General Study Tips and Suggestions about How to Study for Exams

General Study Tips:
Attend every class and come prepared. Read the relevant text sections and work through the text examples before class. As you read, take detailed notes. Pay special attention to definitions, rules, processes, hints, and cautions. Constantly ask yourself, “What is being done?” “Why is that being done?” “How did s/he know to do that?” If you don’t understand something, ask for clarification. Be an active participant in class - work problems, ask questions, help your classmates. Complete all the assigned homework problems as soon as possible after class. If there are any you can’t do, get help. If you do a problem incorrectly the first time, do it the correct way several times and make a note to yourself of the error you made and how to avoid that error. After you complete a section, go back and write a one page summary of that section highlighting key concepts, definitions, processes, hints, and cautions. As time permits, look back over old material to keep it fresh. Get the name and phone numbers of at least two of your classmates and ask permission to call them if you’re stuck or need help. If possible, do your homework and study someplace where you can get immediate help (with a classmate, in the Math Cafe, or in the Learning Lab). As often as possible, come to class early and stay late. Don’t ever get behind. Take responsibility for your learning. Try to maintain a positive attitude. Don’t beat yourself up when you can’t do something. Get help when you need it.

How to Study for a Math Exam:
Do not cram. Start preparing a week or more before the exam. Read back through your notes. Get clarification on anything you do not understand. Work at least one problem of each type assigned. Keep working problems until you can do them completely correctly with no assistance. Once you think you are completely prepared, create sample tests from the suggested review problems and work them with your books, notes, and homework closed (i.e., with no resources, just a blank sheet of paper). Get a good night’s sleep the night before the exam. Look over definitions, formulas, and algorithms just before you go to bed and again in the morning. Eat a little protein before coming to the exam and bring with you something that will help relieve your stress (a picture of someone, someplace, or something that you’re fond of and/or comfort foods). Schedule lots of time to take the exam. Plan to stay late. Don’t rush yourself. Relax.