

Learning Café Quick Study Tips

STUDYING EFFICIENTLY

Have you noticed that some students study for hours & never seem to get enough done? Perhaps you have also noticed that there are students who have time left for fun after their studies, yet still manage to get the grades they want. They have learned to study efficiently, & you can learn too.



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Plan Your Study Time

Identify Fixed Commitments

Mark down on a weekly planner all your fixed commitments: classes, family activities, recreation, exercise, & routine matters such as paying bills & preparing meals.

Set Aside Time For Study

Mark down specific times for studying. Bear in mind that some times of day are better than others for you to study. Only you know what those times are. If possible, try to schedule your study when your concentration level is highest.

Structure Study Times

Be specific about what you plan to do in your study times. It is important to know what subject you will work on & what specific activity you will do. If you are going to study anatomy, for example write something like "Anatomy: Review names of bones in the hand."

Track Your Assignments

Keep an ongoing list of assignment or study activities you need to complete. Then prioritize your list based on the urgency & importance of the activity. Monthly calendars can also be helpful for recording assignments, test dates, & reading activities. You won't be as likely to forget anything & you will be able to anticipate periods of peak demand.

Remember These Guidelines

- As a general rule, plan to study 1 – 2 hours for each hour you spend in class. Study for each class as soon after that class as possible.
- Short but frequent study sessions are more effective than longer, less frequent sessions.
- Plan to start with the most difficult subject or the one you like least. Save the easiest for last.
- Take short regular breaks & alternate subjects when studying for longer blocks of time.

Decide What To Do

- Assignments** Make sure you understand your assignments before your study session. Break large assignments, such as research papers into small, more manageable chunks & set deadlines for each task.
- Read** Use a study reading method, such as SQ4R or PQRS, to help you concentrate on the textbook. Keep a record of what you need to read & when you should read it. Reading about the topic of the day's class ahead of time helps you to get the most out of the class.
- Review** You will forget approximately 60% of what you learned in class within 1 hour. Review as soon as possible & definitely within 24 hours.
- Edit Notes** Look over your class notes. Highlight important points, fill in anything you missed, write abbreviations in full, & make sure your notes are clear.
- Formulate Questions** Write questions in the margins of your texts, on the left side of the page of class notes, on 3x5 cards, or on sheets of loose-leaf paper. To create appropriate questions, ask yourself what questions your notes answer or turn text headings into questions. Identify questions you think might be on the test. Class or text objectives can also be turned into questions.
- Reorganize & Reduce** Transform the information you have learned into charts, diagrams, pictures, or mind-maps. Do as much as you can from memory & then check your notes or text to fill in the missing details. Several pages can be effectively reduced to a one page mind-map which can then be studied in a few spare moments several times during the day.

Complete Weekly Reviews

- Recall Answers to Questions** Without looking at your notes, answer questions (out loud or in writing) that you created in your daily reviews. Check that your answers are accurate. If not, check your notes & answer them again. It is important to actually answer the questions, rather than simply acknowledging you "know" the answers. Reciting is more effective than thinking the answers & writing the answers reinforces the information still further. The more senses you use, the more likely you are to learn & remember.
- Spill** In writing, recall as much detail as you can about charts, mind maps, diagrams, or other information in your notes. This gives you a sense of which areas require additional review.

*For more information on any of the suggestions given here, please visit the Learning Café, located in the library (CE1340) / 403-382-6952 / learningcafe@lethbridgecollege.ca
Or sign up for a Student Success Workshop!*