



Students Smart Kit

Part I

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PREFACE

Did you ever stop to wonder what sets apart the really successful students from the average ones? Why do some students who appear to study all the time just get by, while others who don't appear to put in as much time and effort do well? Is it all related to IQ and genetics or are some other factors involved? The truth is that success is not so much determined by sheer intelligence as knowing how to study. Studying is a skill. Being successful requires a high level of study skills. Students must first learn these skills, practice them, and develop effective study habits in order to be successful. Very often the study habits and practices developed and used in high school do not work for students in University.

Good study habits include many different skills: time management, self-discipline, concentration, memorization, organization, and effort. Desire to succeed is important, too.

There is no one-size-fits-all approach when learning how to effectively study. Studying methods should be tailored to each student. Everyone has different abilities, so it is important to determine what works for you and what doesn't. For some students, studying and staying motivated comes easily — others may have to work a little bit harder.

Finding the best way to study is an ongoing process. It isn't something that can be left to the night before the test. You should be constantly improving your study skills to better understand what works (and what doesn't).

Learning how to study better helps avoid panic and frustration the next time a big test is coming up. After all, you are more likely to do well and be less stressed before a test when you have had time to properly review and practice the material!

Mastering effective study habits not only makes it easier to learn but will also help you get better grades in University.

CHOOSE YOUR LEARNING PREFERENCE

Knowing how you learn best is the first step in developing effective study habits. Every student approaches the task of learning differently. Every student has a unique and personal learning style or a preferred channel through which learning comes more easily.

Ask yourself the following: Am I more inclined to remember something better when I see it, when I hear it, or when I experience it or do something active with it?

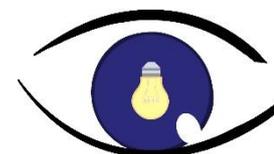
Depending on how you learned the activity or game, you will have a fair idea of what learning channel – visual (by sight), auditory (by hearing), or hands on (by doing)—you prefer to use. We all use all three learning channels. In fact, we use all our senses in learning about the world around us, but each of us has a tendency to lean more heavily on one of the three learning channels – visual, auditory, or hands on. You can improve your study habits by developing all three learning channels.



STUDY TIPS:

VISUAL LEARNING

- visualize what you are studying
- use color in your notes (colored pens, highlighters, etc.)
- visualize what is lecturing about
- draw pictures and diagrams
- use mind maps in your notes
- use picture and graphics to reinforce learning
- learn from videos



AUDITORY LEARNING

- listen to recorded assignments
- tape record your own textbook reading
- read out loud
- talk over ideas from class and what you are studying with other students
- participate in class discussions
- listen to audiotapes on the subject



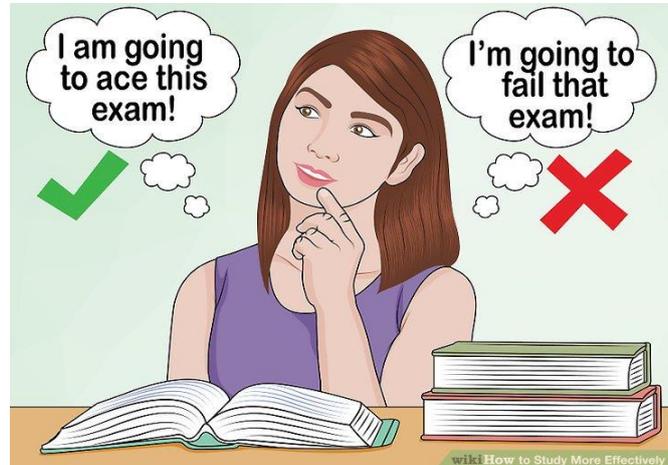
HANDS ON LEARNING

- stand up and move around while you are studying
- take frequent breaks while studying
- make use of your hands and write things down as you study
- use the computer to reinforce learning
- be physically active; experiment with objects
- memorize or drill while walking or exercising



GET IN A POSITIVE MINDSET

You need to be in as positive a mindset as possible when you sit down to study. If you are emotionally distracted, you will be less effective at learning and retaining information. Try to think positively while studying, and don't compare yourself to others.



STUDY TIPS:

- Try saying something positive to yourself before you are being studying, like, "I am going to ace this exam!"
- If you find yourself thinking negative thoughts like, "I'm going to fail that quiz," stop the thought in its track. Replace it with a positive thought, like, "I'm going to master this material and succeed!"
- Believe in yourself and your capabilities. Do more work today than you did yesterday. If you push yourself to test your limits each day, then it will exhibit that you are a capable, skilled, and talented person, which will make it easier to stay positive.
- Relate studying to your life goals. If your life and future depended on how well or how much you studied, would it make sense to do it well?
- Put meaning into your studies in order for them to be meaningful to you.

