

TIPS TO HELP YOU PASS YOUR REAL ESTATE EXAM

Six things you can do to set yourself up for success.



Preparation
in simple
steps

Across the country, the process to get your real estate license looks different from state to state. But there's one piece that remains relatively unchanged: the exam. Whether your state calls it a salesperson license, sales associate license, agent license, or something else entirely, you won't get the green light to legally work in real estate until you score a passing grade on the required test. Although the exam itself varies from state to state, too, there are a few things that remain the same. And that means that some tried-and-true tips can help with preparing to pass your real estate exam, no matter where you live.

Here are six things you can do to set yourself up for success.



STUDY THE RIGHT TOPICS

Your state should issue a candidate bulletin-type guideline about its real estate exam. That should give you an overview of the topics that your exam will cover, and how heavily each topic will be weighed. This can help guide your studying. You don't want to spend too much time reviewing topics that will only be reflected in a few questions. Focus your energy on the core topics your state tests on and you set yourself up to perform well on the real estate exam. If you're not sure what to study, look for exam prep course providers in your state. Companies design these courses to prepare you in the key areas where you're most likely to get test questions.

CREATE NOTE CARDS



Getting a real estate license can feel like it requires you to learn a new language. As you're taking your pre-license education, make note of any words or concepts that you don't know.

Then, when you're ready to start studying for your exam, make note cards for all of the words/concepts that felt unfamiliar to you. This can be as simple as writing the new word on one side of the notecard and the definition on the other. Just writing your note cards out can help you commit these new concepts to memory.

But don't stop there. Make it a point to flip through your note cards on a regular basis. Your goal should be to feel 100% comfortable with each one before test day. To help you get started, here's a real estate glossary from the Federal Trade Commission with succinct definitions of quite a few of the terms you'll need to know.



TAKE PLENTY OF PRACTICE EXAMS

Practice tests give you one of your most powerful tools when it comes to real estate exam prep. There's nothing quite like a practice exam to show you what you're facing — and to help you pinpoint where your studying might be falling short.

Your state or the company they hire to proctor the exam may offer practice tests. If not, or if you want more options, plenty of pre-license education providers offer real estate exam prep courses that include practice exams.

Practice exams give you two serious benefits:

Getting comfortable with the exam format

If you deal with any level of test anxiety, you're not alone. An estimated 10-40% of test takers deal with serious nervousness that can affect their exam performance. But without a test, your state has no way to ensure that you've learned the right content during your pre-license course hours. That means real estate exams are probably here to stay.

To overcome test anxiety, you want to make sure you feel as comfortable and confident as possible during your real estate exam. With practice exams, you can help yourself with that.

Taking lots of practice exams helps you get familiar with your state's exam format and the types of questions that will be asked. The more you practice, the more you'll build a foundation that will help you succeed on exam day.

Identifying which topics you need to study more

There's nothing like that deer-in-the-headlights feeling that comes from looking at a question on a test and realizing you have absolutely no idea how to answer it.

Fortunately, a practice exam lets you get that out of the way while you're at home so you don't have to feel that panic on the day of your actual exam.

Don't wait until close to your exam date to start taking practice tests. When you take them early in the process, your test scores will tell you which areas require more attention from you. By taking multiple exams throughout your time studying, you can track your progress and identify any areas of weakness. That way, you can beef up your knowledge in those areas so you're strong across the board by the time you sit for your exam.

STUDY EVERY DAY

It might seem like overkill, but doing even a few minutes of studying each day keeps the real estate concepts fresh in your brain. When you revisit the material on a really regular basis, you increase your familiarity with it by a significant margin. This makes it easier to commit things to memory, and to learn concepts in a way that will last.

You might find it helpful to make a study schedule for yourself. If you're currently working, you might study for 15 minutes each day right after work, then give yourself an hour of study time on the weekends. Find what works for you and stick with it in the weeks leading up to your exam date.

PREP YOUR BODY, TOO

The day before your exam and the day-of are both critical when it comes to setting yourself up for success. Giving your body what it needs leading up to the exam will help your brain perform its best.

The day before your test, make it a point to eat healthy meals and drink plenty of water. And prioritize getting a solid night's sleep. You might be waking up early on exam day to go through your note cards one last time, so make sure you get to bed early enough to log some quality sleep hours.

The day of your test, eat a healthy breakfast and drink some water. The last thing you want is to be distracted during your exam by a rumbling stomach or a parched throat.



TAKE YOUR TIME

Because real estate exams are generally timed, it can be tempting to rush, especially with questions you feel confident about answering. But hurrying through could lead you to make mistakes that could be easily avoided.

Figure out how many questions are on your state exam and how long you have to complete the exam. Dividing the exam window by the number of questions gives you an idea of how long you have to answer each question. Once you know that information, you can track your progress through the exam to make sure you're taking your time while still setting yourself up to complete the test in time.

Then, take your time with each question. Even if you feel like a question is a slam-dunk, read both the question and any answer options through at least twice. This extra level of care can help you identify trick questions and avoid silly mistakes.

PAY ATTENTION TO THE DETAILS



In a similar vein, make sure you're paying attention to the full scope of each question, even seemingly small details. Most states have designed their real estate exams to do more than simply test your ability to memorize key words and phrases. They want to know that you have a solid attention to detail and reasonable critical thinking and comprehension skills.

With that goal in mind, many states put challenging questions on their exams. You might need to be able to marry two distinct concepts to arrive at an answer, for example. To show your state that you can not only learn the material, but also think critically, pay careful attention to the wording of each question.



IF AT FIRST YOU DON'T SUCCEED, TRY AGAIN

Many real estate agents don't pass the exam on the first try, but still go on to have lucrative, fulfilling real estate careers. In fact, it's fairly common to need to take the exam more than once to pass. Texas says they have a pass rate of just over 62%, for example, and California generally only issues about one real estate license for every exam administered. In other words, it's totally normal to need more than one go to get a passing grade on your state's real estate exam.

If you're feeling panicky during the exam, remind yourself that you can always take it again. Really, the only bummer here is that you'll need to pay another exam fee and clear another day on your calendar to retake the exam — but those are both very surmountable hurdles.

With a little perseverance, some diligent studying, and plenty of practice exams, most people pass their real estate exam within a few tries. If you know test-taking isn't a particularly strong area for you, apply these tips and consider taking an exam prep course. With the right preparation behind you, you'll be able to stride into the exam room feeling comfortable and confident.

YOU'VE GOT THIS. YOUR CAREER IN REAL ESTATE AWAITS.

BONUS TIP:

At Your Pace Online can help with your pre-license and post license continuing education needs. Learn more at AYPORRealEstate.com

