



Physics

Before Class:

Read the sections from the book that you will be discussing in class.

Your professor should tell you before hand which sections to read, or you can find it on your syllabus.

Don't spend too much time on material you don't understand. Your professor may be able to clarify it in class.

In Class:

Sit up front and ask questions when you are confused. Most likely, other students in your class have the same question.

Participate and offer your own input to problems done on the board. Try to follow the problem solving technique mentally - don't just write it down and plan on deciphering it later.

Take good notes, but don't spend too much time looking down at your desk.

Be sure you understand what you're writing down.

After Class:

Re-read the book sections that were discussed in class. Don't waste time reading material not covered in the course.

Do the homework as soon as possible so you don't have to try to relearn the physical concepts before using them to solve problems.

Homework:

Make extensive use of the problem solving sheet. It is designed to help you solve any kind of physics problem. You will never again have to read a problem, shrug your shoulders, and say "I don't even know where to start!" If, for some reason, you don't have a problem solving sheet, follow these steps:

1. Draw a picture.
2. Identify known and unknown quantities in your picture.
3. Restate the problem.
4. Decide which equation(s) to use.
5. Do the calculation(s) and check your units.
6. Check that your answer is reasonable.

Tests:

To prepare for a test, review the material first (notes, old problems, highlighted areas in your book, etc.).

Memorize the equations you will need to know on the test. Make a flash card for each equation. Write the equation on one side of the card and a short description of the equation (ie. Coulomb's Law" or "How is force related to mass and acceleration?") on the other side. See how well you can remember the equations based only on their descriptions.

If you take a sample test, do it under appropriate "test conditions."

Give yourself a time limit, don't let yourself get distracted, and don't cheat by looking at your notes. If you do need to peek at an equation or two from the book, remember to go back and review your weak areas later (but before the test).

Help!!

If you're having trouble with the reading or homework get help. There are many sources of help available to you:

1. Get together with students in your homework or study group. If you don't understand a problem, there is a good chance that someone in your group will be able to explain it to you.
2. Find out when and where the physics tutoring is offered and take advantage.
3. See your professor during office hours. He/she knows a lot!