

NOTE-TAKING



REVISION



PRODUCTIVITY



WELLBEING

HOW TO STUDY

Essential tips for study, success and staying well

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DIRECTED INDEPENDENT LEARNING TO INDEPENDENT LEARNING

Your teachers will set you DIL each week-it will include the following elements:

CONSOLIDATION OF CURRENT LEARNING

PREVIEW OF FUTURE LEARNING

REVIEW OR RETRIEVAL OF PRIOR LEARNING

The guide below shows you the advised study time outside of lessons for each subject to ensure success at the end of the course. This should build gradually and will become increasingly independent as you progress through your courses.

DIL	Y12 examined courses	Y13 examined courses	Non-exam element applied general courses
	Number of hours/subject/week	Number of hours/subject/week	Number of hours/subject/week
1 st Half Term	2 hours	5 hours	2 hours
	October Half Term Break		
2 nd Half Term	3 hours	6 hours	2 hours
	Christmas Holiday		
3 rd Half Term	4 hours	7 hours	2 hours
	February Half Term Break		
4 th Half Term	5 hours	8 hours	2 hours
	Easter Holiday		
5 th Half Term	5 hours	10 hours	2 hours
	May Half Term Break		
6 th Half Term	5 hours	Exams	2 hours



WEEKLY REVIEW

1. Set aside an hour a week. No distractions!
2. Split up the hour evenly. 20 mins per subject
3. For 20 mins, review the week's work in that subject by:
 - Checking your notes are clear, legible and in order.
 - Summarise your learning in a quick diagram, mind-map or a few lines of notes.
 - Highlight or circle material you found hard this during the week. This is the material you will need to work on during your study periods.
 - Go through the DIL you have been given and any deadlines you have been set. Make a prioritised list for the week.
4. Once you've done this for one subject, repeat for the others

PREVIEW 5-15 minutes

- Before each lesson preview new material
- Skim the chapter or watch the video
- Note headings, summaries & big ideas
- Think of questions you want answered
- Decide what you want to learn or accomplish in your study session
- This will give you an overview and make learning the details in the lesson easier

ASSESS 25 minutes

- Periodically assess your level of learning
- Test yourself from memory
- Explain the material in your own words
- Teach the material to someone else
- Apply your knowledge to a new context
- This will help you check whether your study methods are effective

ATTEND 90 minutes

- Go to every lesson
- Participate fully
- Ask questions
- Take meaningful notes
- Participating in a lesson is much more effective than just reading, listening or watching a recording of a lesson

THE STUDY CYCLE

STUDY 25 minutes

- Daily study - schedule 3 to 5 focused study sessions every day at college
- Weekly review - set aside an hour a week to review your progress in all your subjects
- Read material. Make notes. Ask 'why', 'how' and 'what if' questions
- Make connections. This will help you learn the material more deeply and reliably recall it in the future

REVIEW 5-15 minutes

- After each lesson, ideally within 24 hours
- Review your notes
- Fill in any gaps
- Develop any questions that need answering
- This will start the process of moving new material from working memory into long-term memory



THE STUDY CYCLE is a 5-step approach to learning designed to help you become a more efficient learner. It works the way your brain learns best. The study cycle can be easily adapted to any course at college.

FOCUSED STUDY PLAN

PLAN 10 minutes

Decide what you want to learn or accomplish in your study session

FOCUS 100%

Don't get distracted! Turn off your phone and find somewhere quiet to study

STUDY 25 minutes

Interact with the material: organise, concept map, reflect, summarise, connect & elaborate

BREAK 5-10 minutes

Clear your working memory by taking a short break

LEARN 25 minutes

Learn the material: look, cover, write, check

BREAK 3-10 minutes

Clear your working memory by taking a short break

TEST 5 minutes

Test yourself from memory to see what you can remember

PREVIEW



5-15 minutes

- **Before each lesson preview new material**
- **Skim the chapter or watch the video**
- **Note headings, summaries & big ideas**
- **Think of questions you want answered**
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90 minutes

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STUDY



25 minutes

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- **Weekly review - set aside an hour a week to review your progress in all your subjects**
- **Read material. Make notes. Ask 'why', 'how' and 'what-if' questions**
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ASSESS



25 minutes

- **Periodically assess your level of learning**
- **Test yourself from memory**
- **Explain the material in your own words**
- **Teach the material to someone else**
- **Apply your knowledge to a new context**
- **This will help you check whether your study methods are effective**

WEEKLY REVIEW

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4. Once you've done this for one subject, repeat for the others

FOCUSED STUDY PLAN



1-2 minutes

PLAN

Decide what you want to learn or accomplish in your study session



100%

FOCUS

Don't get distracted!
Turn off your phone and find somewhere quiet to study



25 minutes

STUDY

Interact with the material: organise, concept map, reflect, summarise, connect & elaborate



