

Study Strategies

Solid study strategies are essential to your academic success.

First of all, your study time will only be productive if you have quality material to study. Make sure your notes are top-notch by referring to our guide on Good Note-Taking Skills.

Here are some strategic tips for effective studying:

- Never leave studying until the last minute. A good student studies consistently from the time they receive the materials until they take the test. This means regularly reviewing your notes, textbook, and other resources. Never, ever pull an all-nighter. It is never useful because it makes you less alert and sharp.
- Establish a set time that you study every day. If you make it a part of your daily routine, it will be easier to keep up with your studies. Schedule study times on your calendar or planning tool.
- Take advantage of slower weeks when less assignments, etc. are due. Use that time to study.
- Establish a set location to study. Make sure it is well-lit, quiet, and gives you room to spread out your materials. Eliminate distractions. If you live on-campus, the library might be a better study location than a noisy dorm room.
- Take frequent, short breaks. If you try to study for hours on end without a break, your mind will eventually wander and you won't recall what you study.
- Unplug. Turn off electronic devices to give yourself uninterrupted study time.
- Read through your notes a couple times, highlighting major topics and subtopics. Then go through and highlight vocabulary terms and definitions in another color. Remember- reading something is not the same as studying it. Studying goes deeper to really concentrate on learning, knowing, and applying what has been read.
- Read over the entire set of notes to get the overall concepts. It is better to get an understanding of the big picture before you dig down into the details.
- As you review your notes, textbook, and other sources, there are several ways to help seal the information in your mind. These memorization tricks are called Mnemonics.
 - When you have to remember lists of information, try using an acronym (making up a word using the first letter of each item in the list). For example, you can

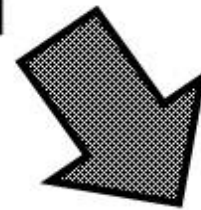
use the acronym HOMES to remember the names of the Great Lakes (Huron, Ontario, Michigan, Erie, and Superior).

- Rhyming the information can help with memorization. For example, “Columbus sailed the ocean blue in fourteen hundred ninety-two.”
- Make up songs using the material. A simple example of this is the alphabet song.
- Use association to link ideas together to make them easier to remember. For example, you may imagine someone holding a microphone to his mouth to help you remember that his name is Mike.
- Make charts, diagrams, graphs, or illustrations of concepts key information. For example, if you have to remember a process, try drawing it out in the form of a flow chart or a timeline so you can visually see the steps in order.
- One of the best tools for memorizing information is the old-fashioned flash card.
- Some people find that reading their study materials out loud helps them to focus on them and remember them. Obviously do this in a location that will not disturb others.
- State the materials in your own words, as if you are the teacher explaining it to someone else.
- As you study, create a running list of potential exam questions. Use these to test your knowledge.
- If your textbook includes quizzes or practice tests, use them.
- Combine studying alone with group study. First, study alone to learn the material, then get in a group to test one another.
- Save everything from the class. Never throw away a handout, returned assignment or exam. You may find them useful for study, especially since course content often builds on information you learned before.
- Repetition is your friend. For example, for a technical class, such as math, you’ll benefit from working and reworking the problems over and over.
- Don’t be afraid to seek out your instructor if you have questions or don’t understand a concept.
- Take advantage of tutoring services provided by the college. Stop by the Learning Resource Center (LRC) in the library to ask about tutoring. There is also online tutoring available to students through BrainFuse, which can be accessed in the student portal.
- Understand and use The Study Cycle, developed by Frank Christ (next page).

The Study Cycle

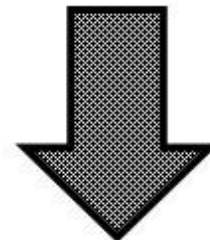
1. Preview.

Look at the material that will be covered BEFORE going to class.



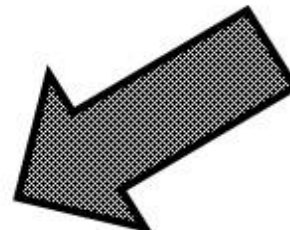
2. Attend Class.

Take notes and be attentive and engaged.



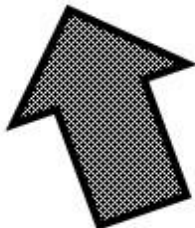
3. Review.

Shortly after class go back over your notes.



4. Study.

Schedule several focused times of study per week for each class.



5. Check.

Test yourself to see if your study techniques are working. If not, make adjustments.

