

SELF-HELP STUDY STRATEGIES AND SKILLS

HOW DO YOU FEEL ABOUT STUDYING?

Overwhelmed by the amount of work I'm facing.

USE TIME

- Provide for spaced or routine review.
- Study as soon as possible after class by review lecture slides and your notes the day you take them.
- Study during the day if possible instead of waiting until evening.
- Study in 1 to 1½ hour blocks instead of trying to study in large blocks of time at one sitting in the evenings.
- Identify and use your periods of maximum alertness for the most difficult, demanding or creative work you face.
- By reading and reviewing daily and using the time you have during the day, you keep up, learn the material more quickly and free your evenings for long-term projects or relaxation.

MANAGE TIME

- Keep daily, weekly and monthly schedules. List the dates-due, exam times, etc. for each month on a month-at-a-glance calendar. Identify the rhythms of each month.
- Learn the daily and weekly demands on your time. Put them on a weekly calendar.
- Each night before bed, list the tasks you need to accomplish the next day in order to “break-even,” taking into account long-term deadlines. Allocate time for them!

CONSIDER THESE CHANGES

- Arrive at class 5-10 minutes early and use that time to review
- Do the task you like least, first. Get it out of the way.
- Schedule “slop time” for each project; plan for 10% more time than you think you will need. Start that project as early as possible.
- Break larger assignments into smaller, more manageable steps.

Like I don't know what the instructor wants.

I do well on quizzes and homework but not on exams.

Pretty sure I always study the wrong stuff.

- When reviewing notes, identify the key concepts or points made. Explain them in your own words.
- As you review, create your own questions and then answer them in your own words without using the texts or notes.
- Read to think, not to memorize. Enter into a dialogue with the ideas. Turn thesis statements into questions and answer them in your own words. Create a diagram to break down the material.
- Give yourself mini practice exams in the same format the professor utilizes.
- In mathematics, be sure you can explain what each practice problem illustrates and what you need to know to solve it.
- Be sure to answer ALL chapter and study guide questions, not just the ones you have to look up.
- If a concept is still unclear visit the professor during office hours or schedule an appointment.

Major in you.

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HOW DO YOU FEEL ABOUT STUDYING?

I don't remember what I just read.

- First skim the assignment, then read it carefully, identifying the issues being covered. Read the introduction, chapter summary, and any questions at the end of the chapter. Allow the material to generate questions for you. THEN read the chapter and answer these questions. Recite the answers in your own words.
- Routinely compare and contrast the reading assignments with each other and with the lecture notes. How do they agree or disagree? Identify common themes.
- Try establishing a discussion and study group with other members of your class.
- Write a summary and critique of each assignment, highlighting the author's thesis and your analysis.
- Be aware of where you are reading. Move to alternative locations if you are routinely interrupted or distracted.
- Break reading assignments into smaller chunks; don't try to read an entire assignment just before it is due.

I take notes, but I don't recall the information.

- Be sure to complete the reading assignments BEFORE the lectures
- If possible, have lecture slides with you during class so that you do not fall behind.
- Listen for basic principles as well as for facts and details
- Listen for the signal words in the lecture: e.g. "First, Second, third...", "however," "therefore" and "If...then..." to help you follow the lecture and connect the material.
- Pay attention to tone of voice and body language.
- Review the notes the day you take them and also weekly. Add to and complete the notes. Identify the key points and themes and then repeat them in your own words without looking. Look for repetitions, patterns and continuing themes.

I don't actually know how to take good notes.

NEED MORE TO FEEL BETTER ABOUT STUDYING?

Check out these topics also available in this series.

[Study Skills Assessment](#)

[Strategies for Your Learning Style](#)

[Effective Note Taking Strategies](#)

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