5-10 minutes

BREAK

Clear your working memory by taking a short break



25 minutes

LEARN

Learn the material - look, cover, write, check



5-10 minutes

BREAK

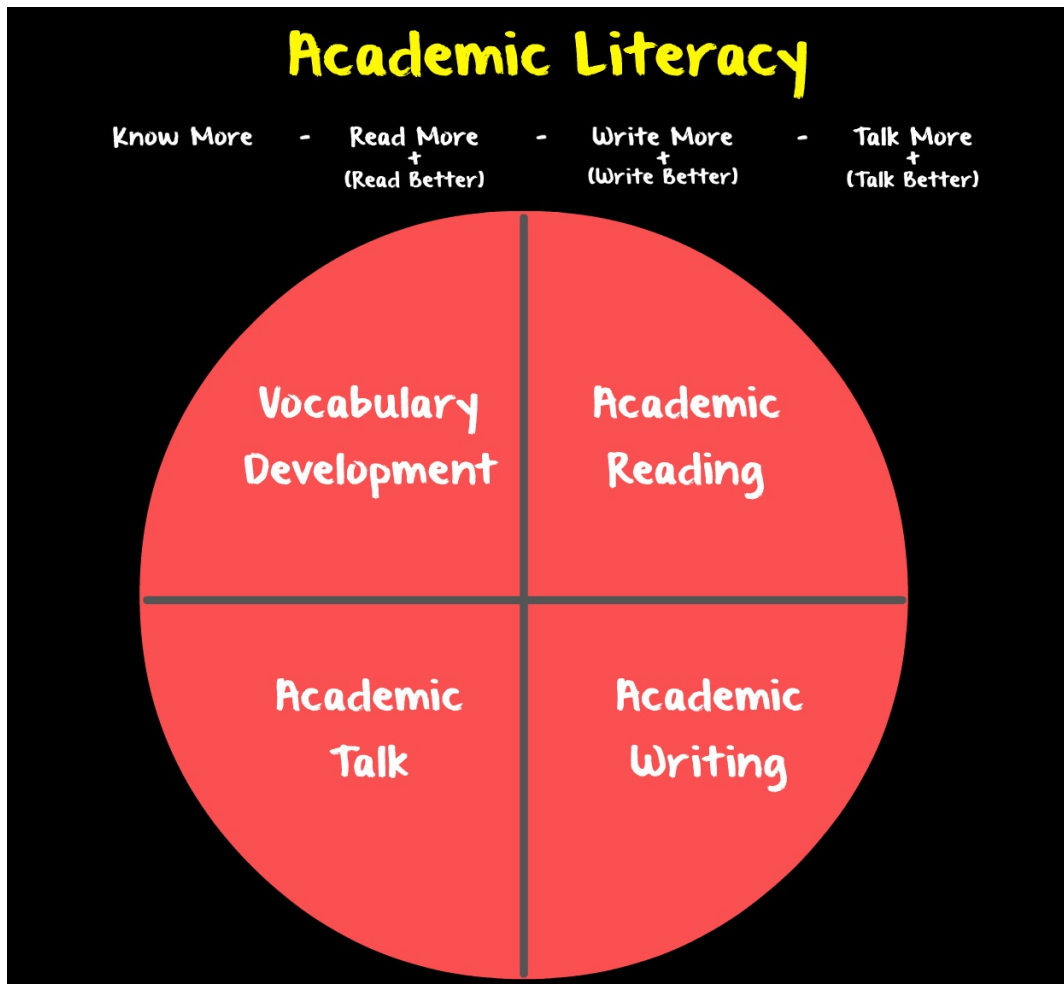
Clear your working memory by taking a short break



5 minutes

TEST

Test yourself from memory to see what you can remember



An important part of your development at New College will be continuing to develop your academic literacy. Your teachers will provide opportunities and support to ensure you develop:

- Your vocabulary
 - Your reading strategies and comprehension
 - Your ability and confidence in talking
 - Your writing ability
-
- This will support you with subject specific performance as well as developing skills needed for future study and employment.

USE FLASHCARDS TO LEARN NEW VOCABULARY:

USING FLASHCARDS TO REVISE

by @inner_drive | www.innerdrive.co.uk

1 Split a box into 5 different compartments and label them 1 to 5.



2

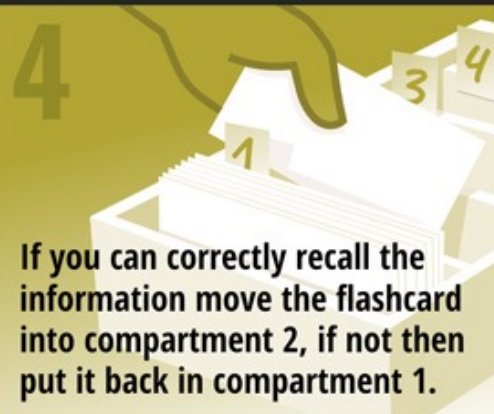


Place all your flashcards in compartment 1.

3 Test yourself on a flashcard



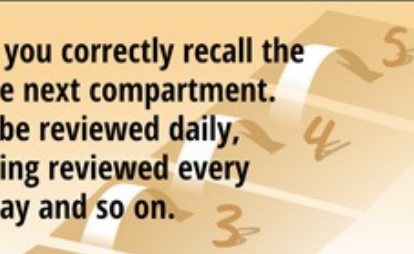
4



If you can correctly recall the information move the flashcard into compartment 2, if not then put it back in compartment 1.

5

Continue to test yourself and each time you correctly recall the information, move the flashcard into the next compartment. Flashcards from compartment 1 should be reviewed daily, with flashcards from compartment 2 being reviewed every other day, compartment 3 every third day and so on.



6



Eventually, all your flashcards will have been transferred to compartment 5 and the information they contain stored in your long-term memory.

USE ACTIVE READING STRATEGIES:

Reading for Meaning (PQ5R)

- Really think about the ideas being discussed.
- Get totally absorbed.
- Do anything possible to get engaged, fascinated or involved with the material.
- Use vivid imagination.
- Generate images or imagine performing the actions.



Preview & Question

- Scan through the titles, headings and sub-headings.
- Make an outline using the headings and sub-headings.
- Read any overviews or summaries.
- Look at diagrams, graphs or tables.
- Attempt any preview questions.





Read

- Read each paragraph slowly.
- Digest every word. Look up their meanings.
- List and define the key words.
- Identify the main idea in each paragraph.
- Write it down in your own words on your outline of headings and sub-headings.
- Look for evidence to support the main idea.



Reflect (interpretation)

- In your own words, explain how & why concepts work.
- Provide evidence to justify your ideas.
- Think of your own concrete examples.
- Highlight the similarities & differences between concepts.
- Create analogies and explain their limitations.
- Represent concepts in a new way or from a different point of view.
- Transform text into a diagram, graph or table.
- Reduce concepts down to their simplest form.
- *Ask: 'Do I understand the material?'*
- *Ask: How does it fit in with what I already know?*
- *Ask: Could I explain the material to a 12-year-old?*





Reflect (elaboration)

- Relate concepts to other ideas, topics and classes.
- Explain the relationship between concepts.
- Create a concept map to show how the key concepts relate or connect to each other.
- Construct meaning from a variety of sources.
- Apply your knowledge to different situations.
- Relate ideas to your own life experiences/memories.
- Predict future outcomes.
- Contextualise your knowledge.
- Ask: 'What is the significance of these fact & ideas?'
- Ask: What principle or principles are they based on?
- Ask: What else could they be applied to?
- Ask: From these facts and ideas, what else can I learn?



Recall, Review & Repeat

- Take a break to clear your working memory.
- Recall from memory what you have read.
- Review your notes to check your answers.
- Restudy questions you didn't get right.
- Repeat the process on another chapter.

Proofreading Checklist for SPAG

It is important that your college work, CVs, cover letters and personal statements are free of spelling, punctuation and grammar (SPaG) errors in order to not lose valuable marks for accuracy and for universities/ employers to consider your application.

Use the checklist below to ensure your writing is accurate.

