

## Student Tips for Taking Tests in Blackboard

- ✓ **Firefox**, <https://www.mozilla.org/en-US/>, is the browser of choice when taking a Bb assessment unless you are using the Respondus LockDown browser. If using the LockDown Browser please read the instructions at: [http://www.gadsdenstate.edu/academics/elearning/respondus\\_installation.php](http://www.gadsdenstate.edu/academics/elearning/respondus_installation.php).
- ✓ Start your test as soon as you can. If your instructor schedules three days for your test, plan to take the exam early on the first day. That way, if you have an issue, you will have time to contact technical support and your instructor.
- ✓ **Be prepared.** Have any materials that you need at hand. Take your test in a quiet area that is free from distractions.
- ✓ Read all of the test instructions. If you have any trouble taking your test or understanding test questions, contact your instructor immediately.
- ✓ Check your Internet connection. You need to make sure that you have a strong internet connection. A wired connection is usually more reliable than a wireless connection.
- ✓ **ISP timeout** – Many Internet Service Provider (ISP) connections are set up to automatically disconnect when no activity is detected for a particular length of time (15- 20 minutes). When tests/surveys in Blackboard are being completed, although answers are being clicked on and responses are being typed, this activity is not detected by the ISP. Please remember to click the Save button at the bottom periodically while taking a test. Although this won't necessarily save the answers in case there is some other problem, it will establish some connection with the Blackboard server, so the ISP will detect activity and not time out. Please click **Submit** at the end of the test.
- ✓ Do not refresh the page, close the window, or click the browser's back button while taking a test. If you experience problems during a test, contact your instructor immediately.
- ✓ **Single click** instead of double click on the arrow for **Next Question**, **Save** and **Submit**.
- ✓ Only have one Blackboard session running at a time. Also, close out of all other programs, browsers, activities, especially instant message applications and email notifications.
- ✓ **Blackboard Session timeout**  
The default timeout for a Blackboard session is 3 hours. It is not affected by activity. If you are in the class for one to two hours before the test, it is possible to get a timeout.
- ✓ Keep your browser window active. Typing or clicking answers is not considered activity; clicking the Save button does keep the window active.
- ✓ **Clicking outside the test area** – Once a test/survey is open within the Blackboard frame (not a new window) do not click anywhere outside of the test area. This may cause the test to lock up. Also be careful when using a mouse with extra features such as a scroll wheel or buttons programmed for going backward or forward on Internet pages. If one of the buttons is inadvertently hit, it will could take you out of the assessment and cause the assessment to lock up.

- ✓ **Turn off popup blockers.**
- ✓ If you are using AOL to access the Internet, once the connection is made, minimize the AOL window and use a different browser (latest version of Firefox is recommended).
- ✓ Do not attempt to print an exam.
- ✓ **Practice tests.** If your instructor provides a practice test to let you test your system before you take a real Blackboard test, use it.
- ✓ Wait for questions to load – After single-clicking to begin a test in which all questions appear on one page, let all the questions load.
- ✓ If the exam is presented one question at a time, be sure to click save before going to the next question. If all the questions are presented at once, save your answers every 15 minutes.
- ✓ Once you have entered the exam do not leave until finished. Do not click outside of the exam area. For example, do not click on any Blackboard menus such as Assignments, Course Documents, Announcements, etc. Do not attempt to access other web pages or files during exam -- this may cause the exam to fail.
- ✓ At the end of an exam, be sure to select **Submit** and not Save. Only Submit will send the completed exam to the instructor. Click **Submit only ONCE. Do Not Double Click.**

## Test Presentation

Your instructor can choose to present test questions all-at-once or one-at-a-time. An all-at-once test presents all of the questions at the same time. The following options are available while taking this type of test:

Function	Action
Store answers	Click Save All Answers. A saved icon appears in the question completion status indicator. You are allowed to change answers after they are saved.
Finish the test	Click Save and Submit. You receive a confirmation followed by a receipt page stating that the test is completed.

A one-at-a-time test presents questions separately. Only one question appears on the screen at a time. You decide when you are ready to move on to the next question. The following options are available while taking this type of test:

Function	Action
Navigate through questions	Use the navigation arrows (<<, <, >, or >>). The question completion status indicator describes the current location in the test and the overall number of questions. When backtracking is prohibited, these arrows do not appear.
Save answers	Click Save All Answers. Questions you answered up to this point are saved.
Finish the test	Click Save and Submit. You receive a confirmation followed by a receipt page stating that the test is completed.

***For further assistance please contact the Gadsden State Teaching and Learning Center.***