

Tips for Studying

- Space study time out over several sessions to ensure long-term retention. Cramming leads to rapid forgetting.
- Review the learning objectives before you begin studying.
- Quickly review (survey) notes and texts so that you know the topics you need to study and how much time you need to spend studying.
- Establish what study technique would work best for the type of exam and information:
 - Make flash cards for factual information, vocabulary, details and formulas.
 - Decide which study strategies will work best for the material you are learning. (See “Which Strategy Should I Use?” on page 48).
 - Create concepts maps including hierarchies, diagrams, sequences and matrices when you need to understand the “Big Picture” (i.e., general concepts) and how one idea relates to another both within and between subjects.
 - Prepare for lab exams by reviewing what, when, why and how you completed the lab.
 - When studying formulas, learn what, when and how to use them; don’t just memorize.
- Test yourself frequently. Always separate what you know from what you have not yet mastered, and spend your study time accordingly.
- Form or join study groups.

Learning Principles

There are many ways to study information to ensure mastery. **Every strategy, however, should utilize all of the following principles:**

1. **Review, review, review.** Learning requires repetition. Regular review and practice leads to long-term retention. Cramming results in short-term recall, but information is easily forgotten.
2. **Ensure understanding.** True learning occurs when information is both understood and mastered. Don't just memorize information, make sure that you understand it.
3. **Make it meaningful.** Learning is easiest when new information is related to previously learned information. When learning new concepts, you should always ask yourself, "How can I relate this to what I already know?"
4. **Self-test.** Never assume that you know information just because you have studied it. Every good strategy allows you to test yourself to see if you really know the information.
5. **Study what you don't know.** Many students spend time reviewing information that they already understand. While it is important to review all concepts prior to exams, it is most important to spend the majority of your time studying information that you do not know. Good strategies allow you to distinguish between what you know and what you do not know, and to focus your attention on what needs to be learned.
6. **Maintain a positive attitude.** Believe in yourself and believe that you can achieve your goals. Positive thinking leads to more action and better results.

Which Strategy Should I Use?

Type of Material	Strategy	Page Number
Sequences or series of steps	First Letter Mnemonics	25
Sequences or series of steps	Method of Loci	26
Notes taken during lectures, from textbooks, or provided by the instructor	Margin Method	42
Notes taken during lectures, from textbooks, or provided by the instructor	Mind Mapping	43
Chapters, modules or sections of notes	PAS (Preview, Actively Read, Strategize)	50
Definitions, concepts, or facts	Flash Cards	52
Concepts that can be changed or transformed into a visual format	Diagrams	55
Concepts/information whose topic can be divided into subtopics so that relationships among the parts is clarified	Hierarchies	57
Concepts/information that can be organized into steps, stages, events, or phases	Sequences	59
Concepts/information that can be compared	Matrices	60
Diagrams, flow charts, and other visual information	Blank Diagram Method	63