

Studying Tips for Students

- Use your trained brain.
Use the same-time-same-place routine you have developed for homework, but extend the time as necessary.
- Start studying early.
Don't leave all your studying until the last night. Cramming will just give you a headache and doesn't help much with the tests.
- Go with a guide.
If the teacher doesn't give you a study guide (most will if you ask for one), take the time to do a general review and write out what the main areas to be studied are. Use point form, then refer to this outline as you study. Use text headings to guide you.
- Keep it quiet.
It seems obvious, but don't study in a noisy place. Find a place where you can focus. Some students find they can study better with music playing. If you're one of them, that's great, but if you start singing along with the tunes, you aren't studying.
- Break up the content and break up the time.
Divide into small chunks the material you want to cover, and study one chunk at a time. Review that part before going on to another. Allow yourself breaks, too. After about a half hour, get up, stretch, and move around.
- Write the ideas out.
For many ideas, concepts, and skills, you will find it a good idea to look at them on paper, then write them out from memory. The act of writing helps you to remember.
- Know those words.
All tests, no matter what the subject is, expect you to know the vocabulary of the course. They may ask for it directly, as in "Define these words," or indirectly (hidden in the questions). So make a list of all the possible vocabulary and study it. Just knowing the vocabulary can improve your mark a lot.
- Use the RAP strategy.
For long sections of notes or text, use RAP: **R**ead a short section (about one page). **A**sk yourself what you just read. **P**ut it in your own words. This way, if you are just reading and not remembering, you'll catch yourself at once.

Studying Tips for Students (*continued*)

- Do the two step.

For sections you must remember in more detail, like procedures, lists, or steps, take the two-steps-forward-one-step-back approach. Read a little bit, review it, then add the next part. Now go back and review both parts together. Go further. Now go back to the beginning and review it all. Keep studying like this until you have all the material covered.

- Create memory aids.

Make up little rhymes or sentences using the first letter of each word in a series, for example, **Every Good Boy Does Fine** for the lines on a treble musical staff. Or come up with words using the first letters of the key words, such as **HOMES** to recall the five Great Lakes. Use anything, no matter how silly, to help remember important facts.

- Have a study buddy.

Some people work better with a partner, but only do this if you know you will both work and be able to help each other. Study buddies should talk lots about facts relevant to the material to be covered.

- See it in your head.

Try to visualize or picture words and ideas in your head. Talk to yourself while you do this. You might even try to associate feelings with the information you're focusing on.

- Underline and highlight.

Underlining and highlighting really do work as long as you are careful not to mark everything. Stick to key points, vocabulary words, and the most important facts.

- Use graphic organizers.

As you are studying, organize the material in a visual way by clumping similar ideas into clusters, or webs, by mapping, outlining, or grouping points, by making comparison charts, and so on. Being able to see the information in a new light will help you to remember it.

- Skim and scan.

Instead of reading every word, skim. Do a quick survey of the chapter or section you are studying and pick out the headings, boldfaced words or phrases, and key points. Then, scan. Quickly read to locate specific points with which you feel unfamiliar.