Aspects to consider		Explanation	Example
1	Spelling	<p>All spelling mistakes are identified.</p> <p>Use Microsoft Spellchecker in Word and people and job titles. double-check proper nouns such as: names, places,</p>	
2	Homophones	<p>Homophones are used correctly.</p> <p>Tip: Homophones are words that sound the same when we pronounce them, but have a different spelling in writing.</p> <p>Common homophone confusions: Affect / effect, know / no, than / then, their / there / they're, to / too/ two, accept / except, your / you're, practise / practice.</p>	
3	Capital letters	A capital letter is used for proper nouns such as: names, places, people and job titles. Capital letters should also be used for street names, towns / cities and postcodes when writing addresses.	<p>✗ Incorrect example: New college <u>doncaster</u></p> <p>✓ Correct example: New College Doncaster</p>
		A capital letter is used for the first word in a sentence.	<p>✗ Incorrect example: firstly, I designed ice breaker activities.</p> <p>✓ Correct example: Firstly, I designed ice breaker activities.</p>

4	Commas	<p>Commas are used to separate the elements in a list of three or more items.</p>	<p>Incorrect example:</p> <p>After she had spoken to the student, a meeting between the parents, student and teacher was arranged.</p> <p>✓ Correct example:</p> <p>After she had spoken to the student, a meeting between the parents, student and teacher was arranged.</p>
		<p>A comma is used to separate certain introductory elements in a sentence.</p>	<p>✗ Incorrect example:</p> <p>Since the beginning of this year we have delivered tutorial sessions on a weekly basis.</p> <p>✓ Correct example:</p> <p>Since the beginning of this year, we have delivered tutorial sessions on a weekly basis.</p>
5	Semi-colon and colon	<p>Colons (:) are used to introduce a list. Semi-colons (;) are different to colons and are occasionally used in CVs and job applications.</p> <p>*Tip: There is a significant difference between the semi-colon and the colon.</p>	<p>✗ Incorrect example:</p> <p>My internship role involved working with members of staff in three departments; Art and Design, Media Production, and Performing Arts.</p> <p>✓ Correct example:</p> <p>My internship role involved working with members of staff in three departments: Art and Design, Media Production, and Performing Arts.</p>

6	Linking words / phrases	<p>Some conjunctions such as: 'and,' 'but,' and 'because' are avoided at the beginning of a sentence.</p> <p>*Tip: More formal words and phrases can be used instead.</p>	<p>✗ Incorrect example: And this resulted in people taking me for granted and professional boundaries being unclear.</p> <p>✓ Correct example: This resulted in people taking me for granted and professional boundaries being unclear.</p>
7	Nouns	Countable nouns are used to indicate that there is more than one person, place, thing or idea.	<p>✗ Incorrect example: I was under supervision for the first two day.</p> <p>✓ Correct example: I was under supervision for the first two days.</p>
		Uncountable nouns are substances, concepts, information and materials that cannot be counted.	<p>✗ Incorrect example: I have received advices and informations from senior colleagues.</p> <p>✓ Correct example: I have received advice and information from senior colleagues.</p>
8	Prepositions	<p>Prepositions are used correctly.</p> <p>For example: about, at, for, in, of, on, to and with.</p>	<p>✗ Incorrect example: I have a proactive approach on planning.</p> <p>✓ Correct example: I have a proactive approach to planning.</p>

9	Articles	<p>Articles are correctly placed before nouns in a sentence.</p> <p>For example: the, a and an</p>	<p>✗ Incorrect example:</p> <p>I have a proactive approach ✓</p> <p>Correct example:</p> <p>I have a proactive approach</p> <p>✗ Incorrect example:</p> <p>I ate a apple</p> <p>✓ Correct example:</p> <p>I ate an apple</p>
10	Incomplete sentences	<p>Incomplete sentences are avoided.</p> <p>*Tip: A complete sentence expresses a complete idea and ends with a full stop. An incomplete sentence does not express a complete idea.</p>	<p>✗ Incorrect example:</p> <p>I understand that if any of my patients refuse treatment for any reasons. I should respect their decision.</p> <p>✓ Correct example:</p> <p>I understand that if any of my patients refuse treatment for any reasons, I should respect their decision.</p>
11	Subject-verb agreement	<p>Subject-verb agreement is used correctly.</p> <p>*Tip: Subject-verb agreement uses the right version of the verb (v) to agree with the subject (s).</p>	<p>✗ Incorrect example:</p> <p>Sorting mail (s) in the correct pigeon holes were (v) quite difficult.</p> <p>✓ Correct example:</p> <p>Sorting mail (s) in the correct pigeon holes was (v) quite difficult.</p> <p>In the above example, the subject 'mail' is a singular uncountable noun, therefore the singular form of the verb 'was' should be used.</p>
12	Missing words	All missing word errors are identified	

Use this SPAG check to proofread your work for accuracy before submitting:

SPAG check	
Spelling is correct	
Homophones are used correctly.	
Capital letters are used correctly	
Commas are used correctly	
Semi colons and colons are used correctly	
Connectives like and/but/because are avoided at the start of sentences	
Countable and uncountable nouns have been used correctly	
Prepositions are used correctly	
Articles are used correctly	
Incomplete sentences are avoided	
Subject-verb agreement is used correctly	
All missing word errors are identified	

SPAG Marking Code

Spelling, Punctuation, and Grammar

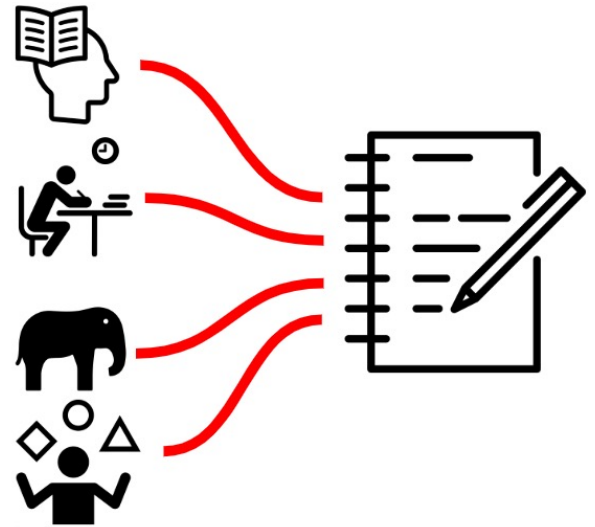
Your teachers will use this and you might use it to peer assess writing accuracy

