

Get Smart!

Caldwell Community College and Technical Institute's Academic Support Newsletter for Students

Make Your Writing *POP!*

You will be writing in all your classes as well as on the job. Here are ten suggestions that will help you improve your skills. Good Luck!



1. Write about something you are interested in or that you already know about. Try to choose a topic that interests others.
2. Don't use slang, profanity, regionalisms, or filler words (such as "actually" or "basically"). Don't write the same way you talk.
3. Crank up verbs from dead ones (is, am, was, saw, went, did) to active, interesting verbs (drove, attended, witnessed, skipped).
4. Revise every sentence you write several times. No one, not even professional writers, write excellent sentences the first time.
5. Get someone knowledgeable to read your work and make suggestions for improvement. Then rewrite again and again.
6. Make sure you are writing exactly what the instructor asked for.
7. Read your work out loud. Rewrite rambling or off-topic sentences.
8. Use transitions often in your writing. Transitions make a **big** difference in how well the reader understands what you are trying to say. A few examples of transitions are additionally, consequently, again, as a result of, then, at first, and despite the fact. There are hundreds of good transitions out there just waiting to be part of your next paper!
9. Check spelling and grammar. Look for run-ons to eliminate. If you don't know what's right, visit one of the experts on staff at CCC & TI and get some help improving your grammar. Accuracy definitely counts!
10. Avoid general, vague statements of the obvious such as "His friends were really there for him." Be specific, descriptive, and use interesting details instead of writing things that people already

Tips for Success in College

- Make a "to do" list every day, and check off tasks that you accomplish.
- Use small blocks of time to review class notes and study vocabulary.
- Learn how to say "no" to distractions and inessentials.
- Do your studying and homework at your "on" times of day.
- Review your class notes every night and add to them.
- Get good rest, and eat well. Take care of yourself.
- Don't waste time on worry or stress. Just get going.
- Keep your goals in mind and be realistic.
- Keep a positive attitude. Think positive, encouraging thoughts.
- Learn to balance your social life with your academic life.

When is the Best Time to Study?

Here are some ideas that really do work.
You should study. . .

- every day of the week, including weekends.
- at the same times regularly each day.
- when you are rested and alert, feeling "on."
- when you are not hungry, angry, upset, rushed, high, or hung over.
- when you have all your textbooks, class notes, and study tools with you, organized, and you are ready to settle down.
- when the television, radio, stereo, I Pod, and cell phone (you get the idea) are all O-F-F.
- when you have at least 20 minutes of uninterrupted time to get focused on the material.

Good luck, work hard, and have fun!

Academic Support and Disability Services

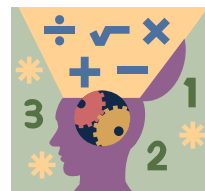


Visit the helpful people in Academic Support on both campuses of CCC & TI for disability services, free tutoring in many subjects, workshops, group and individual study, computers for research and academic purposes, computer-assisted instruction, math videos, reading, Plato biology, and English labs, and referrals. Our friendly staff is always willing to help you reach your academic goals in any way they can!

MATH! MATH! MATH!

By Marie Murphy

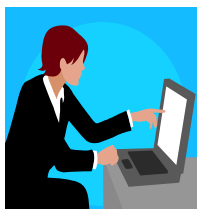
The most essential part of understanding math is building a strong foundation. Mathematics is a language with words to learn, terms, and operations. Unfortunately, there is no easy secret to learning math. Consistent study hours and effort at memorization of the essentials of math are both vital to success. The good thing about math in the early stages is that nothing is abstract. Once a student learns math, it is there, and it is concrete. The rules and concepts remain true and consistent. This fact places more weight on the importance of learning fundamentals clearly and early. After working hard to understand the fundamentals of mathematics, a student will be able to move on with greater confidence. Math builds upon itself, so each new level pulls from the last.



There are many ways to approach most math problems, so with all the rules staying consistent, a student can venture out and work toward a solution one step at a time. Remembering the ultimate goal of the problem is important, along with recalling patterns of solutions from other problems and applying them to the problem at hand. Practice and repetition really help in retaining math information.

In all levels of math, seeking guidance and supervision from instructors and tutors is wise. A student should be sure to ask questions immediately upon finding that something is not clear. Asking "Why?" is also good. Another excellent strategy is to check with a math tutor in Academic Support. When a math concept is not clear, seeing patterns of usage and manipulation and applying them is usually possible.

There is math behind everything. As Galileo said, "Mathematics is the language of the Universe." Learning this important language is worthwhile. Have fun with math, and it will take you far!



Taking a web-based or on line class might be a good idea for you, IF . . .

You are an experienced A or B student.

You have a fast, reliable computer with uninterrupted internet access.

You are computer literate and comfortable with learning new programs.

School Supplies: The USB Pen Drive

Problems often occur for students who save their work on a floppy disk or on a CD/R or CD/RW. These devices are very easily corruptible and unreliable. Instead, Computer Services recommends that all students purchase a USB Pen drive. They cost under \$20.00 at Wal Mart or Staples and can hold many documents at one time. The chance of losing a document is much less when using a pen drive, so the investment is worthwhile.

WHAT NOT TO DO: TEST-TAKING "DON'TS" IN COLLEGE

DON'T WAIT UNTIL THE NIGHT BEFORE TO STUDY FOR A TEST.

DON'T STUDY IN BED.

DON'T STUDY WITH TELEVISION AND OTHER DISTRACTIONS AFFECTING YOUR ATTENTION.

DON'T STUDY WHEN UNDER THE INFLUENCE.

DON'T STUDY BY JUST READING THE TEXTBOOK.

DON'T STUDY WITHOUT CLASS NOTES, TEXTBOOK, AND ALL YOUR STUDY AIDES SUCH AS HIGHLIGHTER, TAPE RECORDER, GLASSES, AND GOOD LIGHTING.

DON'T STUDY MATERIAL THAT YOU ALREADY KNOW AND MISS OUT STUDYING THE HARDER, LESS FAMILIAR MATERIAL.

DON'T ALWAYS STUDY ALONE. GROUP STUDY CAN BE VERY EFFECTIVE AND HELPFUL.