

# Study Skills

## Set Study Goals

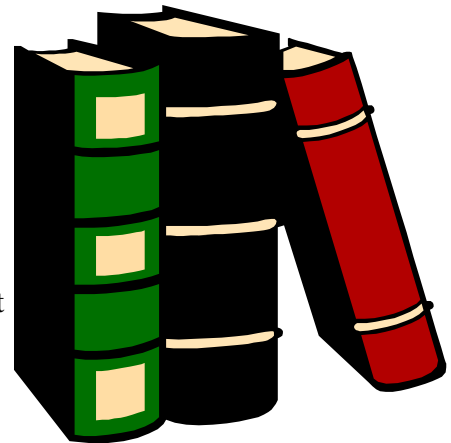
- Benefits:
  - Motivation: Knowing what you have to do and when you will do it provides motivation for studying.
  - Organization: your life will be better organized if you are aware of your study tasks and have specific times to accomplish those tasks.
- Decided what you should study to pass a course.
- Set up a schedule to achieve your study goals
- Decide which study tasks you have to perform to achieve your goals and how much time you will have in which to complete those tasks.

## Improve Concentration

- Eliminate distracters (Visual, Auditory, Environments).
- Set a Routine: Study at the same time and same place every day, if possible. This will increase your likelihood of studying.
- Before you begin an assignment, write down on a sheet of paper the time when you expect to be finished... this might give you just enough push.
- Be reasonable about your limitations.
- Take short breaks, mix types of subjects studied.
- Review your reading or assignment quickly before moving on.

## When to Study

- Plan two hours of study time for every hour spent in class, and begin the first day of class!
- Study difficult (or boring) subjects first. Putting them off until you're tired compounds the problem.
- Avoid scheduling marathon study sessions. Aim for 2-3 hour sessions.
- Be aware of your best time of day.
- Try not to schedule classes back to back, you will miss out of the best time to study: before and after classes.
- Use waiting time for those memorization tasks. Have flashcards on hand at the dentist and your bus ride home.
- Make a weekly to-do list of important tasks and assignments and do high priority tasks first.





## When You Get Stuck

- Ask if there is one small task you can get done that will bring you closer to your goal. Even if it is just typing up the bibliography, you will still be working on the project, but giving your mind a break.
- Ask yourself if you are beating yourself up. If you are, lighten up.
- Ask if this needs to be perfect. If not, don't fret over every little detail. Notes don't have to be grammatically perfect.
- Ask yourself if you are wasting time. If so, catch yourself and get back on track. Is that third popcorn break really necessary?
- Ask yourself if you can do just one more thing? You can almost always finish one more thing, and the overall increase in productivity will surprise you.

## More Tips:

- Think positively; Don't get discouraged when you find the work difficult.
- Deal with personal problems as much as you can before you study. If you can't get rid of them, write down your issues and put them in a drawer, they will always be there later.
- Jot down questions as they occur to you during study time.
- Divide the material for each course into logical sections and concentrate on one at a time; make study sheets, outlines, diagrams, etc. for each segment of the material.
- Make use of study resources on campus. Find out about and use labs, tutors, videos, computer programs, and alternate texts. Sign up for an orientation session in the campus library and computer facilities. Get to know your professors and advisors. Ask questions. "I didn't know" or "I didn't understand" is never an excuse.
- Find at least one or two students in each class with whom to study. Studies show that students who study with someone routinely make better grades. You will probably find yourself more motivated if you know someone else cares about what you are doing in the class. Teaching a concept or new idea to someone else is a sure way for you to understand it. However, studying in a group or with a partner can sometimes become too social. It is important to stay focused.
- Be good to yourself. Studying on four hours of sleep and an empty stomach or junk food diet is a waste of time. Avoid food and drink containing caffeine just before or just after studying.
- Reserve time for leisure activities.
- Reward yourself *after* you achieve goals.