Code	Meaning
//	Start a NEW Paragraph
^	Add Missing Words
Underline	Meaning is Unclear - Rewrite Paragraph
sp	Incorrect Spelling – Correction Needed
p	Punctuation is inaccurate/missing
g	Inaccurate Grammar e.g. matching pronoun and verb e.g. writing - He was instead of We was ...
v	Vocabulary - Choose a Better Word
con	Add Connectives to Link Ideas e.g. and, because etc.
cap	Add Capital Letters e.g. start of sentence/proper noun

THE IMPORTANCE OF NOTE-TAKING

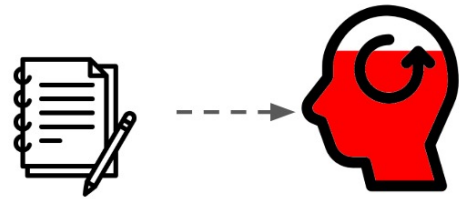
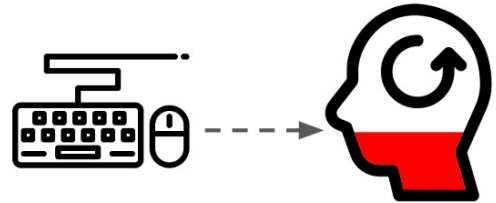
WHY TAKE NOTES

- Research has proved that **note-taking improves learning**
- It develops and **builds study skills and working habits**
- It helps to build both **memory and understanding of content** covered in class
- Being able to take effective notes is a **life skill**



DIGITAL VS HANDWRITTEN NOTES

- Studies have shown that writing notes by hand **improves retention** later on
- Students who type their notes tend to **type exactly what they are being taught**
- Students who write their notes by hand tend to **summarise the content**
- Summarising meant that they needed to **engage more with the lesson content**
- Writing notes by hand requires greater **cognitive processing**



WHY YOU SHOULD RE-WRITE YOUR NOTES

- There may be **weeks or months** between your notes being taken and you will need to **understand and remember** what you first wrote
- Think **how many subjects you study** for which you have notes in some form.
- Without reviewing** the notes you make, you will **reduce how effective they are** as revision materials.

- Remember important information by improving and adding to previous notes



- Fill in gaps in knowledge - important points and concepts may have been missed



- Keep notes up to date by checking accuracy and currency of information



- Organise the information into a form that makes more sense - this may differ from the way the notes were first written



- Create summaries, flashcards and revision notes



THE CORNELL METHOD

ABOUT

The **Cornell** note-taking method was devised in the 1940s by Dr Walter Pauk, at Cornell University.

- ✓ Efficient method of taking notes
- ✓ Encourages reflection
- ✓ Makes an effective study guide for revision and exam preparation

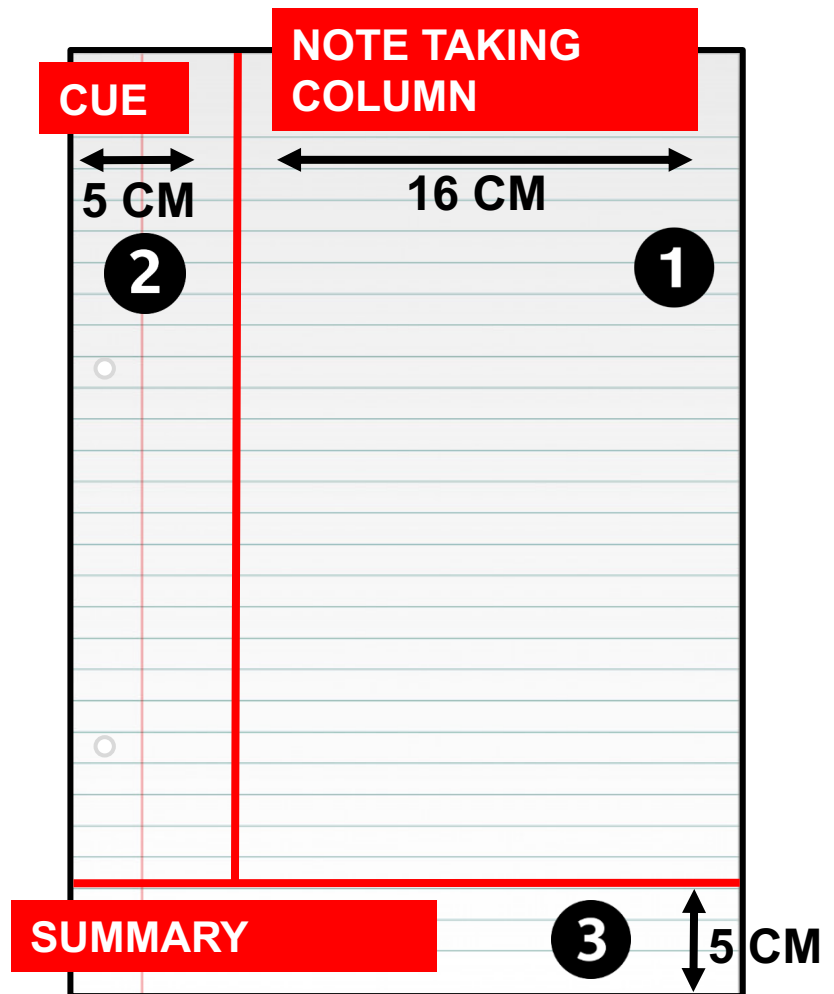
HOW

Divide an A4 page into the three sections as shown.

You can use different dimensions for each section if you prefer

Each section has a specific purpose:

-  **RECORD**
-  **QUESTIONS**
-  **REVIEW**



- Write your notes in this section **during the lesson**

Use **any format** you like to record these notes (for example, mind-mapping)

Record only the **important information** (don't write in full sentences)

Focus on **ideas** rather than the actual words

- This section is for **recall**.

Do not write in this section **during the lesson**

The cue section is created **when you review your notes**.

Do this **as soon as possible** after the lesson

Cues are **in the form of questions** that you can use the notes to answer.

