Proper Uses of "Being"

On standardized tests such as the ACT, SAT, GMAT, and GRE, the answer choices with "being" are wrong most of the time. Usually, the use of "being" indicates Passive Voice, which is not a preferred way of writing in English. However, there are four acceptable exceptions to this rule.

1) Being + adjective

The structure being + adjective is used to talk about actions and behavior (which do not occur all the time, just at the time of speaking/writing)

*"Why are you **being** so silly?"*

*"You are **being** cruel when you hurt others with your words or actions."*

NOTE: When the adjective refers to feelings, the continuous form is not possible.

*"I **was upset** when I heard that I had failed the test."*
(NOT "I was being upset …")

*"I **am delighted** to hear that you have won the first prize."*
(NOT "I am being delighted …")

2) Being in participle clauses

Instead of a "because /as/since" clause, we sometimes use an adverbial participle clause with "being." This structure is mainly used in a formal or literary style.

*"**Being** late, he couldn't watch the show."*
(= "Because he is late, he couldn't watch the show.")

*"**Being** a friend of the Minister, I am often invited to official parties."*
(= "As I am a friend of the Minister, I am often invited to official parties.")

*"**Being** quite slim, I managed to squeeze through the small opening in the wall."*
(= "Since I was quite slim, I managed to squeeze through the small opening in the wall.")

3) Verb + being

Being is a progressive form, and you can use it after the verb "to be," as in:

*"You are **being** a naughty boy."*

*"He is **being** transferred to another branch of the company."*

*"The show is **being** held tomorrow from 1:00 to 3:00 p.m."*

4) Being as a gerund

Being plus an adjective, preposition, or noun refers to an experience or condition.

*"**Being** stuck between two people is wrong."*
(being + adjective)

*"**Being** on an airplane is uncomfortable."*
(being + preposition)

*"There are many things that are difficult about **being** an actor."*
(being + noun)