

General Study Skills

DO:

- Take good notes.
 - Note-taking is the single most important study skill. Without good notes, you will have one less resource when studying, and you might not remember which material is important.
- Review after each lecture.
 - Do this as soon after the class as possible, while the material is still fresh in your memory.
 - Reviewing will help your brain store the information in more places, which makes it easier to remember when you need it.
- Compare your notes with your classmates.
 - This helps in two ways. First, it is a fun way to review. Second, it will make sure that you have all the important material.
- Do all homework and assignments, even the optional and extra credit work.
 - Homework lets you practice what you learned in class, making it easier to remember during a test, and easier to use in everyday life.
- Visit your professor during office hours.
 - Your instructor is here to help you, but they can only help you if you let them know there is a problem.
 - If you feel embarrassed asking a question in class, the office hours will give you the chance to ask it privately.
- Pay attention to detail.
 - In math classes, this means remembering all the little details: negative signs, carrying during addition, etc.
 - In English or other language classes, this means paying attention to spelling, punctuation, and grammar.
- Take notes while studying or reading.
 - If you take notes while studying or reading, it will help you remember the material later.
 - Note-taking also gives you a way to remember any questions that come up during reading (“What does this word mean? How does this idea work?”)
- Read ahead.
 - Reading the material before the instructor gives the lecture will help you understand the lecture material better than if you were hearing it for the first time. You’ll already know the material in that section.
- Practice.
 - Studying is a skill, just like riding a bike. The more you do it, the easier it will be.

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DO NOT:

- Procrastinate.
 - Avoiding procrastination sounds hard, but there are lots of things you can do to help.
 - Knowing your goals will help you decide what is important in your life.
 - Learn to manage your time! Keeping a planner, establishing a schedule for yourself, and getting organized can go a long way toward making you a more effective student.
- “Space out” in class.
 - Paying attention to the lecture is the best way to take notes, because you can ask questions right away.
 - Paying attention in class also helps you build a relationship with your professor; after all, it’s polite to pay attention when someone is talking to you.
 - Try to avoid distracting yourself. This includes clicking your pen, rustling your papers, and staring at your classmates; all of these things will distract you from the lecture and hinder your learning.
- Be afraid to ask questions.
 - Always remember: if you have a question, someone else wants to ask it, too. If nobody speaks up, neither of you will find out the answer.
- Underestimate yourself.
 - Convincing yourself that you “just can’t do it” is the fastest way to fail.
 - Always be confident in yourself. The material may seem hard now, but you can understand it if you try.
 - The only person that can decide how you feel about yourself is you.
- Fall asleep in class.
 - The best way to avoid this is to get enough rest the night before.
 - Often, the people who fall asleep in class are the same people that have overloaded schedules.
 - Each hour in class should be matched by 2 more hours of study and homework time; a full-time academic load (12 units) is really equivalent to 36 hours of work a week, which is a full-time job.
- Study while tired.
 - If you study while tired, you won’t remember it the next day.
 - The worst thing to do is to study while you are tired, hungry, or emotionally upset.
 - Instead, try to study while calm, well-rested, and comfortable. That will cut down on distractions while you concentrate.