- A **summary** of the notes taken

It should be **concise** focusing on **key ideas** only

Written in **your own words**

NOTES + CUES + SUMMARY should show how all ideas fit together

MIND MAPPING

ABOUT


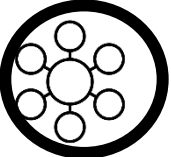


Mind Mapping and Brainstorming is a highly visual method of representing information

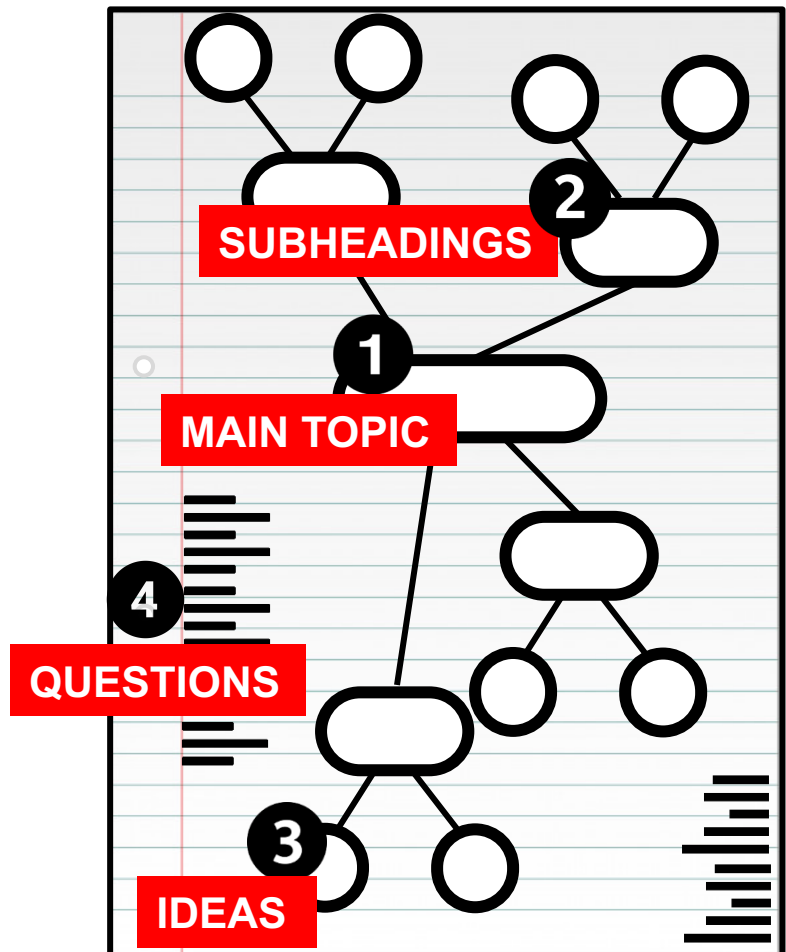
- ✓ Establishes links and relationships between ideas and concepts
- ✓ Can be used to take notes as part of the Cornell Method
- ✓ Effective when working from textbooks or written notes

HOW

This works far better on paper than as a digital method

Make sure you start in the centre of the page

- 1  TOPIC
- 2  SUBHEADINGS
- 3  IDEAS
- 4  QUESTIONS



- 1 Determine the **overall topic** or theme
Write this in the **centre of your page** and **circle it**
If the main focus of your mind map changes – create an **additional mind map** – do not add the new focus to the mind map that you are already working on.

- 2 You will need to add **major facts (subheadings)** that relate to your main topic
- 3 Each subheading will have at **least one idea** related to it.
Make sure that your **ideas are visually distinct** from your subheadings

- 4 Use the edges of your document to **write questions**
These should **relate to the ideas** in your mind map
You could also use these areas to **expand on points** that need additional clarification on the main mind map

THE LINEAR/OUTLINING METHOD

ABOUT

The **Linear / Outlining** method is particularly effective in humanities or social sciences subjects. Its use of indentations makes it easy to establish relationships between topics.

- ✓ Perfect for those who prefer structured notes
- ✓ Prioritises information using headings and bullet points
- ✓ Good for digital notetaking

HOW

This system is very easy to use, BUT...

Make sure you are **CONSISTENT** with how you structure your notes

1 MAIN TOPIC

MAIN TOPIC #1

1. SUB-TOPIC

2 SUBTOPIC

- 1st POINT
- 2nd POINT
- 3rd POINT

2. SUB-TOPIC

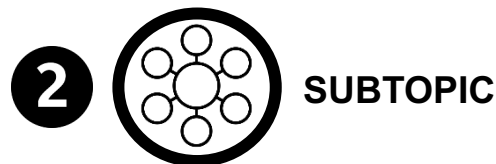
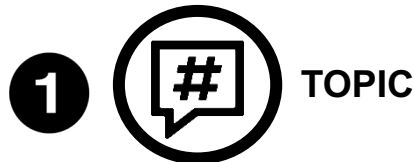
- 1st POINT
- 2nd POINT
- 3rd POINT

3 NOTES

MAIN TOPIC #2

1. SUB-TOPIC

- 1st POINT
- 2nd POINT
- 3rd POINT



1 Determine the **main topic** of your notes and **number it clearly**

Write this in **capital letters**.

If you are working digitally consider **using bold or increasing the font size**

New topics can be added – use your **numbering system** and **indent it** correctly.

2 Add a **subtopic** for each “section” of your main notes.

It is a good idea to **number or letter** your subtopics – either method is fine, **just be consistent**

Indent each subtopic and again, **keep your indentation consistent** so that the structure of your notes is clear.

3 Notes are **concise points** relating to each subtopic

These are **indented** again so that they are **distinct from your main and subtopics**.

HOW THE BRAIN WORKS

THE SCIENCE BIT

Revising can be hard – especially if you think about it the wrong way. Revising isn't about getting stuff IN to your brain – it's about being able to get it OUT of your brain when you need it.

A lot of scientific research has been done about how the brain (and memory) works, as well as the study methods that work best.

Before we look at some revision strategies, it's a good idea to understand a little bit about how your brain (and memory) works.

To use a computing analogy, your brain has both a **WORKING MEMORY** (like **RAM** in a computer) and a **LONG-TERM MEMORY** (like a **hard-drive** in a computer)

WORKING MEMORY can only cope with four pieces of information at once – just like RAM, it can become full very quickly if it ask it to do too much.

You need to be able to move information **from** your working memory **to** your long-term memory, so you can use it later – i.e. **LEARNING**. (Just like when we save data to a hard-drive)

You also need to be able to retrieve information from your long-term memory and put it back into your working memory, so that you can use it – i.e. **REMEMBERING**.

This is just like when a computer loads data from the disk and puts it back into memory.

