy!



Adapted from Foodnetwork.com

Upcoming Events

DROP-IN SUPPORT GROUP: CAPS is providing drop-in times for UCSC students to discuss how they have been impacted by current local and national events. If you have been impacted by recent events (e.g., wildfires, the shooting tragedy in Thousand Oaks, local and national racial trauma) and would like an opportunity to talk together with our counselors and other impacted students, please come to the Student Health Center Mural Room on Friday, Nov. 30th, or Friday, Dec. 7th, from 12 to 1 pm. We are here for you.

LET'S TALK: Let's Talk is a drop-in space where you can have a brief, confidential, one-time chat with a professional CAPS counselor. It's free, and you don't need an appointment—just walk in! Let's Talk is held four afternoons a week from 1 to 3 pm at different locations throughout the quarter, except holidays and finals week. All registered undergraduate and graduate UCSC students are welcome at all locations of Let's Talk. Read more on our [website](#). Let's Talk is not set up for mental health crises—for crisis situations, visit CAPS during business hours or call (831) 459-2628 any time to talk to a crisis counselor.

CAPS GROUPS: CAPS is offering a variety of therapy and support groups in winter quarter. Contact CAPS now to get more information or inquire about how to sign up. Our winter quarter schedule has not been finalized, but you can see the fall schedule on our [Groups web page](#) or call us at (831) 459-2628 for more info.

ANXIETY TOOLBOX: This three-part workshop series gives you information and coping tools for managing anxiety and stress. It meets three times for an hour each session. Our winter quarter schedule has not been finalized, but you can read more about the series and see the fall schedule on our [website](#), or call us to get more info at (831) 459-2628.

MINDFUL LIVING: This three-part workshop series provides an intro to mindfulness and meditation and teaches skills that apply to a range of issues, including managing stress and difficult emotions. It meets three times for an hour each session. Our winter quarter schedule has not been finalized, but you can read more about the series and see the fall schedule on our [website](#), or call us to get more info at (831) 459-2628.

