

Study skills and Techniques

Step 1: Get into the right mind-set

How you approach your studies has everything to do with how well you perform. If you're motivated, you will perform better. So how can you get into the right mind-set by:

1. Set realistic goals
Trying to overachieve can set you up for frustration and failure. Identify goals that will be challenging but attainable, then stick to them.
2. Get motivated
Find ways to motivate yourself. This can be an immediate reward, like watching a favourite Tv programme or a long term one like buying that something special you've wanted for some time.
3. Stay committed
Even the best students get discouraged at times. Don't let a few difficult assignments or tests get you down, just identify what you still need to learn and forge ahead. Keeping those rewards in mind will help.

Step 2: Stay organised

The secret to any straight A student's success is organisation. The way to do this is to:

1. Manage your time
Get a calendar and use it to track your school schedule, important dates and test times. Make sure you allow for study time and homework every day, which will allow you to complete your assignments and still have time for chores, exercise and extra-curricular activities.
2. Reduce clutter
Kee4ping your study space neat will help you to concentrate and make it easier to find textbooks and notes. Also keep files and notebooks well organised in terms of subject and date that will allow you to be more efficient.

Step 3: Develop good study habits

Good study habits developed now will improve your tertiary performance and beyond. Follow these basic tips:

- Go to class regularly and on time
- Review your readings and notes from the previous class before each session
- Complete your assignments with enough time to review them before you turn them in
- Tackle large projects in manageable time slots.

Better reading (The QSR method)

Q: QUICKLY read the page or chapter you wish to study, then

S: SCAN each page at a time noting key words or sections as you read fairly quickly and then

R: READ the page carefully and thoughtfully making notes as you go. Concentrate on key words using them as a trigger points to recall.

Learning to study

Work out priorities, which can be divided into:

- URGENT – must be done now
- IMPORTANT – must be done soon
- UNIMPORTANT – must be done eventually

Keep a diary or even a computerised data base to record the list or priorities. Be flexible and make changes when necessary.

Use the 4D system:

- DUMP anything that does not need to be done at all
- DELAY what you can't dump
- DESIGNATE a time for what you can't delay and then
- DO IT!

Determine your Concentration-span

The best way to learn is to limit your study periods to the length of your concentration span. This gives the brain the best chance to store what we are studying in long term memory. You will find that your concentration span varies between ten and twenty minutes depending on the subject.

Never study beyond your concentration span. You may still be reading but your brain will be losing most of the information it takes in.

Note taking

the purpose of notes is not to copy out chunks of information. Notes should be taken to trigger your memory and should be short, to the point and well organised. Notes are more easily remembered than long sentences. Use lots of headings, sub-headings and points.

If you study to remember you will forget, but if you study to understand, you will remember.

This is the beginning of anything you want

One thing which sounds obvious- but is terribly overlooked- is that you have to be willing to work hard, no matter how bright you are.

Treat studying like a job. Studying each day is more effective than studying for extended periods in one day

Imagine with all your mind- Believe with all your heart- Achieve with all your might

I hear and I forget, I see and I remember. I do and I understand.

Education is not the learning of facts, but the training of the mind to think.