



EXAM STUDY TIPS

Studying is SUPER unique to the person so the main thing is to find out what works for YOU! It's time to do some introspection! Think about these questions so you have a better understanding of your study preferences.

1. Are you naturally more alert/focused at a particular time of day?
2. Are you more alert or focused after doing something specific (e.g. taking a shower, exercising, eating)?
3. Where are you studying? Do you get distracted by things around you? Is there somewhere that you feel you can focus more than other areas?
4. Are you hungry or thirsty when it's time to study? Are you getting enough nutrients from your food throughout the day?
5. Are you drinking enough water?
6. Are you getting enough sleep?
7. Are you feeling (unnaturally) anxious about the upcoming exams? Do you have ways that you cope with this? Is anxiety affecting your studies?
8. Have you found any strategies that help you focus - fidgeting, moving around, sitting on the floor, etc?
9. Are you exercising enough?
10. How do you best retain information - reading it over, using highlighters, writing it down, saying it out loud, listening to it? What's your learning style?

Based on the list above, some things are an easier fix, like drinking more water if needed. Other strategies may take some trial and error to find what truly works for you. Now that you might have a better understanding of your own preferences and needs, here are some general suggestions that you can go through and try.



General study tips

- Study in an area that's used for that purpose only (try not to study on your bed or around the tv etc)
- Think about the times of day you are most productive/focused and set aside that time regularly to study (e.g. early in the morning, late at night). Use this time for the harder tasks, and other study times for simpler revision
- Move around while studying - do a trainer ride, pace around the room, dance!
- Make associations between your work and something you will remember - make up a song about something, make up a dance to go with a topic, turn a topic into a movie script/story
- "Use active reading techniques—read headings before reading chapter, skim chapter to see what comes next, take notes while reading, make up questions using chapter headings, practice answering these questions while reading, review major points."
- Decide how you prefer to study - by setting aside a chunk of time to get it all done? Or spacing it out in several sessions? Go with what works best for you
- Aim to understand the work rather than memorise - you will remember it better

Self-regulation/Staying focused

- Movement helps you stay alert and focused, and encourages memory. Pace around the room, do exercises between breaks to stay alert.
- Have water/something to drink (and munch on). In general, cold drinks are alerting (but stick to water, especially if it's late at night). Crunchy or chewy foods help with focus (gum, crackers)
- Having a fidget in your hand can help you to focus, but make sure it's something you can fidget with absentmindedly and is not distracting. ANYTHING can be a fidget - an eraser, a pencil, a random piece of string. Whatever you choose should be something you can hold on to or manipulate without thought. It should also not distract anyone else if in a class.
- Consider listening to music in the background (or through headphones) but only music that will help you stay focused. In general, calming/mellow sounds (without words) can help with focus (but this can vary by person). Don't listen to music that will distract you (like if a song plays that you like and you have to stop to listen.) Alternatively, if you like a quiet environment, consider foam ear plugs to block out noise.
- Take breaks - aim to do 15-20 minutes of work between breaks. These breaks should be no more than a minute or two (the longer the break, the harder it will be to restart). During these breaks you can stretch, move, etc. You can take a longer break once that subject is completed.
- Check the lighting in the room - do you prefer soft or bright lighting?



Organisation

- Keep your study area tidy and free of distractions
- Keep work organised into folders or sections for easy access
- Make a checklist of what you need to do and keep it visible. This checklist can be a daily checklist or a weekly checklist, or both.
- Break up work into smaller chunks
- Do not wait until the last minute; do a little at a time
- Set aside more time for studying than you think you will need
- Use different coloured pens or highlighters for work
- Organise your work by using headings, bullet points, tables, drawings etc

Time Management

- Make your "to do" list from the night before so you wake up with a clear idea of what needs to be done that day
- Prioritise important or difficult tasks, don't keep putting these off
- Use timers, alarms or watches to stay on track (eg set a timer or alarm for a break)
- Organise your day into chunks - study time/s, relaxation, exercise, etc and try to stick to this. Don't put more in your day than you think you can manage
- Use a planner that works for you - writing it on Post-Its, Google calendar etc
- Put the phone away and on silent!
- If you do not finish something on your to-do list, don't fret - just add it to the next day's list
- Be realistic about what you can accomplish each day and give yourself some grace - you are doing the best you can!