

Study Tips for Students at Post Primary Level

This leaflet provides advice and simple strategies for Post-Primary students in relation to study. It may be useful for teachers to incorporate into their lessons or for teachers or parents to share directly with students.

It covers the following questions:

- (1) What is studying?
- (2) How to start studying?
- (3) Where to study?
- (4) When to study?
- (5) How to study?



(1) What is studying?

- Studying is a useful habit. It takes practice to find out what work best for you. Like all habits it gets easier the longer you do it!
- Think positive every day. You can do this! Study a little every day, and build on this. When the exams get closer, you will feel less stressed because you will have a strong foundation.
- Studying helps learning become easier. Learning is not something that just happens; it is going to take effort from you.
- Take a moment to think about your study habits. What works for you and what does not work for you? Think about and write down some changes you could make and some other ways of studying.

(2) How to start studying?

- There are many different ways to study. It is important to use a number of habits or ways of studying.
- Planning how you best learn new information or skills is an important place to start.

- You might begin by making connections to what you already know. Then, identifying what you do not know and mapping out what you need to do.



- Talk to your teachers. They can give you a good idea about what you could do and what you need to know.
- Studying is not just reading. Study needs to be active, to study you have to do something with the information to really understand and remember it.
- It is important to identify your own preferred learning style. This may be different for different subjects. Be sure to use your senses to learn in many ways. For example, if you are a visual learner, you might use your “imagination” to create an image or picture of a paragraph you have struggled to understand. Some students learn best by hearing information, others prefer to read it while still others – many others – have to do something (write, draw, build, create) in order to learn.

**“I hear and I forget.
I see and I remember.
I do and I understand.”**

(3) Where to study?

- Study in a quiet place that is free of distraction
- Study wherever you feel works best for you.
- Good lighting can improve attention span.
- Make sure you have all you will need with you. Keep a box with spare things like pens and pencils, paper, a ruler, scissors, index cards, highlighter pens, calculator and a mathematical set.
- Put aside distractions like mobile phones, music or the TV. Every interruption, however brief, may take several minutes before concentration has recovered.



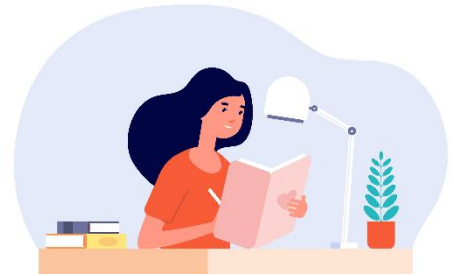
(3) When to study?

- Some students find the morning is the best time to study. Think about when is your best time for you to study.
- Remember it is difficult to concentrate and learn when you are hungry or tired.
- It is a good idea to study for periods of 40 - 50 min with short 10-minute breaks, like a school timetable. Take regular breaks with movement.
- Keep a calendar of what you study. Mark in the dates of tests and exams. Mark each day that you study and for how long.
- Make a study plan before an exam. Make a timetable or schedule of when you will study and what you will study. This will help you to give equal time to all subjects, especially the subjects you do not like.

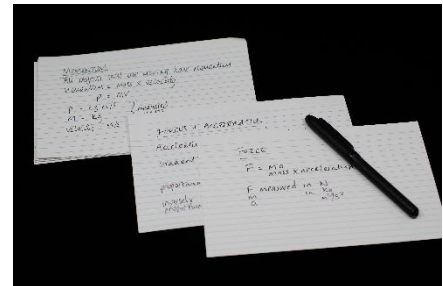


(4) How to study?

Sometimes when someone says, “I can’t study”, they really mean, “I have never done it before and I don’t know what to do.” Here are some suggestions for where to start and options for different methods of studying.

