



Best Practices for High Stakes Examination Preparation

Preparation is the key to success

~Alexander Graham Bell



Common Themes to Excel on High-Stakes Examinations



Good Sleep



Healthy Breakfast



Exercise



Ask for Help



Don't Panic



Practice

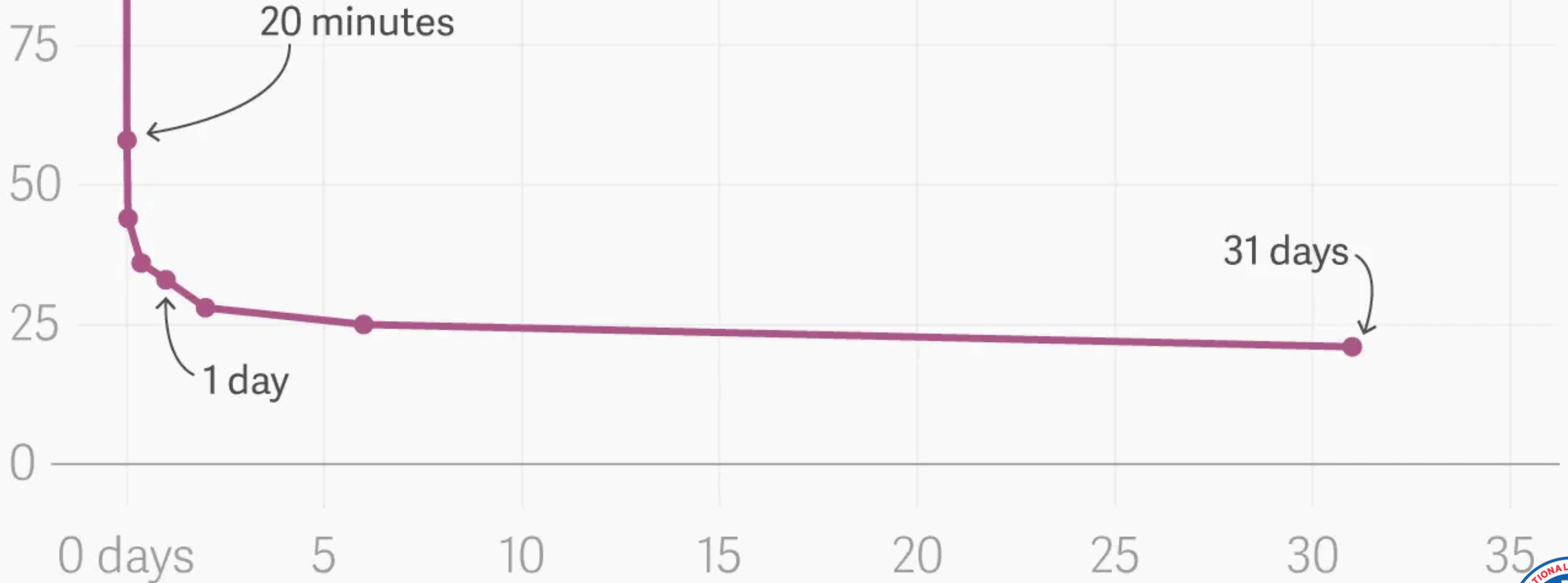
Study Habits

- Create the habit
- Don't cram
- Prepare early
- Sleep well - this is a priority!
- Arrive early
- Positive rituals



Hermann Ebbinghaus' forgetting curve

100% of information retained



Retrieved from: <https://practicalpie.com/ebbinghaus-forgetting-curve/>

Memorization Techniques

- Acronyms and acrostics
- Music mnemonics
- Rhyming mnemonics
- Chunking
- Create a memory palace
- Write it down
- Use spaced repetition
- Make visual connections
- Share what you're learning
- Sleep more
- Move your body

Lau, J. (2025). How to Memorize Things Fast: 11 memorization techniques. Retrieved from: <https://zapier.com/blog/better-memory/>



“Reflection Is a Form of Practice”

- Memorize, or write down the lessons learned each day.
- Focus on how you will remember the lessons.
- Step by step process to easily retrieve the information in the future.



