How To Pass A Chemistry Class

Chemistry may be challenging but there are many things you can do to help yourself succeed...
Tips To Help Pass Chemistry Class
From Ann Marie Helmenstine, Ph.D.

http://chemistry.about.com/od/homeworkhelp/a/how-to-pass-chemistry.htm

Traps To Avoid

- Thinking you can learn the Math prerequisites at the same time as Chemistry
- Procrastinating! Putting off studying for a test until the night before, writing up labs the night before they are due, working problems the same day they are due
- Skipping class
- Only attending class on quiz days or leaving early

Traps To Avoid

- Relying on someone else to take notes
- Expecting the instructor to offer extra credit or to drop a low grade
- Copying the answers to the problems from someone else or from the text (for books that give the answer)
- Thinking that a good grade early on means the class will remain the same level of difficulty or that you won’t need to study later

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**Be Prepared**

- You should be familiar with the following concepts before starting Chemistry:
  - Writing and solving algebraic equations
  - Exponents
  - Scientific Notation
  - Negative Numbers
  - Logarithms
  - Fractions

**Get Your Head On Straight**

- Some people psych themselves out of doing well in Chemistry.
- It’s not impossibly hard...you can do this!
- However, you need to set reasonable expectations for yourself – this involves keeping up with class and building bit by bit on what you learned the previous day
- Chemistry is not a class you cram for on the last day. Be prepared to study

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Attend Class
- Attendance is related to success. It’s partly a matter or more exposure to the subject and partly showing your professor that you are putting forth the effort.
- There is more to attendance than simply showing up. Actively participate and respect the time and effort your instructor puts into lecture and labs.

Attend Class
- Arrive on time. Many instructors review concepts at the beginning of class – often indicating likely test questions.
- Take good notes: If it’s written on the board or your instructors says it, write it down.
- Examples given on the board often show a method of solving a problem that is different from your textbook.
- Sit near the front – this engages you with the lecture which can enhance your learning.
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Work The Problems
- Working problems is the surest route to passing Chemistry
- Do the problems yourself
- Don’t look at the answers to problems (if available) until you’ve gotten the answer yourself

Work The Problems
- You may understand how a problem is worked, but don’t make the mistake of assuming that this is a substitute for working though the problem on your own
- Work through examples yourself
- Consult the worked problem if you get stuck
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Work The Problems

- Write down what you are trying to answer in a problem
- Write down all the facts that you are given
- Sometimes seeing what you know written down in this way will help you recall the method for obtaining the solution

Work The Problems

- If you get the opportunity, help someone else work problems
- If you can explain the problem to someone else, there is a good chance that you truly understand it
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- Read the Text
  - The easiest way to master Chemistry concepts and problems is to see examples of those problems.
  - You’ll use the text for examples and most likely will have problem assignments in the book.
  - The text will contain a periodic table, glossary, and helpful information regarding lab techniques and units.
Hoping you do well in Chemistry!