

# How to Pass the Real Estate Exam

## Can You Pass the Indiana Real Estate Exam?

Yes. Here's How to Walk In Ready (Not Panicked).

Before you spend a dime on real estate school, read this.



# **The Big Question: Can I Actually Pass This Test?**

If you're here, you're probably thinking:  
"Can I actually pass this test?"

Not "Will I enjoy the class?"  
Not "Will I like real estate?"  
Just... can I pass?

That's normal.

Almost everyone who investigates real estate starts right here. And the truth is, most people don't fail because they aren't capable. They fail because they don't understand how the test works or how to prepare for it.

That's a very fixable problem.

This guide is here to show you what to expect, how the exam actually works, and how to approach it in a way that gives you a real shot at passing.

# The Truth About the State Exam

The real estate exam is not designed to be impossible.

But it is designed to:

- Make you think carefully
- Test how you apply knowledge
- See if you can avoid common traps

Some questions are straightforward. Others are wordy. Some include extra information that you don't need. A few are designed to make more than one answer look correct.

That's not to trick you for fun. It's to make sure you understand what you're doing, not just recognize words on a page.

Here's what matters:

- You do not need to be perfect.
- You need to be prepared.

And most importantly:

You are not trying to outsmart the test.  
You are trying to understand how it works.

Once you start seeing the patterns in how questions are asked, the test becomes much more predictable—and a lot less intimidating.





## How to Study So It Sticks

Your brain is not built for cramming large amounts of information all at once.

Working memory is limited, which means you can only process so much at a time.

To actually retain information, you need to move it into long-term memory—and that takes repetition and variation.

Better approach:

- Study in shorter sessions
- Revisit the same material multiple times
- Use different formats (reading, listening, explaining)

This is how information sticks.



## Using Your Real Life to Study

You don't need more time. You need better use of the time you already have.

Waiting at a doctor's office? Bring your book or notes.

Have a lunch hour? Bring flash cards.

Driving? Listen to material.

Walking? Review concepts in your head.

At the gym? Repeat key terms or ideas.

Some class programs have study aids that are in an audio format. You could also creating your own audio from notes.

Consistency matters more than long study sessions.



## **First Thing When You Sit Down at the Exam: Brain Dump**

When you initially sit down at the testing computer, you will be excited and maybe a little nervous. But, it also will be the time that you are the least confused. This is a perfect time for a brain dump.

At the top of the paper or board they give you, write down all the info that you want to reference later. This could be memory aids, formulas for future math problems, anything you "brought with you" in your head.

You may even want to create a list that you plan to brain dump, and study that so you are ready.

At the exam, it will give you a minute or two to relax and give you something to reference later when you need it.



## **Answer Easy Questions First**

You're likely to come across questions that immediately stump you. Don't waste precious time trying to figure them out right away. Instead, move on and answer the easier questions first.

Exams allow you to mark tricky questions and come back to them later.

This strategy helps you maximize your score by "banking" the easier points while saving the more difficult questions for the end when you have time to think clearly.

This technique is good for long word problems that will take up time, or math problems if that isn't your strong suit. Mark it and come back.



## **Be Sure to Answer Every Question**

Unlike some tests that penalize you for wrong answers, the real estate exam doesn't. A wrong answer is worth the same as a blank one—no points. Therefore, you should always attempt to answer each question, even if it means guessing: you have at least a shot at earning that mark.

You can do this by initially leaving it blank, or mark a guess, then make a note of it to review. If you find yourself running out of time, and this does happen even if it's rare, don't panic. Use the last minute or two to fill in the remaining questions with your best guess. This small action could be the difference between passing and failing.

# Start with What They Are Asking



Many questions on the real estate exam will contain excess information designed to distract you. Often, this extra information is irrelevant to what's being asked. The key is to focus on the actual question.

Consider the following question: “Jim, Jack, and Bob own a house. Jim purchased the home with Jack and Bob’s father, Steve. After Steve passed away, Jack and Bob inherited their portion of the property, owning 60% between them. Jack has a son, Andrew, who will inherit Jack’s portion if he dies.”