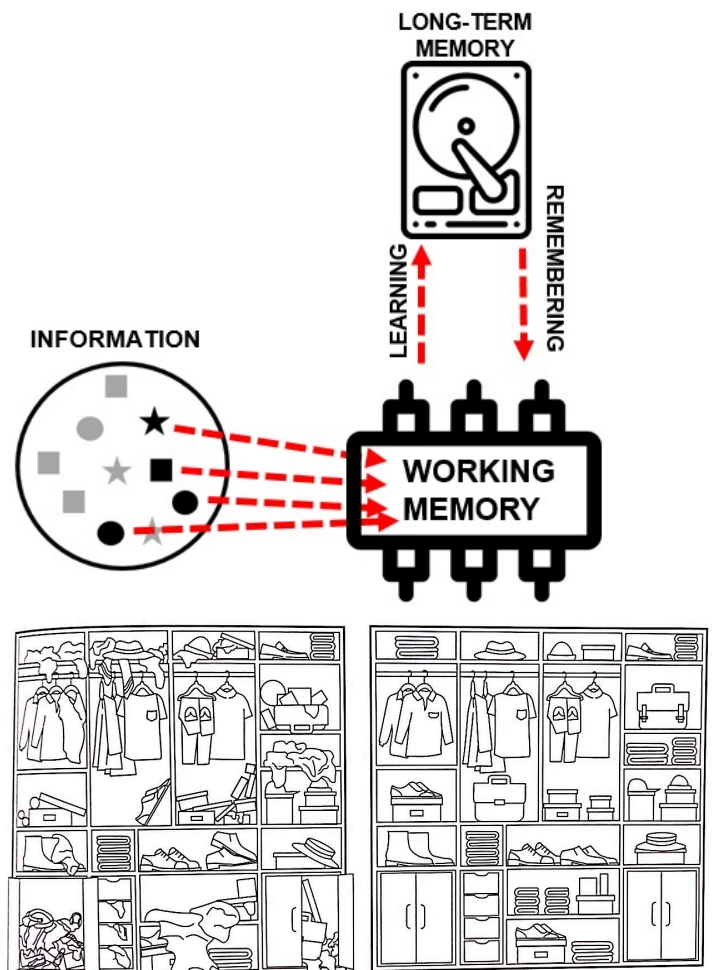


Image by Oliver Caviglioni, taken from "Connect the Dots" [Tricia Taylor/Nina Dibner]

REVISING

Unfortunately, pulling information from long-term memory to working memory is harder for humans than it is for computers!

Unless you use the right techniques to revise, you are unlikely to be able to retrieve your information when you need it.

Another analogy is that memory is like a wardrobe. Like your memory, a wardrobe can become disorganised and untidy as you add more to it.

Each time you return to your wardrobe, you can tidy it a bit, making it easier to find what you looking for.

Each time you recall something from your memory, you make it easier to find that information in the brain.

RETRIEVAL PRACTICE

ABOUT

RETRIEVAL PRACTICE is an important part of revision. It's all about getting the information that is (hopefully) in your **long-term memory**, back into your **working memory**.

There are a wide range of straightforward ways of doing retrieval practice.

RAG (Red/Amber/Green) the material you need to learn – allow more time to focus on **RED topics**.



 **RED – No understanding or recall of this topic**

 **AMBER – some recall but could not explain the topic to others**

 **GREEN – confident in terms of recall and understanding**

HOW

Start by checking **WHAT** you need revise – you should have complete and thorough lesson notes to refer to for this purpose.

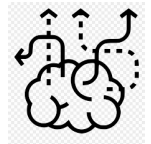
Ask your teacher if they have a **knowledge organiser** for the topics you are studying.

RAG all the topics that you need to know to give you a clear focus.

Flashcards are a good retrieval method especially if you are using **SPACING** (see next page)



Brain dump – give yourself 5 minutes to write as much about a topic as you can and then check using your notes



Producing **diagrams/drawings** can be useful retrieval method – for example, creating a representation of the registers in the CPU



AVOID

Research suggests that some popular revision methods are **NOT** effective.

Re-reading notes, re-writing notes and highlighting notes do not use **ACTIVE RECALL** – in other words they do not involve **RETRIEVAL** of information

Note-taking is an important part of studying, but retrieval is much more effective as a revision strategy. This is because it is **COGNITIVELY CHALLENGING** – i.e. your brain has to work harder!

Always do retrieval practice **WITHOUT** using notes



Use tools like **Quizizz** or **Kahoot!** for quick revision questions. Obviously paper based questions are fine too!



QUIZIZZ



KAHOOT!



1

Instead of making notes you could **write questions** – you could then turn them into Quizizz or Kahoots.

2

There are a lot of different retrieval strategies – mix them up for variety. Ask your teacher if they have any topic-specific retrieval materials (such as revision clocks or retrieval grids)

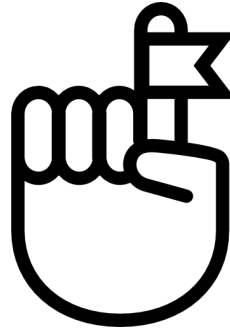
SPACING

ABOUT

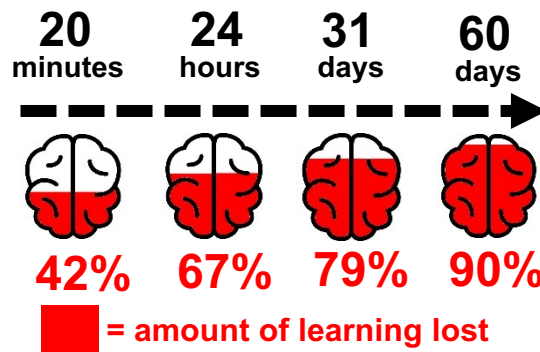
SPACING or **SPACED RETRIEVAL** works on the basis that the best time to revisit and revise information may be at **the point at which we likely to forget it**

The gap between each revision session should **get progressively longer**

This means that your brain has to work harder to recall information each time – which has the effect on making the process more effective



Spaced practice is based on the principle of the **Ebbinghaus Curve** – a theory by Hermann Ebbinghaus that suggested that increasing amounts of knowledge are lost as time passes.



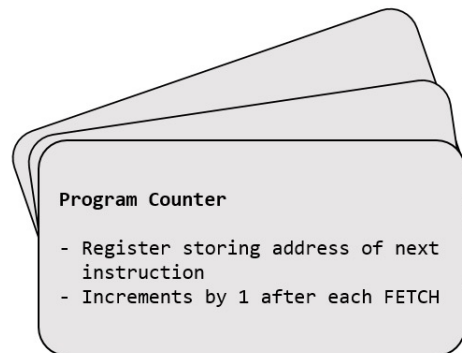
A visualisation of the Ebbinghaus Curve

HOW

Create flashcards for the topics you are studying

Try to ensure that the flashcards are increasingly challenging

Flashcards do not suit long and open-ended questions; for example, “explain the differences between Von Neumann architecture and Harvard architecture” is too complex – “Identify three characteristics of Harvard architecture” is better.



