

## TAKING THE NCLEX-PN: 4 TIPS FOR SURVIVAL

You've been taking classes for years. You're through your pre-requisites and co-requisites, and the school finally accepted you. You began your journey through your classes to become an LPN. You eventually graduate and you realize you're finally there...

**But wait...you still have to take the NCLEX-PN! As if all the stress and pressure of classes, work, and relationships wasn't enough, you have to take that blasted test!**

Let us mince no words. The NCLEX-PN was one of the most difficult tests (if not the most) that I've taken so far in my academic career. If it wasn't the most difficult, *it was at the very least the one over which I fretted and stressed the most.* However, the test is possible to pass – despite how you may feel – and you can do it!

**Here are four tips you can try to ensure that you will test more successfully.**

### 1. Be Prepared

- **Get a good NCLEX review book and go to town.** Answer as many questions as you can and get used to the format of NCLEX questions and work through problem-solving techniques.
- **Pay attention in class.** Your professors know what's on the test. Pay attention when they tell you things. You will most likely see something on the test that your teachers mentioned.
- **Learn how to test.** If you have difficulty answering the NCLEX format type of questions, you need to get some help with it. There are books which teach you how to test for the NCLEX.

### 2. Be prepared to be unprepared

- **You will not know all the answers.** My test ended at 85 questions and I think at least 10 of the questions dealt with drugs I had never even heard of before. Use your critical thinking skills to answer the questions you don't quite know. Review, review, review.
- **The test tries to fail you.** The NCLEX is a test that continually adapts and gets harder as you answer more questions. It's unlikely you will answer everything correctly. Don't feel bad if you felt like you missed a lot. You can still miss many questions and pass.

### 3. Relax and think through the questions

- **Don't rush. Read them thoroughly.** Think them through. The situations described in the NCLEX questions occur in an ideal environment. Don't think into the questions too much and twist the questions with too many "what ifs." What ifs can get you into trouble with the NCLEX. Remember ABC (airway, breathing, circulation) first and foremost.
- **Consider covering the answer choices with your hand before you answer the question and answer what you think it is.** Write down your thoughts and answers if you need to on the provided supplies.

### 4. Trust yourself

- **Don't change your answers before you move on.** Most likely if you've thought through the question your first answer will be correct. Don't second guess yourself (but make sure you understand the question before you answer it).

Practical nursing is a rewarding career. I got my LPN while I was (and still am) in school for my RN degree. If you're going for your RN, being an LPN gives you useful experience in the medical field. If you have chosen it as a career, you can do it! It will be rewarding and challenging and you can always continue to obtain more education as a nurse if you wish to increase your knowledge, understanding and responsibility (not to mention opportunities and salary).

**Overcome test anxiety and Develop effective study habits with [Saunders Strategies for Test Success.](#)**

*Study well!*

By: Jonathan G., Former Sponsored Elsevier Student Ambassador

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