Sounds confusing, right? And, it sounds like it’s getting you ready for your typical question of how these folks own title. Then you get to the question at the end: “What percentage of the home belongs to Jim?”

Well, that’s easy. The two other owners hold 60%, so Jim owns the remaining 40%.

So, back to this tip to pass the test: Start with what they are asking.

How do you find that? It is the statement at the end with the question mark. By zeroing in on the actual question, you can ignore the extraneous details and solve the problem efficiently.



## **Use One Question to Answer Another**

This is a great technique for those tricky moments when you aren't sure about an answer.

Sometimes one question provides hints or outright answers to another. Be on the lookout for these clues throughout the exam.

For example, if a question asks about how commissions are split in a transaction, a later question about commission agreements might help clarify the first.

Jot down the numbers of any questions you're unsure about so that if a later question sheds light on the topic, you can return to it.



## **The Structure of the Question Can Give You Clues to the Answer**

This is another one that will help you if you truly do not know the answer.

If that is the case, understand this: long and complicated questions often require equally detailed answers.

For example, if a question describes a lengthy contract negotiation process with lots of specific characteristics of the seller and the buyer, the correct answer is likely to be the one that also contains a more thorough explanation. A simple one-word answer is probably not going to be able to answer it.

If you're struggling, let the length of the question guide you. The complexity of the question usually mirrors the complexity of the answer.

# If You Don't Know the Answer At All, Look to the Longest Answer

This tip builds on the previous one, and just like the last one, should only be used if you do not know the answer.

Even when a question is short, the longest answer may often be the most accurate. Why? Because the correct answer usually needs more explanation to clarify the point, making it right.

While this isn't a foolproof method, it's a great fallback if you're stuck between options.

It's not just about length but about content—answers that explain things clearly and thoroughly are more likely to be correct.





## **Try to Anticipate Answers Before You Read Your Choices**

Before diving into the answer options, try to think about what the correct answer might be. Doing this helps you avoid being misled by trick questions or confusing choices.

For instance, if the question asks something about property appreciation, you should already be thinking about terms like "increase" or "gain" before reading the answer choices.

By anticipating the correct answer, you'll quickly eliminate choices that don't fit. It can also make you less susceptible to answers that are there to fool you.



## **Make Sure the Answer Makes Sense**

Always ask yourself if the answer makes sense. This tip is particularly useful for math questions, but it applies to everything.

In math, for example, if you calculate a property's future value after it has appreciated, it wouldn't make sense for the value to decrease in your answer.

But this principle works across the board: ask yourself if the answer is logically consistent with the real estate knowledge you've acquired. If something feels off, trust your gut and reconsider the other choices.

Does it make sense that as an Agent, you should show a home that is not for sale? Does it make sense that a Broker would start reacting to an issue without getting the facts first? Just ask yourself... does it make sense?



## Don't Read Too Much into the Question

Sometimes, test-takers fall into the trap of overanalyzing a question. They might start adding in their own assumptions or second-guessing the scenario. Stick to what's provided.

For example, if a question states that a home sold for \$200,000 and asks for the listing broker's commission at 6%, don't start thinking about what happens with the buyer's agent or any splits.

The question is simply asking you to calculate 6% of \$200,000.

If the question didn't ask it, don't assume additional information. Overcomplicating the question leads to mistakes.



## **There Can Only Be One Best Answer**

Even though several answers might seem partially correct, there's always one that's clearly the best.

When you're unsure, eliminate as many wrong options as possible, and focus on what remains.

It helps to look for keywords or clues within the answers that give away the incorrect ones. If you've narrowed it down to two or three choices, pick the one that fits best—even if you aren't sure if it's perfect.



## **This is a Big One: Don't Change an Answer Unless You Are Absolutely Sure**

If you're unsure of an answer, trust your gut.

Then, don't change it.

Statistically, changing an answer usually results in switching from the correct one to a wrong one.

Only change your answer if you are *absolutely sure* you made a mistake. Unless something triggers a clear memory or knowledge, don't second-guess yourself.



