

# STUDY STRATEGIES

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Study Skills are the strategies and techniques that help you **make the most of your time, academic potential and resources**. Improving your study skills can help you get more work done in the time available to you, and make it easier to retain the information you learn.

**Developing proper study strategies will help reduce the stress** associated with studying and improve your academic output. There are various different learning styles out there, and everyone will have a method that works best for them.

## Learning Styles

**There are many different styles of learning, and each has different methods associated with them.** People rarely learn in one specific way, and often people will learn different subjects in different ways. The main learning styles are:

- Visual (pictures, diagrams and videos)
- Solitary (private, introspective and independent)
- Auditory (class discussions, lectures and audio tapes)
- Tactile (hands on and learning by doing)
- Logical (recognising patterns and grouping information)
- Social (group work, pair work, and 1-2-1 instruction)

The best way to find the learning style that works best for you is to try out the different methods until you find a way of working that feels natural and enables you to be productive. Studying should not feel like you are going up against a brick wall. Mind Maps are particularly useful for Visual and Logical learners, but Social and Auditory learners will usually prefer group sessions.

## TOP TIP

Finding the method that works best for you and identifying your preferred learning style is key to developing good study strategies, and reducing the stress of study periods.

## Good Study Habits

**Once you have identified your preferred learning styles, it's important to start developing good study habits.** These habits will help you no matter what you study, but remember that what works for you may not work for someone else. Here are some things you should consider:

### Environment

**Having a dedicated learning space is crucial for developing a good study routine.** Your study space should be free from distraction and organised, as a cluttered work space will distract you from your work. Figure out whether you work best from home, in the Library or elsewhere. Wherever you study, make sure you have everything you will need on hand, to save you time looking for it in the middle of your study session.

### Getting Organised

**Timetabling your study sessions is a useful way of making sure you know what you need to do and when.** Putting your deadlines into the calendar will also let you visualise your priorities, and let you know what you should be working on. It's important to plan for breaks between and during study sessions. Taking a break after 30 minutes will allow your brain time to rest, and will improve your efficiency in the long term.

### Goal Setting

**Once you've planned out your study sessions, it's important to stick to that routine and goal setting will help you to achieve that.** People's energy levels vary and you should accommodate your own energy levels. Study the most difficult material when your energy levels are at their highest - when you're too tired to tackle difficult material you won't be able to concentrate on it.

Consider the 3 W's of goal setting:

- **Will** (your determination to complete the task e.g. research for my essay)
- **What** (you want to achieve e.g. research, writing up, editing)
- **When** (set a realistic time limit)

Goals should be

- **Within your skills range**
- **Realistic**
- **Flexible**
- **Measurable**
- **Within your control**

**“Be here now” is a simple strategy to help your mind from wandering away from study.** Living in the present and planning for the future are not contradictory; they’re complimentary! Part of your routine can be making the statement and bringing your attention back to study. This is something that needs work (for everyone!), so keep trying this - it really works.

**Set aside worry time (half an hour a day)** when you get distracted by your thoughts or lose concentration because you are worried about something allow yourself the time to worry in the “worry half hour” and bring your focus back to the task in hand.

## **TOP TIP**

- Do you have an organised study space?
- When and where do you work best?
- Have you mixed and matched your learning styles?
- Have you set clear and realistic goals?
- Did you schedule your workload?
- Have you taken breaks?

Have you evaluated your schedule and goals to ensure it works best for you?

## A.S.P.I.R.E Checklist

<b>A</b>	<b>Approach</b> your studies with a positive <b>attitude</b> and <b>arrange</b> your schedule to eliminate distractions.	✓
<b>S</b>	<b>Select</b> chunk of material to study.  <b>Survey</b> headings, graphics get an overview.  <b>Study</b> marking any info not understood.	✓  ✓  ✓
<b>P</b>	<b>Put</b> aside books.  <b>Piece</b> together what you've studied and summarise what you understand.	✓  ✓
<b>I</b>	<b>Inspect</b> what you don't understand. <b>Investigate</b> alternative sources of information web, text books. <b>Inquire</b> from professionals (lecturers, librarians, tutors, etc.).	✓  ✓  ✓
<b>R</b>	<b>Reconsider</b> content, what questions would I ask or what criticism would I offer?  <b>Reflect</b> on the material – how can I apply it?  <b>Relay</b> understanding – how could I make this information interesting to others?	✓  ✓  ✓
<b>E</b>	<b>Evaluate</b> grades. <b>Examine</b> progress and work towards improving it. <b>Explore</b> options with lecturer/tutor to do this.	✓  ✓  ✓

## Conclusion

You will be more successful if you take an active role in planning, monitoring and evaluating your education.

## Useful Links

- <https://www.educationcorner.com/study-skills.html>
- <https://www.lib.uoguelph.ca/get-assistance/studying/effective-studying/top-40-study-strategies>
- <https://thinkeracademy.com/21-study-tips/>
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5ad6grll-ak>
- <https://freedom.to/blog/how-to-stay-focused-studying/>
- [https://www.jstor.org/stable/23900724?seq=1#metadata\\_info\\_tab\\_contents](https://www.jstor.org/stable/23900724?seq=1#metadata_info_tab_contents)
- <http://www.educationplanner.org/students/self-assessments/learning-styles-quiz.shtml>
- <https://arden.ac.uk/what-type-learner-are-you>

## Other Relevant Online PDFs

- Note-Taking for Lectures
- Note-Taking for Reading
- Procrastination & Motivation
- Time Management