



# Professor Messer's CompTIA A+ Study Tips

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*These are some of the study tips I used to pass my CompTIA A+ exams. I hope you can use these tips to make the most of your certification studies!*

- Professor Messer

## **Study Tip 1: Download the CompTIA A+ Exam Requirements**

Before you start studying for your certification exam, wouldn't you want to know exactly what would be on the exam? You'd be surprised how many people haven't really read through the official requirements document!

You can download the requirements document directly from the CompTIA web site:

<http://certification.comptia.org/Training/testingcenters/examobjectives.aspx>

You should use this document for much more than a simple explanation of exam requirements. Instead, consider using CompTIA's exam document as the master guide to your studies. During the study process, you should refer back to this document many times as a checklist for what you've learned and guide for what you should study next.

I used CompTIA's A+ requirements document as the ultimate checklist for my studies. When I was completely comfortable with a topic, I checked off that section and moved on to the next. It doesn't matter the order, but when you've checked off every topic then you're probably ready for the test. As long as you're honest with yourself, you'll have the perfect barometer of your CompTIA A+ knowledge.

## Study Tip 2: Take apart your computer (or someone else's)

A huge portion of the CompTIA A+ exam deals with the inside of the computer and how all of the parts connect to each other. If you've never removed the cover of a computer, then you're probably in need of some hands-on study.

**It's important to remember that you should only work inside of a computer until you've removed the power source. Never open the cover of a computer or work inside of the system unless you have disconnected the power cord. Simply turning off the computer isn't enough!**

This tip works best if you have a desktop computer, and preferably one that you won't need for a while. Not only is it useful to pull the cover off and look around, but it's really great if you can actually unscrew hard drives, take adapter cards out of the computer, and examine the individual components.

You don't have to break the entire computer down and rebuild it from scratch, but it's helpful if you can become comfortable with the cabling, ports, and how everything is connected together. Even if you don't physically replace the motherboard, at least you'll have an idea of what it takes!

If you don't have a computer to dismantle, consider visiting a local computer store or office supply chain to look through their computer parts. Most of these stores sell replacement fans, cables, power supplies, and other parts. Although many of these parts include lights and include custom hardware, you'll still be able to examine the hardware up-close and personal.

## Study Tip 3: Don't get one A+ book. Get TWO A+ books.

The CompTIA A+ certification is one of the most comprehensive exams in the IT industry. Not only do you have to know every piece of hardware and how they all connect together, you must be able to install and manage operating systems, troubleshoot components, and repair every aspect of the personal computer hardware and software.

Given this huge amount of information, it's simply not possible for a single CompTIA A+ book to effectively provide you with every detail that you'll need. No book can be perfect, and you'll find that two high-quality CompTIA A+ books can work nicely together to fill in the gaps.

Here's the list of books that I used for my CompTIA A+ exam:

<http://www.professormesser.com/aplusresources>

If spending the money for two books to be a bit outside of your budget, remember that many libraries have extensive CompTIA A+ resources. Even if the book is for a previous exam edition, the vast majority of the content is identical between exams. Don't forget to take advantage of these free resources!

#### **Study Tip 4: Get a good practice exam**

Learning content from a book is a necessary step, but you'll want to qualify what you've learned with some sample questions or exams. The Internet is full of both free and commercial practice test questions, and the quality varies widely between all of these different types. Be sure to check reviews before you buy!

Fortunately, many books have Q&A sections after each chapter, so you'll probably have some instant feedback after every major topic. You may also find that an entire book full of questions, answers, and detailed explanations is a better test of your knowledge. Many of these practice question books are excellent investments, and can position you well for the actual exam.

Electronic versions of these practice exams not only quiz you on the content, but most of them also give you the experience of taking the real exam. If you've not taken one of these standardized electronic exams, you'll find the computer-based practice session is a good way to become familiar with marking questions for review, moving from question to question, and selecting answers to different kinds of questions.

**We have many more study resources on our web site,  
with free videos, forums, and much more. Visit our web site today!**

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