## **Make These Skills a Habit on Practice Tests**

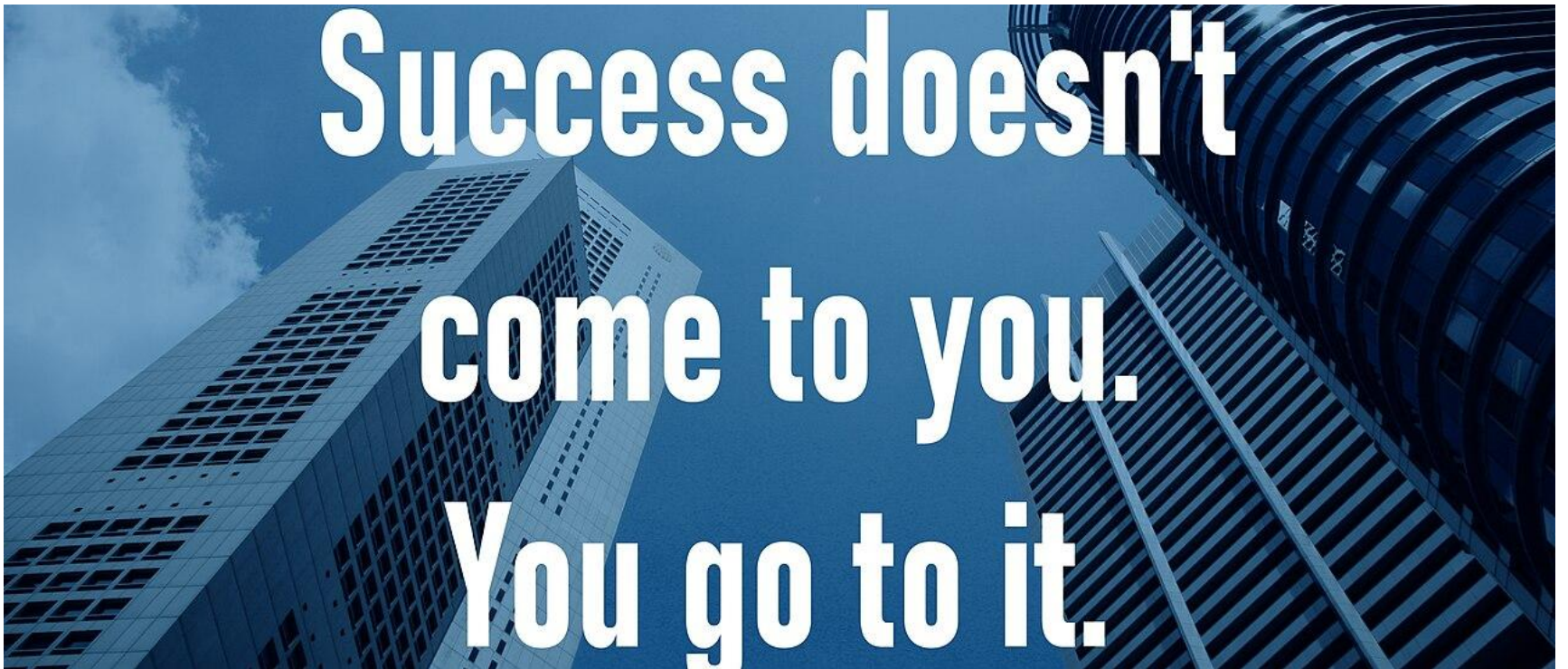
Even the most prepared folks can easily forget all of these tips when sitting at the exam. The way you don't forget: practice how to take a test.

Taking practice tests is essential, but it's not enough to simply test your knowledge—you need to practice test-taking strategies as well.

Get in the habit of applying these tips as you complete practice exams. Ask yourself, “Does this make sense?” and remember to choose the longest answer when you're unsure.

Practice eliminating wrong answers and knowing that the answer is right in front of you. You must find it.

Use every opportunity to refine these techniques so that when the real exam comes, it is second nature to use all of these tips. You'll be confident and prepared to succeed.



## **Just Remember**

You can pass this test.

Not because it is easy, but because it becomes predictable once you understand how it works.

You do not need to know everything.

You need to:

Understand the concepts

Practice how the test works

Stay consistent

Most people are closer than they think.

You've got this.