

Study Guidelines



The first step in studying is to set your targets, this means deciding exactly what you will study and for how long. However, there is little point in studying unless you have a desire to learn, and to do your best work a definite effort is required. Like any other challenging and interesting work, study should be a source of satisfaction and even enjoyment - but it is work. It needs to be properly organised if as much as possible is to be achieved in the time available.

1. **Where to Study?** A comfortable room, equipped with suitable table and chair, with a good light and comfortable heating. There should be no distractions, like radio, etc.
2. **When to Study?** The best time to study is when you are not tired. Trying to study immediately after school is not the best, take a break after the day's work. Any work done after 10pm is unlikely to be of much benefit, this is too late and increasing tiredness stops any useful learning. The time slot between 5pm and 10pm is where study has to be done.
3. **How long should I study?** This is often the only question people ask about study, if you can do three hours' good quality work per night you should be happy. The entire study period must be broken down into many short sessions, none longer than 30 minutes. During one of these sessions, one subject only is dealt with. Longer periods are wasteful as much time is lost in day-dreaming, resulting from boredom or tiredness. It is best to change from subject to subject frequently.
4. **How should I study?** If you are serious about studying, then setting up a time-table is the first step. This is a study plan in which a specific time is allocated to a particular subject. Since most of your study time is spent at home, there will be no teachers to check that you are studying. There will be many distractions to your studies and in order to overcome these it is necessary to prepare a **time-table** and follow it in a disciplined way.

Mon							
Tue							
Wed							
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Sat							
Sun							

There are many advantages to a time-table.

- You know what you should be doing at any time - no time lost wondering what to do.
- Better concentration if you take a subject for a set period of time.
- Better organisation - more quality work done.
- Unpopular subjects are not neglected.
- Provision for recreation - very important.

Having drawn up the time-table you are now at the final stage - sitting down to study, once again you must have a method of work. Just sitting "reading over" the text will get you nowhere. This is the Passive Method and as you may have spent many years using it, there is little need to convince you that it does not work. You need the **Active Method**.

Active Study

This has a number of very simple steps:-

1. **Survey:** Focus on what you do not yet know - Avoid restudying all the material.
2. **Question:** It is far easier to study a piece of material, if you are looking for the answer to a question. Find relevant questions in past exam papers or at the end of the chapter.
3. **Read:** Target what you need to find your answer. While reading try to understand the material rather than simply memorising it. Making a Mind Map is probably the single best improvement in a study method; it helps in concentration and gives you the basis for the next step.
4. **Revise:** Work that is not revised is 80% lost in 24 hours! To revise you **re-look at the Mind Map**, asking yourself all the time if you still understand the material.
5. **Recall:** This is the goal for all who work for exams. Frequent revision and an emphasis on **understanding rather than remembering** during your study will produce much easier recall.