Electronic Flashcards



AVOID

Last minute revision – i.e. “cramming”

Teachers will always have told you that cramming does not work – and the science backs this up.

ANKI



QUIZLET



1 Stick to short study sessions. You will learn more effectively in five one hour sessions, than one five hour session.

2 Make sure that you are clear when your practice (and real!) assessments are – you will need to ensure that you have factored in enough time to allow for the gaps that spaced practice requires.

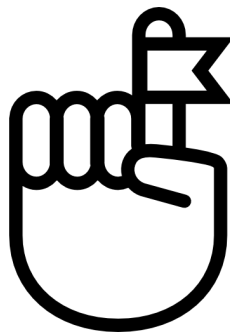
INTERLEAVING

ABOUT

INTERLEAVING is the opposite of **BLOCKED PRACTICE**

It involves **breaking revision time into chunks** and studying a **different subject or topic** in each chunk

This is instead of using **blocked practice** – i.e. focussing one topic or subject for the entire revision session

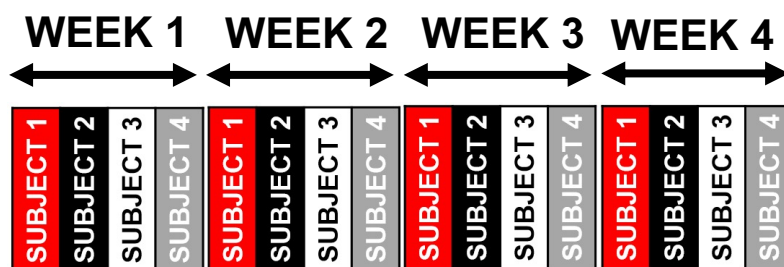


Research has shown interleaving to be more effective than blocked practice when it comes to **long-term retention of knowledge**

HOW

Divide your subjects or topics into chunks across your revision period.

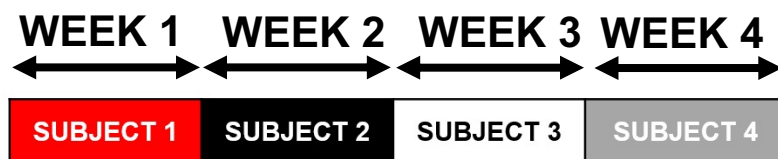
Make a plan to ensure that your revision covers everything you need it to.



AVOID

Blocked practice is not an effective **LONG TERM revision strategy**

This is because it involves focusing heavily on one topic before moving to the next. By the end of your revision period, you are unlikely to remember what you revised at the start



1

Interleaving enables you to see links, similarities and differences between different topics.

2

This means that **interleaving will be much more effective if you use it with similar topics**

3

It is a good technique to use in subjects like computing, as interleaving works well with **problem-solving topics**.

4

Interleaving is very much a **long-term** revision strategy



GETTING THINGS DONE

ORGANISING YOURSELF & STAYING ON TRACK

Sometimes study and revision can seem overwhelming, especially when you have a range of topics or subjects to cover.

It is important to find ways of managing your time effectively and of organising your tasks and your time.

There are many different task management and organisation systems and there is no “perfect” solution - so we will look at a few basic principles that will help.

One of the most famous productivity methods is called “**Getting Things Done**” or “**GTD**”.

The 5 principles of GTD are easy to implement and you can easily incorporate or adapt these into your own personal workflow

ABOUT

GTD is a productivity method developed by productivity consultant, David Allen

His book, outlining and explaining the method was first published in 2001 and has sold millions of copies

WRITE IT DOWN!



A diary or planner is a must – whether you use an app or paper doesn’t matter. Do what works for you.

Using your GTD inbox to write tasks down **QUICKLY** will reduce cognitive load.

You **WILL** forget things if you simply rely on remembering them!

1 CAPTURE

Write down any task as soon as you think of it or are given it. Do this digitally, in a planner or a notebook – it doesn’t matter.



The idea is that you use an “**inbox**” to capture these tasks straightaway. Don’t worry about categorising them – this comes later.

2 CLARIFY

Look in your inbox and check each task that you have written down. Make sure you know what **KIND** of task it is – for example, homework or coursework.

Does it need to be broken down into more steps? (a larger assignment or project almost certainly will!)



If it is a task that can be done in two minutes or less – do it straightaway!

It may even be the case that you don’t need to do the task after all and it can be crossed off, or added to a “someday” list

3 ORGANISE

This is where you start to put your tasks onto **lists or categories** – for example, each subject you study may be a different list.

Also add **due dates** and **priorities**.



4 REFLECT

Check back to **review your progress** on the tasks you have set. You should try and do this on a **daily basis**



5 ENGAGE

Start work! You should base this on the **priorities** of the tasks you have set, the **time** you have available, the **energy** you have, and the **context**. Context means, for example, that if you are at college and in a computer room, do a coursework task.



THE POMODORO METHOD

ABOUT

POMODORO is a productivity method created by Italian developer Francesco Cirillo.

