

Study Tips

Establish a study routine. Creating a routine—such as studying for an hour after dinner, or for a half hour each morning—will encourage consistency. When getting started, create a study schedule and set reminders on your phone to help build the habit.

Create a dedicated study area. Choose an area that is free of distractions where you can set up your study materials and leave them between sessions. When it's time to study, you won't spend time searching for something you need. Just sit down, and you're ready to go.

Focus on the quality of studying, not the quantity. It's more effective to space out many short study sessions, rather than having one marathon session. Try studying in half-hour to hour-long blocks, with breaks in between. This way, you can stay alert and focused the whole time.

Make studying a priority. When it's time to study, take it as seriously as you would take a job. Don't skip study sessions, start on time, and give the task 100% of your attention.

Set specific study goals. Goals give direction to a study session and provide a sense of accomplishment when completed. Create goals that can realistically be completed in a single study session, such as: Learn the terms in chapter 1, pass the chapter 2 practice quiz, take notes on chapter 4, or review class notes for 30 minutes.

Don't stop at reading—write down what you learn. By typing or hand-writing information, you will engage in active learning, which can improve retention and understanding. Try making flashcards, writing chapter summaries, or creating an outline of the material. As a bonus, you can refer back to what you've written to quickly review the material.

Quiz yourself to make information “stick”. Look for practice tests or discussion questions after each chapter you read. Another way to “quiz” yourself is to teach something you've studied to a friend, a pet, or even an inanimate object, without looking at the material.

A change of scenery can improve information retention. If you're feeling unfocused, unmotivated, or just plain bored, try studying somewhere new. Libraries, parks and coffee shops are great alternatives for breaking out of your routine.

Take care of your mind and body. Healthy sleep habits, exercise, and a balanced diet will boost memory and brain function. Studying is most effective when it's balanced with good habits.

