



Considerations for Best Results

Before you begin, close all other programs or applications, log out of Blackboard, and then login back. If your computer has been on for several hours, shut down and restart it. Have only your Internet browser with Blackboard open on your computer. We recommend using Safari, Firefox, or Chrome. Disable pop-up blockers, disable firewalls, run anti-virus and anti-spyware software regularly. To avoid a loss of your answers, use only the navigation buttons and links in Blackboard. **Do not use the Back button** or any other browser buttons during an Assessment. If an item includes a link to open in a new window, review the material and close the new window before continuing.

During an All-at-Once Test, **click the Save button during the test and again before submitting.**

In a Timed Test, if you are allowed to save and resume the test later, the timer will continue to count. The timer is usually visible above the test. The timer begins when you start the test and continues until you click the **Submit** button.

In a Force Completion test you must complete the test on the first attempt. You cannot save and resume the test later. Do not click outside the test area. Do not use the browser navigation buttons or links. Do not open other browser windows (unless embedded in the test) or other computer applications (unless required by your instructor).

If your instructor set the test for Multiple Attempts, you will see a note at the top of the test. Your instructor may limit the number of attempts. Click the test link to start a new attempt. If the tests are timed, the timer continues to count until you click the **Submit** button, even if you leave Blackboard.

Avoid using a wireless (WiFi) connection for a test.

Before the Exam

1. If the Instructor set up a practice exam, take it on all computers you might use. Do this early so that you have time to identify and resolve any issues. If allowed, taking the practice exam an additional time before the actual exam will help you verify that your computer is still setup properly. Contact your instructor to report any problems before taking the real exam.
2. Avoid using a wireless (WiFi) or satellite Internet connection because a weak signal or a brief interruption in the signal during the exam will make it impossible to submit it properly.
3. When you log in, Blackboard starts your session and tracks your time. After about three hours of non-navigation (not clicking to go to a different page) Blackboard may close your session. To avoid an unexpected lock out, you can log out of Blackboard and log in again just prior to starting your exam. Answering questions without clicking a Save button does not count as active use in Bb.



TEST TAKING TIPS

4. Make sure your computer is free of Adware applications. These applications will periodically open a popup window containing an ad. You can use a free program to evaluate your computer. One possibility is Ad-Aware from Lavasoft (<http://www.lavasoft.com/>). (No recommendation is implied or given - this only is FYI.)
5. Review the [Blackboard Browser Recommendations](#) to find the best browser for your system. If the browser and version you use is Certified by Blackboard, Inc., for your computer's operating system, you will avoid most problems.
6. To have enough unused RAM to take the test, restart your computer before logging in to take an exam. Programs and websites do not always release computer memory. Restarting your computer will help ensure that Blackboard has all of the resources it needs to function properly.
7. Do not use browsers provided by your Internet Service Provider (ISP), e.g., AOL, Comcast, Charter, and SBC. These browsers have been modified and do not work well with Blackboard. We recommend [Safari](#), [Firefox](#), and [Chrome](#). Some dial-up ISPs will terminate your connection if you don't use their browser within a given time limit. You have few options to deal with this. You could return to your ISP (e.g., AOL) browser and click to remain active, which could cause other issues, or use a continuously active connection elsewhere to avoid the problem. During high use times, like evenings, service can be slow or can have a temporary break. These issues can cause a disconnect and you may lose your work. Check you connection speeds at various times over several days to help you decide when to take a test from home.
8. Open only one browser window - the one you will use to take the exam, unless the exam has an embedded link for a file. After reviewing the content, close that window and continue the exam.
9. Set the browser window to the size you want before clicking to start the exam. Most browsers refresh the page when you resize the screen. This means it will reload the page and may stop you from taking the exam.
10. Turn off third- party browser extensions. Third-party browser extensions include (but are not limited to) features such as Google or Yahoo toolbars installed on the browser.
11. Allow Popups. Turn off the popup blocker before starting the exam. Turn it back on after you submit it. If you have a firewall installed, it may not let you take the test. Either disable it temporarily or go to a non-firewalled computer to take the test.
12. Do not use any other applications, unless otherwise directed by your Instructor. You may wish to write longer essay answers in a plain text editor. Although using a word processor gives you a backup copy, switching between applications or leaving Bb alone (for 3 hours) could cause problems or log you out of the test. Bb times out after 3 hours of inactivity. Typing an answer in a text box does not count as activity. Clicking a Save button will reset the 3-hour Bb clock, but not your ISP clock.



13. When you see a dialog box that asks you to verify a digital signature or run an application, click the Run button. For better results, click the Always Allow option. This lets you use the Bb Content Editor, a built-in word-processor-like text editor. The Content Editor is a javascript-based WYSIWYG (What You See Is What You Get) tool.
14. Start ASAP. If you have a time frame given by your instructor, begin as soon as possible. If you have a technical problem, you are more likely to have time to find a solution. Waiting until the final hour of the final day of the appointed time may be your ticket to serious problems.

Taking the Exam

1. To enter the exam, click the link **once** and wait. Sometimes it takes a while to load the exam. If you click twice, you will get a message saying you already took the exam and will not be able to begin. Wait for the page to load completely before starting the exam.
2. Read the instructions carefully. **Force Completion** = you must complete the test in one session. Leaving the exam by clicking outside it may lock it. Answers not saved will not be recorded. **Allow Multiple Attempts** = you may return to the exam within the limits set by your instructor. Click the **Save** button as you work. Click the **Submit** button to submit your test for grading. A timed test continues running the clock until the you click **Submit**, even if you leave Blackboard. **All at Once** = all questions are on one page. Click a **Save** button often, preferably for each question to record each response. **One at a Time** = each question appears in its own window. Click the **Save** button as you answer. Click the **forward arrow** once to move to the next question. Some tests will be set to allow you to return to previous questions, others will only let you move to the next question.
3. Do not run other applications while taking an exam unless otherwise directed by your Instructor.
4. Do not use the browser Back or Forward buttons for any Blackboard navigation. Always use the navigation links on the Bb page.
5. Do not resize or refresh the browser window after loading the exam.
6. Remember to save the exam often. Click Save once more before clicking the Submit button. The Submit button sends the exam to the instructor for grading. The Save button does not.
7. Click the **Submit** button **only once**; it may take a few moments to receive confirmation of a successful submission. If you don't see a confirmation, return to the page where you started the test and click the link again. If your exam is submitted, Bb will say the exam is completed. Contact your instructor if the test is not completed.
8. Check **My Grades**. An exclamation point (!) means the test is submitted and waiting for the instructor to complete the grading. Blackboard scores objective tests and displays a score. A lock icon indicates a problem, and you should contact your instructor as soon as possible. Tell your instructor



exactly what you did, what you clicked, what you saw, and when you did everything.

9. **OOPS!** If you lose power, your browser quits, you lose Internet connectivity, or have any other technical issue, contact your instructor immediately and explain in detail what happened. The instructor will decide how to handle your issues.
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