Brown, Peter C. (2014). Make it stick : the science of successful learning. Cambridge, Massachusetts: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press.

Develop Your Own Study Habits



Develop a study plan



Study together



Take breaks



Eliminates distractions



Set goals



Get organized

Mentors and Open Labs

- Do you have a mentorship program?
- Do you have open lab hours to help students?



Photo used with permission from Kellogg Community College, Battle Creek, MI

Instructor Habits

No Trickery

- Are students expected to read the material before class?
- Application of material in practice.
- Team-based learning.
- Immediate feedback.



Experience

- Your experience will not be your students experience.
- Teach to the standards.
- Practice Analysis' are completed and define current daily practice of:
 - EMRs and EMTs (BLS Practice Analysis)
 - AEMTs and Paramedics (ALS Practice Analysis)

Common Myth

The questions are too hard.

All items are referenced and supported with a rationale

All items are pretested/piloted to gather statistical data to assure that they are:

- Not too difficult (or too easy)
- Able to discern between high-achieving and low-achieving candidates
 - The stats tell us if all the candidates are guessing

Examinations need items of all difficulty levels



Common Myth (continued)

All items are reviewed by a diverse panel of EMS experts to assure they are:

- Reasonable and relevant
- Within provider scope
- Consistent with current practice and national guidelines
- Clinically accurate
- Fair
- Entry-level



Examinations Content

EMR: New EMR Certification Examination Domain Information

Content Domain	Percent of Examination
Scene Size-Up and Safety	19% - 23%
Primary Assessment	37% - 41%
Secondary Assessment	4% - 8%
Patient Treatment and Transport	20% - 24%
Operations	10% - 14%

**Note: Items related to pediatric patient care will be integrated throughout the examination content.*

Examinations Content

EMT: New EMT Certification Examination Domain Information

Content Domain	Percent of Examination
Scene Size-Up and Safety	15% - 19%
Primary Assessment	39% - 43%
Secondary Assessment	5% - 9%
Patient Treatment and Transport	20% - 24%
Operations	10% - 14%

**Note: Items related to pediatric patient care will be integrated throughout the examination content.*



Examinations Content

AEMT: AEMT Certification Examination Domain Information

Content Domain	Percent of Examination
Airway, Respiration & Ventilation*	9% - 13%
Cardiology & Resuscitation*	11% - 15%
Trauma*	7% - 11%
Medical/Obstetrics/Gynecology*	25% - 29%
EMS Operations	6% - 10%
Clinical Judgment*	31% - 35%

**Note: Items related to pediatric patient care will be integrated throughout the examination content.*



Examinations Content

Paramedic: AEMT Certification Examination Domain Information

Content Domain	Percent of Examination
Airway, Respiration & Ventilation*	8% - 12%
Cardiology & Resuscitation*	10% - 14%
Trauma*	6% - 10%
Medical/Obstetrics/Gynecology*	24% - 28%
EMS Operations	8% - 12%
Clinical Judgment*	34% - 38%

**Note: Items related to pediatric patient care will be integrated throughout the examination content.*



Reminder

Pilot Items

- EMR: 30 items
- EMT: 10 items
- AEMT: 35 items
- Paramedic: 20 items



Final Thoughts

Study Habits

- Sleep
- Avoid distractions
- Set time aside each day to study
- Do what works for you



Resources

Brown, Peter C. (2014). Make it stick : the science of successful learning. Cambridge, Massachusetts :The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press.

Lau, J. (2025). How to Memorize Things Fast: 11 memorization techniques. Retrieved from: <https://zapier.com/blog/better-memory/>

Practical Psychology. (2020, April 8). Ebbinghaus Forgetting Curve (Definition + Examples). Practical Psychology. <https://practicalpie.com/ebbinghaus-forgetting-curve/>

Questions?

Thank You!



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