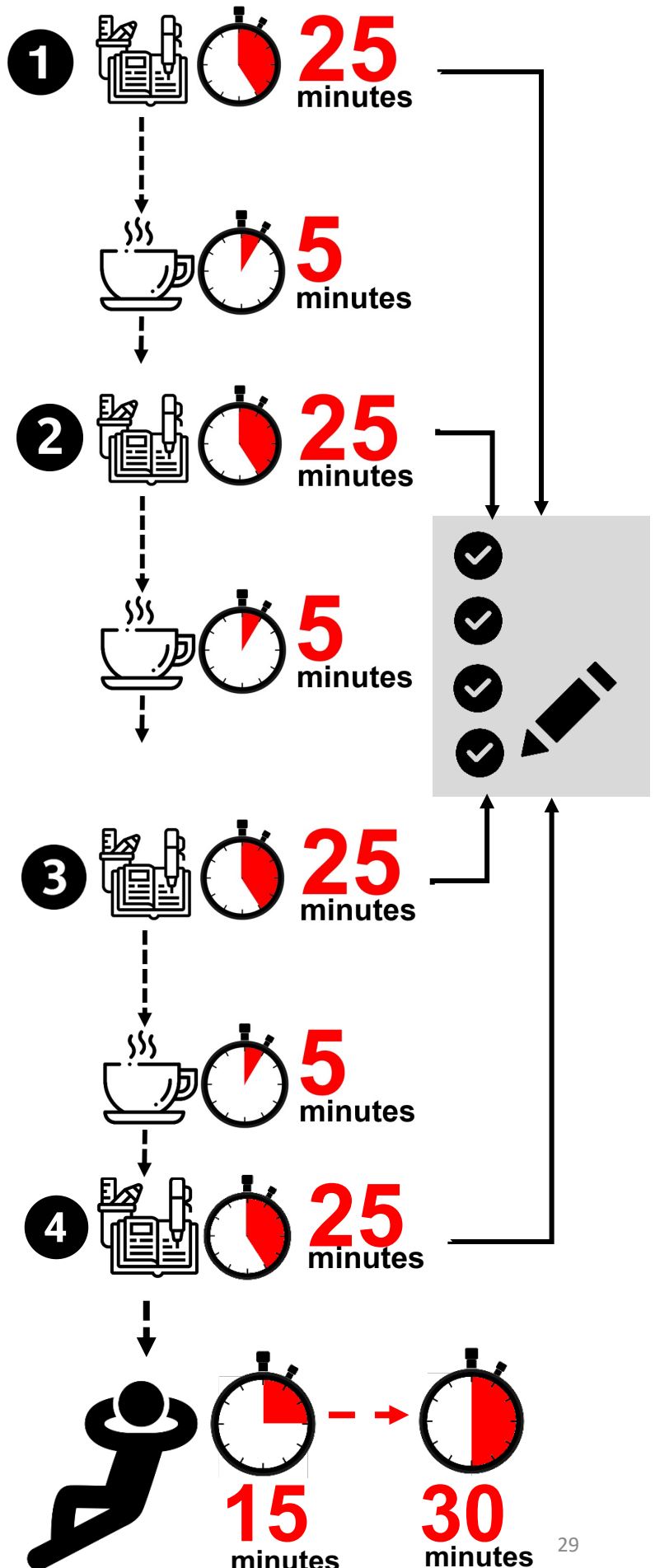
The name originates from the tomato-shaped timer that he used to track his time when he was completing assignments as a student.

“Pomodoro” is Italian for tomato

- ✓ A simple time management and productivity technique
- ✓ Involves breaking a large task down into smaller tasks (called “pomodoros”)
- ✓ Trains the brain to focus for short periods
- ✓ Over time it can build your attention span and ability to concentrate

HOW

- Choose the task that you wish to complete
- Set a timer and work on that task for 25 minutes
- When 25 minutes have elapsed, place a tick on a sheet of paper
- Take a 5 minute break
- Repeat this process 3 times, taking a longer break (15 – 30 minutes) after your fourth session



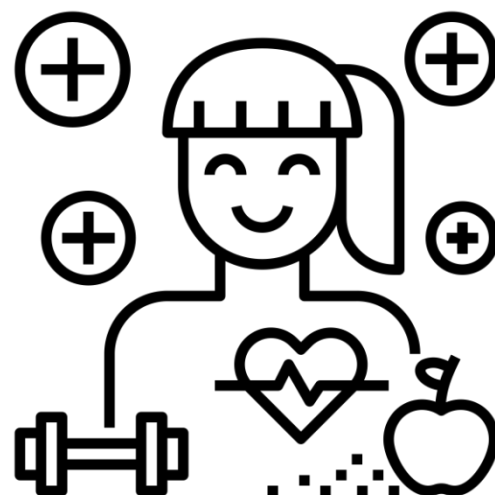
PLANNING, HYDRATION, SLEEP & EXERCISE

TAKE CARE OF YOURSELF

It is important to do well in tests and exams - but **nothing is more important than your health and wellbeing**

Taking care of yourself is especially important during test and exam periods when you maybe experiencing anxiety

You will not perform well unless you are looking after yourself – and there a few key areas to consider



Plan your revision carefully. Make sure that you know when your test/exam is and that you have allowed enough time to revise properly, avoiding the need to cram.

As we have seen, not only does cramming not work, but it is a stressful way of revising. Not only should you plan time for revision, but also for relaxation and socialising! This is really important!

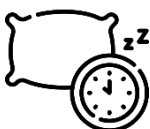


Research tells us that **staying hydrated** is important in terms of staying generally healthy.

Some of these benefits are particularly relevant to exam preparation – for example, improvements to memory and reducing stress and anxiety. Regularly drinking water can improve your attention span by up to **20%**



**1 LITRE
PER DAY**



It is quite normal to be nervous about exams and tests – but burning the midnight oil to revise is not a good idea. Going without **sleep** can have a negative effect on concentration, mood and memory.



**8 – 9
HOURS PER
NIGHT**



If you usually do **exercise** as part of your normal routine – for example, going to the gym, swimming, playing sport, jogging – you should continue to do so.

If you don't usually exercise, try to build this into your routine. Teenagers should aim to do at least 60 minutes per day across a week. Even walking to and from college can help.



**60
MINUTES
PER DAY**

DIET, MINDFULNESS & DIGITAL WELLBEING



A **balanced diet** is always important, but this is especially so when you are studying. Don't skip meals (especially breakfast!) and avoid the temptation to survive on caffeine.

Fish contains Omega 3 which is excellent brain food – tuna and salmon are especially good. Eggs, pumpkins seeds and dark chocolate (whoop!) are just some of the foods that have proven benefits on memory, focus and concentration.



**5
PORTIONS
OF FRUIT
& VEG
PER DAY**



Mindfulness techniques are used by more and more people to help manage the stress and anxieties caused by everyday life. These techniques include guided meditation and even simple breathing exercises, which can help you stay calm and manage stress.

Mindfulness exercises can last from literally a few seconds to a few minutes and the benefits can be felt straight away.



**10
MINDFUL
MINUTES
PER DAY**

DIGITAL WELLBEING

The technical nature of many subjects subjects means that you will inevitably spend a lot of your working time in front of a screen.

While this is an inevitable and important part of your studies, there are obvious disadvantages and possible problems as well.

Below are some of the main dangers – as well as some tools that might help to combat them

TECH TOOLS FOR SELFCARE



<https://bit.ly/3kbVU6l>

Scan this code (or type in the URL) to get a list of links to apps, chrome extensions and software that are designed to **help you with your wellbeing and productivity.**

They cover iOS, Android, Windows, MacOS and Chrome. All are totally (or partly) free.

DIGITAL DOWNSIDES



Digital tools and devices can be a distraction – websites and games can be provide tempting distractions which can hugely **impact your productivity and focus**



Laptop, tablet and phone screens can have a **detrimental impact on sleep patterns** if used at night



FOMO – Fear Of Missing Out – is an anxiety driven by use of social media, and the fear that you might be missing out on more interesting or fun times that your friends are posting about while you are busy studying!