

ACTIVE STUDYING

based on: http://www.learningcommons.uoguelph.ca/guides/university_learning/accessibility/studying.html

Active studying means you have to be engaged with the content. Most students make the mistake of relying on passive review which involves reading and re-reading their notes and assignments. They assume the more times they read the content the more they will remember it. Make the extra effort to get it into your head!

Here are some suggestions for actively getting involved with your study notes, problems and exam material.

Plan Your Time

- When is the best time to study?

Everyone is different - choose a time you are most awake.

Students find the most effective time for studying to occur between when they wake up and when they eat dinner. Yet some students work very well late into the night. Choose a time that is quiet and when your brain is ready to learn.

- Where should you study?

Most students work best in isolation.

Find two isolated study spots at a local library or at home. Seek out study spots that prevent procrastination or to avoid distractions. Studying in your room surrounded by your electronics while on your bed often just doesn't work.

- How long should you study?

Generally, no more than 30 min at a time without a break.

Your break needs to be only 5-10 minutes, but it's important that you take a brain break. Use the washroom, eat a snack or have a drink of water.

What is a study plan?

- Divide your workload into manageable chunks.

Divide your available time and what you have to study into manageable chunks. Study frequently in 30 min periods of time. Pay attention to how much time you are spending on specific study tasks and stay on track with your study plan. Focus your energy on studying, not playing catch up. If you are already behind, try to prioritize, concentrating on the topics worth the most on your exam/test.

Studying Top Ten Takeaways

1. Review your notes on a regular basis, combine your textbook notes and class notes, and identify what you need help with – well before the exam/test
2. When you study, don't just read your notes again and again. Instead, explain the material out loud, teach the material to a friend, do a practice quiz, and solve problems
3. To help you study, draw diagrams and concept maps to visually represent the content and show relationships
4. Review your material, explain it (without looking) in your own words and out loud (if possible) and then check to see if you are correct
5. If you can close your eyes and create an argument from scratch or stare at a blank sheet of paper and reproduce a solution without a mistake, then you have fully understood the concept
6. Teach the material to a classmate. When you have to teach and explain a concept to someone else, you are actively understanding and interacting with the content. Have your classmate ask you questions for further explanation
7. Construct a practice quiz for each chapter in your study guide. Say the answers out loud, not in your head. Put a mark beside challenging problems. Go back and redo those that you did not get correct
8. Textbooks have practice questions throughout or at the back of each chapter. Practice answering these.
9. Upon solving the problems, try to explain an answer for each problem out loud! If you just memorized solutions, you aren't prepared to handle new problems on a test. Put a mark beside those problems that gave you trouble. Review the solutions for these questions. Do this until you finish a round with no marked problems.
10. Get enough sleep especially before the test- 8 hr