

Improving Study Skills

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Things You Should Not do

- Do not study in bed or while watching television
- Do not study with a study group whose members have poor study skills
- Do not socialize too much during study group time
- Do not habitually stay up all night cramming or finishing assignments
- Do not drink excessive caffeine before testing or oral presentations in class
- Do not miss class and study from someone else's notes which are geared for their memory recall and not yours
- Do not neglect self-care (lack of sleep, eating a balanced diet, exercising regularly)
- Do not rush through tasks or tests
- Do not forget to ask for help from professors or tutors
- Do not use negative self-talk before testing or class presentations ("I am going to fail")
- Do not procrastinate

Things You Should do

- Create a quiet work area free of distractions and clutter (not the bed)
- Carry pocket size study material on index cards to effectively use downtime
- Study in as many ways as you can for effective recall (read, write a summary, join a study group, make index cards that a partner can quiz you aloud, go to learning resource center)
- Make a structured daily study schedule free of distractions (rule of thumb is two hours study for each hour in class)
- Write a timeline from syllabus when things are due and write in your own due dates on day planner for rough drafts, final drafts, study schedule
- Look at your Day Planner daily
- Structure your time and use short breaks to reward yourself
- Schedule 15 minutes Sunday to write a weekly agenda and adjust last week's unfinished business

TIME MANAGEMENT QUESTIONNAIRE

Answer "YES" or "NO" to the following questions.

1. Have you estimated how many hours you need to study this semester? **Y or N**
2. Do you tend to complete your assignments on time? **Y or N**
3. Have you estimated how long it takes to read one chapter in each of your textbooks? **Y or N**
4. Do you begin working on long-term assignments at the beginning of the semester? **Y or N**
5. Do you make lists of things to do in your head rather than on paper? **Y or N**
6. Do you participate in social activities even when you know you should be studying? **Y or N**
7. Do you schedule time to study for exams? **Y or N**
8. Do you have a job that requires more than 20 hours a week? **Y or N**
9. Do you know exactly what tasks you are going to do when you sit down to study? **Y or N**
10. Do you do the assignments from your favorite class first? **Y or N**

Give yourself one point for each YES answer to all questions except 5, 6, 9 and 10, and one point for each NO answer to questions 5, 6, 9 and 10. Total your points. A low score indicates a need for help with time management and a high score indicates use of effective time management techniques.

*Adapted From Orientation to College Learning, by Dianna L. Van Blerkhom.