



TIPS FOR APPROACHING STUDY

Before we start on study techniques, take a moment to consider, 'Why you are studying?' What are your short-term goals and what are longer-term ones? We are more motivated to do something if we are clear about why it's important to us.

Setting yourself up to succeed

Develop a study plan/timetable

- Start with putting in your timetable the activities that you most enjoy and really don't want to compromise on during the study period. Then you can more clearly see all the time you have to put in your study blocks.
- Break down your study content and plan out times and days where you can cover it. Think how you work best e.g. alternating subjects versus focusing on one, and the best time of day for you to study.
- Watch for overstudying! An effective method is to aim for windows of study and then plan in clear breaks as this helps with knowledge retention. In breaks you could have some food, talk to friends, or exercise. This will help you refresh and take in more.

Managing your environment

- It's OK to vary your study environment. Do try to have a clear desk with just the material you need to study at the time on it.
- Set a time at night when you will stop studying by. Your body needs time before bed to unwind before falling asleep. Fuel yourself with regular meals and snacks to help study well.

Study techniques

There are two core concepts that should help you to get the most out of your study:

Start more broadly then narrow down

- Start with all the information on the subject you are studying and then gradually reduce the information you need down to one page of notes or a series of palm cards. Highlight and use colour to group related ideas together and make clear what you need to pay attention to.
- Start with key terms, then their definitions and finally the detail. Think about the order of information you are trying to remember, and go over areas again that are difficult. Try and relate new material to what you already know.

Don't just read things: elaborate and rehearse

The more actively we engage with things we are learning, the better it sticks.





Learning styles

Consider what kind of learning styles you could use for different situations: talking through ideas, creating visual aids, listening to information, moving whilst focusing, or breaking information into chunks. For example, you could:

- Create mnemonics and acronyms to help remember information.
- Read your notes page or palm cards and try repeating them out aloud.
- Record your notes on a voice memo and listen to them.
- Visualise the information you need to remember.
- Describe the information to a friend or your parents. Teaching others helps us retain and consolidate information.
- Make a poster or screen of content using different colours and headings for important information to create visual memories. Put up posters in different locations.

Spend time on practice exams and questions and take quizzes. Don't just read over the information, rather, *interact* with it.

Managing procrastination and distractions

- Procrastination can occur for a number of reasons. It might be that the topic is difficult, tedious, or because you might be feeling worried about failing. Come back to your overall reason for wanting to study.
- Watch for procrastination excuses, break work down into small steps and try just starting for 5-10 minutes. Often it's starting off is the hardest part.
- Think in advance about what tends to distract you from study and consider controls to limit distractions whilst studying. For example, you might prepare a snack to take into your study session and turn off phone notifications for a period of time. Allow yourself regular breaks as rewards.

Use your supports

- Consider if it's helpful to use supports around you. Parents, teachers, friends and partners can all be helpful: with organisation, rehearsing content and accountability. Letting supporters know what you need will ensure you get the right help.
- To parents, be an ally not a policeman with your child. Offer to assist them with going over work. If they say no, ask if there is another way you can be helpful in supporting their study.