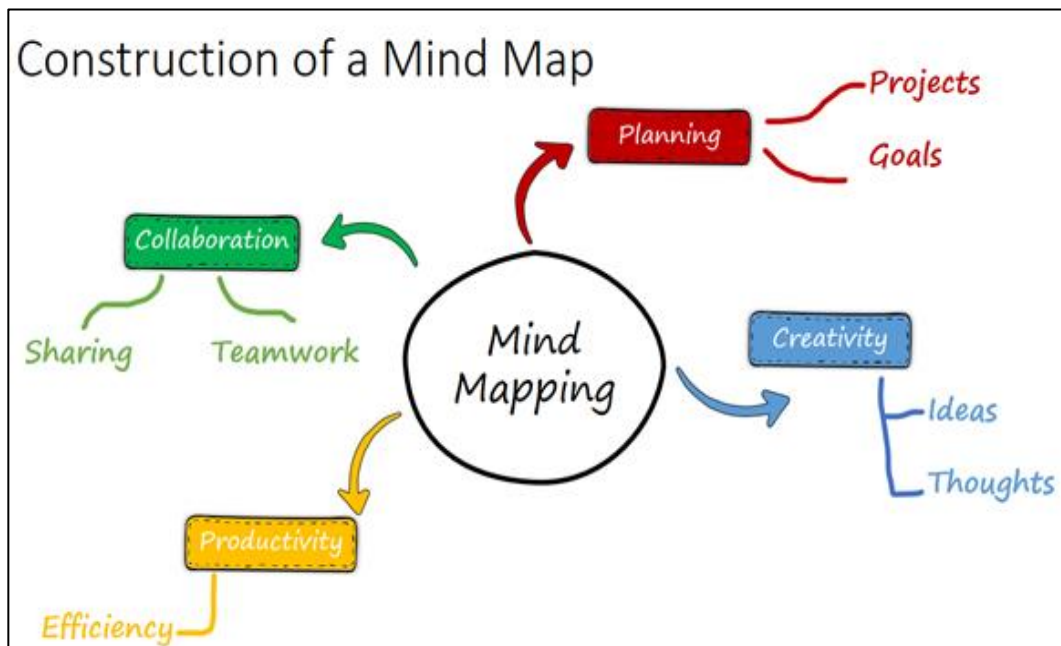


- Start with a subject that you like.
- Take turns with your subjects. Do an easy one, then a hard one, then an easy one. Do a language subject, then a mathematical or science subject.
- A really useful way to study is to re-write your notes, drawings, mind maps and study cards in your own words. Reflect on what you are learning. Then check to see how well you remembered the content.



- If there are facts, names, dates or words that you must know for a subject, try making study cards. Write each new thing onto a small card. For example, put a new word on one side of the card and what it means on the other side of the card. Likewise, put a date on one side of the card and what it refers to on the other side. Drawings may help too. Keep the cards in a box. As a part of revision, have someone at home take a few cards to check your memory.
- Keep all your notes tidy and in order with page numbers, dates, titles, and references. Colour coding could help this.
- Stop often and think about what you are studying, try link it to things you know already or real life situations.
- You are more likely to understand and remember if you go over things repeatedly on different days.
- Try to regularly, recall what you have learned.
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- Talk to yourself more. A good way to remember something is to say it repeatedly to yourself. This may work better when you say it aloud.
- It is very difficult to remember something that you do not understand. If you do not understand what you are trying to learn, you need to seek help from someone. Your teacher is there to support you.
- Many students find that the making of a mind map is an easy way of studying. Mind Maps can help you to see the 'big picture' and how the parts work together. New ideas can be added easily without rewriting.



- If you wonder if you have studied something enough, try teaching it to someone else. If they understand what you are saying, then you know it well enough. Speak to a mirror if you do not have someone to talk to.
- Some pupils study better with a friend. If this suits you, you can share the work, and learn from each other and support each other, subject to health advice.
- When finished a spell of study, make a note of what you need to study next. This will save you time and help you to focus when you return to your study.

- In the end, it comes down to what works best for you.
- Remember also that exercise, healthy eating and drinking water can not only help you concentrate and remember information better, it can also help you sleep more soundly and cope with the pressures of deadlines and exams.



- Finally, be proud of your achievements!