PLAN YOUR STUDY TIME

Leave enough time for each of your subjects and more time for difficult subjects. Most University classes require about six hours of study per week or two hours of study for every hour in class. If you are a slow reader or have other study problems, you may need to plan more time.



STUDY TIPS:

- Prioritize your time and put off other activities to allow for adequate study time. You may find it necessary to postpone or eliminate certain activities in order to fulfil your goals as a student.
- Keep a weekly and monthly schedule planner in which to record due dates of assignments, tests, papers, field trips, etc. Transfer important dates from your syllabus to your weekly/monthly planner.
- Once you figure out what you need to study and how you will take advantage of the resources at your disposal, sit down, and make a study schedule. Block out periods of time within your schedule to dedicate to studying and stick to the plan.
- You can change your study schedule slightly but try not to change it too much!
- Make sure you give yourself more time than you think you need, especially if it is a subject that you struggle with.

LEARN IN MULTIPLE WAYS

Another one of the best ways to learn is to focus on learning in more than one way. Instead of just listening to a podcast, which involves auditory learning, find a way to rehearse the information both verbally and visually. This might involve describing what you learned to a friend, taking notes, or drawing a mind map. By learning in more than one way, you're further cementing the knowledge in your mind.



STUDY TIPS:

- ***Use as many senses as possible.*** Some people retain information better if multiple senses are engaged in the study process. One way to incorporate multiple senses while studying is by reading your notes out loud as you rewrite them. This approach uses multiple senses and might help you retain information more effectively. To learn a specific topic, you could do the following:
 - ✓ Read the class notes
 - ✓ Read the textbook
 - ✓ Watch a video
 - ✓ Look up other online resources
 - ✓ Create a mind map
 - ✓ Teach someone what you've learned
 - ✓ Do practice problems from a variety of sources.
- ***Play a memory game.*** Try using a song, acronym, or mnemonic device to help you remember information. Memory games don't work for everyone. If you find yourself struggling to memorize information using this method, skip it.

- ***Join a study group.*** A good study group can be one of the most effective means of studying. It helps to combine the efforts of different minds, increase your storehouse of information, learn new study techniques, and allows you to share notes and information. It reinforces learning through discussion, questioning, repetition, and reinforcement.
- ***Divide training material into readable pieces.*** Reading ten pages at a time will seem manageable compared to reading forty pages. Always preview the chapter before you read.
- ***Study in intervals.*** Long, extended study sessions with no breaks will not help you learn information effectively. To be an effective learner, you will need to take regular breaks as you work. Try studying in 30 minutes intervals and taking a 5–10-minute break at the end of each interval. If you find that your concentration is starting to falter, you may have to pause studying for the day or switch to a different subject. Do something relaxing during your break that doesn't take too much concentration, such as stretching or walking.
- ***Review the information periodically.*** Go over notes, outlines, and the text. Read the highlighted parts out loud. Regular review review is essential if you want to move information from your short-term memory to your long-term memory. This will help you get better exam grades.

TAKE NOTES

If your in-class notes are messy, unorganized, and unclear at first glance, you're not going to get much use out of them. This has nothing to do with how neat your handwriting is — it's all about how your notes are structured.

One of the most effective ways to remember (and understand) what you are learning in class is to take effective notes in the classroom.

Better notes will help you remember concepts, develop meaningful learning skills, and gain a better understanding of a topic. Effective notes will even lead to less stress when exam time comes around!



STUDY TIPS:

- Write down what the speaker is saying but with different wording, it helps get the actual idea into your mind.
- When you take notes, underline keywords that might appear on your test.
- Supplement the notes you took in class with extra material from the text and handouts. Always leave plenty of extra space in your notes for this.
- Define terms heard during lecture. When you hear unfamiliar words, write them in your notes as best you can, then look them up later, getting the correct spelling and definition in your notes.
- Clean up or rewrite your notes. If notes are too scribbled or difficult to read, copy them again.
- Summarize your notes at the end of each topic or chapter.
- Use your notes to teach someone. Teaching someone from your notes is a great way to solidify the information in your own mind. For example, you could create a brief PowerPoint using your notes, or write key talking points on index cards and use them to help you present the material.

USE PREVIOUS LEARNING TO PROMOTE THE NEW ONE

Another great way to become a more effective learner is to use relational learning, which involves relating new information to things that you already know.



