

101 STUDY TIPS

1. Make an efficient study schedule and stick to the routine! Let other people know your schedule as well.
2. Give yourself plenty of time: starting to study well in advance will give you time to read and review everything. It also gives you time to ask questions about anything you don't fully understand.
3. Make classroom time active learning time: raise your hand, ask questions, participate in discussions and get involved in learning!
4. Go to class! Especially go to any review classes.
5. Prepare for lecture: skim over readings and lecture notes to get a sense of what to expect during lecture. This will keep you from getting lost or falling behind.
6. Make a To-Do list to keep track of everything you want to accomplish that day.
7. Test yourself by reciting material in your own words without referring to your notes.
8. Review your notes right after class and on a weekly basis to keep the material fresh.
9. "Learn, don't burn". Learn from your mistakes or failures.
10. Ask for help from your peers, professors, TAs, etc.
11. Have a positive attitude. It makes a difference!
12. Identify what motivates you the most and draw/write it out. Make it a constant reminder!
13. Before reading a chapter, go through and look at anything large or bold (i.e., definitions and headings) to get an overview of the chapters.
14. Be active and exercise to manage stress.
15. Eat healthy, and don't skip the most important meal of the day: breakfast!
16. Plan when you'll study, as well as what, how and where.
17. Identify what type of learner you are and then modify your study strategies to fit the way you learn.
18. Eat before you write an exam! Nothing can distract your brain more than an empty stomach.
19. Study in groups and try to teach lecture material to your peers. If you can explain material to someone else, it shows you have a great understanding of the topic.
20. Give yourself time to study. Don't leave anything until last minute.
21. Find an ideal study space that is free of distractions.
22. Study the most difficult material first (save the best for last!).
23. Make realistic study goals.
24. Take study breaks.
25. Discover when you're most productive (Morning? Afternoon? Evening?) and plan to study then.
26. Make use of flash cards.
27. Relate the ideas and information with other course material so it sets off a chain of memories.
28. Go into the exam with confidence. You can do this!
29. Leave the exam knowing you did great and no amount of worrying can change what you've already handed in.
30. Prioritize important information that needs to be learned.
31. Smiling is uplifting. Don't forget to smile before you go into the exam!
32. If you don't have enough time to read the whole textbook chapters before a lecture, try reading the summaries.
33. If you don't understand your lecture material, try different sources (textbook, Google, YouTube, etc.).
34. Give yourself at least one week to study for each midterm and/or exam.

ACADEMIC

35. Create a study timetable (monthly/weekly calendar) and schedule the material you want to review all semester.
36. Make use of your Avenue to Learn discussion boards. Ask questions and/or review the instructor's answers to your peers' questions.
37. Practice old tests and exams. But don't rely on them exclusively (i.e., just use them as a guide)!
38. During last-minute review of exams and midterms, plan your time wisely.
39. Make it a habit to meet with professors and TAs if you don't understand the material (never be afraid to seek help when you need it!).
40. If you're a visual learner, try creating mind maps to represent the linkages, organization and main themes of readings and lectures.
41. Get at least eight hours of sleep per night. This will enhance your ability to be mentally prepared for the next day.
42. If you tend to procrastinate, try the 5-minute plan. Work on something for 5 minutes and switch to something else if you want (you will probably get the momentum to keep going!).
43. Try the Pomodoro technique! (Tips: Decide on a task to be completed; Set a timer for 25 minutes and work on the task until the timer rings; Take a 3-5 minute break)
44. Try not to study more than two subjects per day.
45. Study for understanding, not memorization!
46. Make use of colours while you study to visually remember categories of information.
47. Teach material to others and try to explain concepts in the simplest way possible.
48. Study in chunks and take short breaks.
49. Create mnemonics, acronyms and acrostics to remember lists and orders.
50. Make an outline of what you need to know.
51. Stay motivated.
52. Try different graphic organizers: charts, maps, graphs, tables, pictures, etc.
53. Dress for success, even at home. Dressing up boosts confidence!
54. Make up examples.
55. Take a walk outside to relax your mind and restore your brain's ability to focus.
56. Stay organized to eliminate unnecessary stress.
57. Space out study material and assign topics to a given period of time.
58. Explain the material to a friend (or to yourself) without looking at your notes.
59. Write things in your own words.
60. Relate a concept to a visual cue.
61. Switch to airplane mode on your phone, or hide your phone in the fridge so it can't distract you.
62. Read a good book to stay in reading mode during long study stretches.
63. Set study goals and reward yourself when you complete them.
64. Don't skip meals. Keep your energy levels up during the final weeks.
65. Students who listen to music while studying tend to have the poorest recall abilities.
66. Ask questions while you study, such as how and why things happen, and how you feel about different theories.
67. Stay hydrated.
68. Know when to stop studying.
69. Prioritize the exams that matter the most. Which exams need the most study time, and which grades don't matter as much?
70. Compare and contrast theories and concepts and know how to use them.
71. Try to recall the material after 2-3 day gaps without looking at notes.
72. Use abbreviations.
73. Increase your study time day by day.

ACADEMIC

74. Focus on studying closer to the exam day and don't add new topics to your schedule.
75. Skim your textbooks for important information before deep studying.
76. SQ3R: Survey the chapter, Question while you survey. Read actively, Recite the information orally and visually, and continuously review.
77. Listening to Mozart can help with recall!
78. Alternate study spots.
79. Replicate the exam conditions.
80. Approach each class differently.
81. Build on what you know. Associate new information with familiar material.
82. Self-test and challenge yourself as intensely as you can.
83. Avoid all-nighters!
84. Make connections between different themes and ideas.
85. Summarize your notes and textbook chapters.
86. For sciences especially, focus on charts, diagrams and outlines.
87. Make use of the internet and find different explanations for the same topic.
88. Visualize the information if you can.
89. Look for areas of confusion and actively seek to understand it.
90. Exchange notes with peers.
91. Keep quizzing yourself. Recall helps to cement material in your memory. It also gauges how well you are doing.
92. Remember: you have to learn the material before you can review it.
93. Apples do a better job at keeping you awake than caffeine does.
94. Keep copies of assignments and handouts. They may help you study
95. Triage your study time. Proportion your study time to how hard you think each exam will be.
96. Learn to say no to distractions and be selfish for a day. You want a good grade, right?
97. Put off procrastinating.
98. Use all your senses, or use as many as you can.
99. Revisit concepts taught in class.
100. Know where you study best, how and with whom.
101. Be aware of all the resources available to you. Learn more about what your professors or TAs offer, and how the Student Success Centre can help!

NEED HELP?

Make an appointment for **Academic Skills Coaching** for one-on-one help with anything from study skills and reading strategies to time management and goal-setting! Appointments are 25 minutes in length and can be pre-booked in OSCARplus:

Log into oscarplumcmaster.ca

- Click on the maroon-coloured 'Appointments' tab at the top
- Choose 'Student Success Centre'
- Click on 'Academic & Writing'
- Select the Academic Skills Coaching calendar to see the available appointments

We also offer a number of small-group **workshops** to help with a variety of academic skills. For the schedule of workshops and to register, please see the Student Success Centre Events in OSCARplus.