GRE Subject Test:
Physics
Overview

• What the test is like.
• Test Prep
• Testing Tips
The Test

• 100 multiple choice questions
• 170 minutes
• No computers, calculators, integral tables, etc...
• Constants are given as well some hard to calculate numbers, i.e. ln(pi)
The Test

- 1. CLASSICAL MECHANICS 20%
- 2. ELECTROMAGNETISM 18%
- 3. OPTICS AND WAVE PHENOMENA 9%
- 4. THERMODYNAMICS AND STATISTICAL MECHANICS 10%
- 5. QUANTUM MECHANICS 12%
- 6. ATOMIC PHYSICS 10%
- 7. SPECIAL RELATIVITY 6%
- 8. LABORATORY METHODS 6%
- 9. SPECIALIZED TOPICS: 9%
The Test

• Your Score
  – +1 point for right answers, -1/4 points for wrong answers, 0 points for blanks.
  – Raw score from 0-99
  – Scaled score from 200-800
Preparation

• Take the practice test.
• Take another practice test.
• Repeat
Preparation

http://www.ets.org/Media/Tests/GRE/pdf/Physics.pdf


http://grephysics.net/ans/
Preparation

• Dedicate as much time as possible to studying.
• Get with friends to study together
• When taking a practice exam, treat it as the real thing.
• Avoid learning entirely new subjects
Tips

• Time is valuable, don’t waste it day dreaming, using the bathroom, smoking ect...

• Do the easy ones first.
  – First thing after getting the test is to read through it quickly, and immediately answer the ones you know you know.
  – Only then go for the ones you think you know and finally progress to the ones that require difficult calculations
Tips

• It's often quicker to start with the answer and work backwards
  – Eliminate those with the wrong units
  – Eliminate those with the wrong sign or variable dependence
  – Use “back of the envelope” calculations to find the right order of magnitude
  – Use symmetries
  – Use common sense
Tips

• Use your resources wisely
• Your scratch paper is yours. Don’t worry about it making sense to others.
• Don’t memorize questions unless absolutely necessary.
• Guess when appropriate.
Questions?

http://www.physicsgre.com/