STUDY TIPS:

- Focus on the relevance of what you're learning. Research shows that when learning is relevant, students are able to connect what they're learning to what they already know and build new neural connections and long-term memory storage.
- Take time to reflect and self-explain. Before you can transfer knowledge to new contexts, you need to understand the concept inside and out, which is why it's important to take time for reflection and self-explanation. Self-explanation can help you to identify any incorrect assumptions, lead to a deeper understanding of the material, and ultimately promote knowledge transfer.
- Use a variety of learning media. Another way to facilitate the transfer of learning to new contexts is to use as many different learning media as possible, from text and imagery to video and audio. Even if your course doesn't have visuals or narration built into it, you can try to find ways to supplement what you're learning by using a variety of educational resources such as YouTube, iTunes, etc.
- Identify any gaps in your knowledge. Without a complete understanding of the concept or information you're learning, transferring it to new contexts will be more difficult. With this in mind, it's important to identify any gaps in your knowledge and then work on strengthening your weaker areas.

GAIN PRACTICAL EXPERIENCE

For many students, learning typically involves reading textbooks, attending lectures, or doing research in the library or online. While seeing information and then writing it down is important, actually putting new knowledge and skills into practice can be one of the best ways to improve learning.



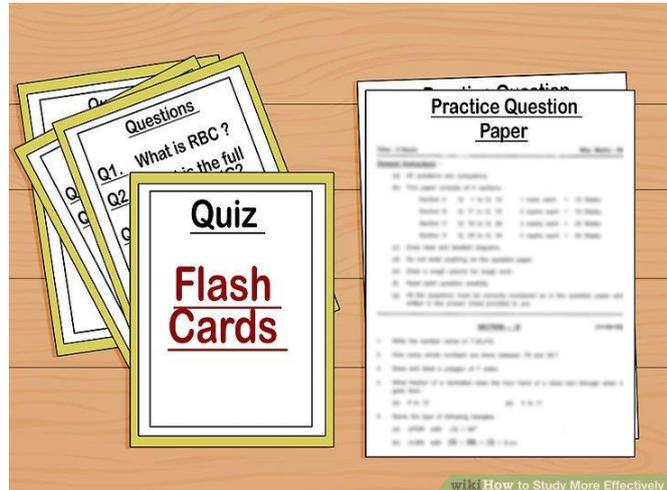
STUDY TIPS:

- Present your what you have learned to your colleagues. Ask them to provide informal constructive feedback about any aspect of your performance.
- Participate in the analysis of concrete, real life situations.
- Summarize similarities and differences among research findings, artistic works or laboratory results.
- Read articles in scientific journals.
- Use technology during active learning.
- Apply and participate in different internships, study abroad, service learning and clinical opportunities.
- Use class time to work on projects.

USE TESTING TO BOOST LEARNING

Review tools will help make studying more interesting and effective. Design your own tools or work with a group or study partner to develop them. Following are some suggestions for study tools:

- ✓ Concept maps - create a visual diagram of your notes with the central topic at the top middle of the paper and the remaining concepts branching off from the central point.
- ✓ Study checklists - make a list of all the topics you are going to study and check off as you go along.



STUDY TIPS:

- Review the information you have learned immediately. Spend a few minutes reviewing new information as soon as you've learned it. Look through the material again and add to any notes that you've already made.
- Schedule further reviews. Remember, it takes repeated effort to move information into your long-term memory. So, it's vital to review material frequently. Otherwise, key details will inevitably slip away.
- Test yourself. Every time you review something, include an element of testing. This will uncover any gaps in your knowledge, highlight key areas that you need to focus on, and reinforce your learning.
- Use flash cards, mock quizzes, and practice exams to more effectively learn information. You can create a simple simulated exam for yourself by copying all of the questions from your previous quizzes and answering them or you can also ask your teacher for, a simulated quiz or practice exam.

- Rewrite your notes. Rather than simply making notes once and hoping that they sink in, review them regularly – and improve or add to them each time. This is a great way to keep information fresh and clear. You can do this quickly with keywords and bullet points.FINAL REMARKS...

FINAL REMARKS

If you are like many students, your time is limited so it is important to get the most educational value out of the time you have available. Speed of learning is not the only important factor, however. Students need to be able to accurately remember the information they learn, recall it at a later time, and utilize it effectively in a wide variety of situations.

Becoming an effective and efficient student is not something that happens overnight. It can take time, and it always takes practice and determination to establish new habits. Start by focusing on just a few of these tips to see if you can get more out of your next study session.

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