

Wise Choices for Real Estate -- Test Taking

A test is a game... an important game, but a game nonetheless.

First, let's review why passing the Real Estate State Exam is important (as if you didn't know). Having a Real Estate Salesperson License allows you to enter the field and conduct real estate transactions for compensation. Without a license, the law is strict and prohibits any involvement with real estate for compensation. However, if you pass the state exam, you will be eligible to apply for a Real Estate Salesperson License. The license is a gateway to many opportunities in the field such as a Real Estate Agent, Broker, Analyst, and Developer, to name a few. One of my students told me that even a future employer required a real estate license. Perhaps, the company wanted to see the license to reveal knowledge, credibility, and determination.

So, the Real Estate State Exam is important. But it *is* just a game, and you win the Real Estate State Exam game by correctly answering at least 70% of 150 questions. That translates to either missing no more than 45 questions or getting at least 105 questions correct.

Three factors determine how well you score on the Real Estate State Exam:

Factor 1: How well you have prepared? If you have diligently read the Principles book, you are extremely well prepared! Look around the room at the other students taking the state exam. Remind yourself that you are as well prepared as all of them and more prepared than most of them. You have worked hard, used a powerful learning system, and the result is deep and lasting learning. You have every reason to be confident!

Factor 2: How well do you take tests? Most people assume that the state exam reveals how much you know and maybe even how intelligent you are. In an ideal world, perhaps this would be true. Here on planet Earth, however, another critical factor influences your examination results: Your skill at taking exams. Without this skill, your examination results may only vaguely represent how much you know or how intelligent you are. Every game requires special skills for correct answers. In this section, you'll learn some of the very best skills for maximizing the number of correct answers on the Real Estate State Exam. Get ready to learn how to have a "game plan."

Factor 3: How much have you learned from practice tests? Every test provides feedback. As you know, self-aware creators pay attention to feedback and use it to their advantage. If a practice test score reveals that you're on course, you can confidently keep doing whatever you're been doing. However, if a practice test score reveals that you are off course, it's time to change tactics.

TAKING THE STATE EXAM: THE BIG PICTURE

The good news is there are only so many ways the Real Estate State Exam can ask you to demonstrate your knowledge and skills. Your challenge is to determine the most likely ways and prepare accordingly. So, experiment with the many following strategies and, as you do, keep in mind the big picture of the state exam: Your goal is to correctly answer at least 70% of 150 questions. Just as there is an art to learning, so is there an art to taking the state exam. It's called having a *game plan*...

BEFORE TAKING THE STATE EXAM

1. Actively use the Principles book. This means when you walk into the testing room, you have already...

A. **Collected** complete and accurate information from all reading assignments and class lectures,

B. **Organized** many different kinds of effective study materials,

C. **Practiced** and rehearsed these study materials with a distributed study schedule, and

D. **Evaluated** to confirm your understanding of all study materials.

2. Simulate testing conditions. Take practice tests and mimic testing conditions. Practice the tests at the same time of day that you will be taking the Real Estate State Exam. Pace yourself at a rate that is similar to the state exam. The Real Estate State Exam is 3 hours and 15 minutes, which is 195 minutes (1 hour lunch in between). There are 150 multiple choice questions. This equals to 1 minute and 20 seconds for each question. Food and drinks are not allowed while taking the state exam; therefore, avoid doing so when taking practice tests. If possible, make a practice drive to your exam site to get a feel of the location, parking, and building.

3. Visualize success. Create a mental picture of yourself taking the state exam with great success. In your mind, picture yourself understanding every question, answering each one quickly and correctly, finishing on time; and afterwards, receiving your examination results with the word "CONGRATULATIONS!". Playing this positive picture in your mind often will build your confidence and prepare you to think, feel, and act positively during the real exam.

4. Prepare yourself physically and emotionally. Be sure to get a good night's sleep and eat well before the state exam. You don't want to be distracted by tiredness or hunger. As your Proctor prepares to start the exam -- you should breathe deeply and relax. Your studying is done. Now it's game time and your goal is simple: Correctly answer at least 70% of 150 questions.

WHILE TAKING STATE EXAM

5. Use the scratch paper to your advantage. When permissible, write notes and formulas on the given scratch paper. These memory aids will assist you in remembering the information that is required for the state exam. Examples are: M.A.R.I.A., P.E.T.E., D.U.S.T., T.T.I.P., No Darn Foolin' Around, 640, 5,280, and 43,560. *Do not* lay out a township with section numbers until those questions are asked. In some examinations, there may not be any section number questions.

6. Make a game plan. Remember, your goal is to correctly answer at least 70% of 150 questions. There is no penalty for a wrong answer. Your examination results will be the sum of the correct answers. The game plan has two steps. *Step 1*, do a first round through the state exam and answer the questions you can do easily. You never want to lose points by leaving questions undone that you could have answered, but ran out of time. Answering easy questions first has advantages such as pocketing correct questions, building confidence, and calming test anxiety. *Step 2*, make a second round through the state exam on the remaining questions that require more time.

7. Answer multiple choice questions. Multiple choice questions offer a statement or question, and then present alternative ways to complete the statement or answer the question. A multiple choice question is actually a group of true/false questions. Your task, then, is to read each statement and choose the correct (true) answer. When you are stumped, here are ways for the game plan. The following options won't always get you the correct answer, but when you are reduced to making pure guesses, they can improve your odds of choosing the correct answer:

A. Be sure to read all answers before making a choice. For example, Answer "A" may be partly accurate and tempting, but Answer "D" may be more accurate and therefore is the answer you should choose.

B. Cross out all obviously incorrect answers, such as those that are intended to be humorous.

C. Cross out answers with unconditional (100%) words such as *all, always, never, only, every*.

D. If the statement has two negatives, cross both negatives out (typically two negatives form a positive meaning) and see if the statement is true or false. Examples of two negatives are *not illegal, not never, not unnecessary, not unethical, not voidable*.

E. If two answers are similar (ex: *independent* and *interdependent*), choose one of them as the correct answer.

F. If the question is based on a reading passage, read the question and possible answers *before* reading the passage. Then read the passage with the specific purpose of finding the answer.

G. If one answer has a more thorough answer than the others, choose that answer as correct.

H. If you know two or more answers are correct, choose "All of the above" as the correct answer.

8. Process of elimination. Each examination question has four multiple choices. For each multiple choice that you are able to eliminate, your probability of getting the correct answer increases by 25%. Normally, you are able to eliminate two of the four multiple choices. If you can do this then you will have a 50% probability of getting the correct answer.

9. If you get stuck, move on. Don't sit there wasting time on a question you can't answer. Not only will you lose time, you'll also undermine your confidence by focusing on what you *don't* know instead of what you *do* know. If you doubt an answer that you've given or you've given no answer at all, *write the question number and possible answer(s) on your scratch paper*. This will help you on the second round through the state exam; and in case you run out of time and have to answer quickly.

10. Review your answers. If time is available, do review your answers to ensure there are no mistakes. Sometimes later questions in the examination either gave you the answer or "triggered your memory". *If you have to change an answer, make sure you can justify changing the answer*. Almost always, the first guess is better than the second guess!