

When to Study

Back on Track



Daily reviews: Study begins on the first day of class. Successful students read and review notes before each class to recall information from the previous class and to warm up for learning. Review your notes immediately after each class to reinforce learning or within a 24-hour period for best recall. Repeated exposure to the material will store it in your long-term memory.

Studying one hour immediately after a class will do more good in developing an understanding of the material as several hours a few days later. Studies show that as much as 80 % of material learned in class is forgotten within 24 hours if there is no review.

Weekly reviews: At the end of the week go over your notes for the week. This refreshes your memory and promotes better recall of the material. Repetition is the key to remembering. The more times you look at the material, the stronger you make the neural (brain) pathways that lead to the material. This makes recall much easier.

Pre-exam reviews: These reviews are longer, from 3 - 5 hours. Break your study sessions into one-hour blocks with ten-minute breaks in between. Get up, stretch, get a drink, and move around during your break. The more active you are, the more effective your study time will be. A tired body only makes a tired mind.

Peak Study Times: Study when you are at your peak, when you are more awake and alert and able to absorb new information. If you are a morning person, your best study time is in the morning. If you are an evening person, study at night. If you cannot find time to study at your peak time, try to study when you are feeling relatively awake and alert. **Bonus Study Time:** Whenever you have extra time, study. Write notes on 3x5 cards and have them with you. Whenever you have free time, such as when waiting for appointments, study your notes. Study in your car by tape recording your notes and listening to them while driving to school. Study whenever you find yourself having an unexpected break, a free hour, a canceled class, etc. Don't forget that weekend evenings can also be used for studying.

Exercise: Fill in the blanks with the first thought that comes to mind.

1. I find it easiest to study when _____.
2. If a subject is really hard, I tend to _____.
3. The subject I most like to study is _____.
4. The subject I least like to study is _____.

STATE YOUR INTENTION...

Why are you studying and what do you intend to gain from it? Ask yourself this question every time you sit down to study. Half-hearted or distracted studying is a waste of time. 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? If you cannot see the point in studying, it will only make it boring and tedious. Think about your goals. Ask yourself, "Is this what I really want to be doing?" "What do I hope to gain from this?" You have to put meaning into your studies in order for them to be meaningful to you.