

STUDYING IS KEY TO ACADEMIC SUCCESS



Studying for 30-50 minutes at a time—with 10 minute breaks in between—is the most effective way to retain information.

STUDY GUIDELINES

1. Students should **plan to study**. A student should not study in a hit-or-miss fashion, but instead plan out a study schedule that will better prepare them for any future exams. The schedule should start at least one week before a quiz or exam and include at least one hour of study every day.
2. Students should try to study for an hour everyday rather than studying for seven hours on a single day (an instance of cramming). Practice and repetition are necessary to really learn material. When our brains become tired we are no longer effective at learning material.
3. A student should not rely on cramming for tests. A student should start studying information as soon as that material is presented in class or as soon as possible afterwards.

STUDY MATERIALS

4. If possible, students should **form a small study group**. The group should set a specific time and place* to meet and focus only on studying. Students can practice working on specific problems, share notes, quiz each other, and review any papers or projects.
*Study rooms in the Library are ideal for groups and can be reserved for up to two hours at a time at the circulation desk.
5. **Taking good notes** in class provides a student with effective study material. Good notes allow a student to make flashcards and take self-tests on the material. Keeping the notes well organized will help make this process easier.
6. Make **flashcards**. These will help you reinforce new concepts and improve recall. There are three main types of flashcards:
 - **Term and Definition Card**
 - Front of card: Vocabulary, formulas, expressions, etc.
 - Back of card: definition of item on front of card
 - **Concept Card**
 - Front of card: concept name
 - Back of card: brief explanation or principles of the concept
 - **Question-and-Answer Card**
 - Front of card: Question
 - Back of card: Answer



7. Students should **annotate their textbooks**. If students are studying from a textbook or reading material for class, they should highlight key ideas and make notes in the margins about what those ideas mean or how they might use them in an essay or paper.
8. If the professor is using PowerPoints during lectures, students should **print the PowerPoint slides** using the 3-slide handout print option so that they can take notes beside the slides in class. A student who doesn't want to write in the textbook can record page numbers, the paragraph (by assigned number), and the main point(s) of the paragraph in a notebook.
9. Students should **review graded homework, tests, or papers**. Such reviewing can ensure that a student will not make the same type of mistake again. Also, reviewing old tests can give a student a feel for the type of questions an instructor might ask on a future test.

STUDY TECHNIQUES

10. Know what **type of learner** you are.
 - **Visual**: Learn from things they can look at like charts and diagrams.
 - **Auditory**: Learn when listening to things like lectures or debates.
 - **Reading/Writing**: Learn when utilizing or creating written materials.
 - **Kinesthetic (Hands-on)**: Learn best when working with their hands or performing an activity that requires action.
11. Students should always make sure information they are studying is in a form that will help them best understand and retain that information. For example, students who are visual learners could translate written notes into graphic organizers, such as concept maps and hierarchy diagrams.
12. If a student finds memorizing large amounts of specific information too difficult, have them try learning or creating **Mnemonic Devices**. An example would be "King Henry Died By Drinking Chocolate Milk." This mnemonic helps students remember the order of units in the metric system—kilo, hecto, deca, deci, centi, and milli.
13. **Maintenance studying is a study skill** defined as continual note reviewing, which helps students reinforce key ideas and concepts. Students should use maintenance studying to help understand themes and skills integral to the class.
14. **Preparation studying** uses study skills to prepare for a specific task, such as taking a quiz or exam. Students should use preparation studying to practice problems that will be on a test or quiz themselves on key terms using notecards.
15. Students can use the KNL method. KNL stands for **Know, Need to Know, and Learn**. First, a student writes down what they already **know**. Next, they write down what they **need to know** for the test and look up that information. The last step is to write down everything they **learned** about the topic. The KNL method is an efficient means of pinpointing specific course topics for study.