Top 20 Study Tips for Students

Planning and Organizing

1. **Determine How You Study Best:** What time of day, for what length of time, and where do you find yourself most productive? Establish habits surrounding when and where you study best (McGraw Center for Teaching and Learning, Princeton University, 2018).

2. **Plan and Organize:** Make a daily schedule, and keep a monthly planner to plan sufficient study time before tests (McGraw Center for Teaching and Learning, Princeton University, 2018).

3. **Be Specific When Planning:** Don’t plan to “Study on Wednesday”; instead, plan to “Study Biology, Chapter 2, after school on Wednesday” in order to stay accountable and on task (McGraw Center for Teaching and Learning, Princeton University, 2018).

4. **Attend Class:** Showing up for class will benefit your learning even if the textbook has similar information. Copying class notes from a classmate is not the same as being there yourself (Putnam, Sungkhasette, & Roediger, 2016).

5. **Take Notes:** Take organized notes in ways that you understand to help you study later (Southern Methodist University, 2010).

6. **Review After Class:** Reviewing for a few minutes each night will set you ahead when it comes time to study. Try spending even 10 minutes rereading your notes, and flagging anything that you did not fully understand while the information is still fresh in your mind (Putnam, Sungkhasette, & Roediger, 2016).

7. **Have Go-To Study Spots:** Find 2-3 places that fit the study environment in which you work best in. If your study space is no longer working for you, it is time to switch up your study spot (Putnam, Sungkhasette, & Roediger, 2016).

8. **Use School Resources:** Meet with teachers, reach out to other students who you know understand the information, and take advantage of any free tutoring services at school or in the community (Southern Methodist University, 2010).

9. **Plan for 8-10 Hours of Studying:** This is the general time needed to achieve an A or B on a test. Also, use your judgment when planning the amount of study time based on your perceived difficulty of the test material (The Learning Strategies Center, Cornell University, 2018).

10. **Complete Readings Before Class:** Taking the time to fully engage with assigned readings will help you get more out of class content, and will not leave you feeling a step behind when it is time to start studying (Putnam, Sungkhasette, & Roediger, 2016).

11. **Start Early:** More than any other study tip, performing well on a test can be achieved by starting early (at least 5 days prior), and by using short yet frequent study sessions (The Learning Strategies Center, Cornell University, 2018).
Active Studying

12. **Reading is NOT Studying:** Think of reading, whether it is the textbook itself or your class notes, as simply reviewing or pre-studying (University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, 2018).

13. **Divide Up Material:** Prepare a new chunk of material to focus on each day leading up to a test. Study one chunk at a time, then review the others – this makes studying more manageable and lessens frustration (The Learning Strategies Center, Cornell University, 2018).

14. **Engage:** Effective studying requires actively engaging with the material. Try strategies such as becoming the teacher, creating a concept map, or creating your own test questions – then swap your mock questions with a classmate (University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, 2018).

15. **Write and Recite:** Writing and reciting are active learning strategies. Find a space where you can recite information aloud or a dry erase board in an empty classroom to write out your thoughts (The Learning Strategies Center, Cornell University, 2018).

16. **Test Yourself:** There is no better way to find out know what information you need to study more or study in a different way (Putnam, Sungkhasetee, & Roediger, 2016).

17. **Limit Technology:** Unplug and turn off distracting technology by silencing your cell phone, and close any open browsers to avoid unwanted notifications. Plan time for internet/social media breaks (McGraw Center for Teaching and Learning, Princeton University, 2018).

18. **Take Breaks:** Spend 5-10 minutes away from the material towards the end of your study session, and then go back for a final recap to summarize the information (Louisiana State University, 2018).

19. **Reflect:** When you lose focus or ambition, reflect on your long-term goals. Remember why you are here, and where you are headed (Southern Methodist University, 2010).

20. **Use the Study Cycle:**
   - **Preview:** View material and read
   - **Attend:** Go to class and take notes
   - **Review:** Reread notes and review key concepts
   - **Study:** Devote focused study time for each class
   - **Check:** Do you know the material? Could you teach it to someone else? Was your studying effective enough to meet test expectations? (Center for Academic Success, Louisiana State University, 2018)