

How to Study Better

Which Type of Learner Are You?

Auditory Learners

Auditory learners learn best through sound. Record lectures and replay them until you fully understand the concepts. Record yourself reading your notes, essay assignment sheets, and essay drafts on your smartphone, then listen back to evaluate your focus, organization, and development. Ask your instructors if they have lectures online. When you read, read aloud. Create or join a study group. Bouncing ideas off others will help you understand concepts.

Visual Learners

Visual learners learn best through sight. Make charts, graphs, and colorful drawings to match the material you are studying. Use bright colors to link ideas together. These methods could be useful in a test. When you cannot recall the information, you might remember the color or chart, and that will help you remember the information.

Kinesthetic Learners

Kinesthetic learners learn best through touch and by doing. Buy Post-It notes and write down ideas, concepts, and definitions. Slap the notes everywhere: in your study area, in your car, or around your house. Put them on the fridge, mirrors, doors, and other places you pass by often. Every time you pass a note, recite the information in your head or out loud. Once you have a concept down, take the note down and put it in a box. Keep reviewing and taking down notes until your walls are empty. Frequently review the notes in the box. A study group is also a good idea for kinesthetic learners.

Create or Choose a Comfortable place to study

- Studying is not a natural activity for most people, but you can make studying easier and more efficient in the right place. Try to use the same area once you have either found one here on campus or created your space at home.
- Make sure the place is comfortable but not too comfortable. For example, it is a bad idea to study in or on your bed. The place should not put you to sleep. Make sure it is well lit.
- Have supplies on hand: laptop, pens, pencils, highlighters, textbooks, scratch paper, online dictionary/thesaurus app on your smartphone, etc.
- Make sure it is free from distractions: no TV, texting, or games. Play music that helps you focus. COFFEE. COFFEE. COFFEE. TEA. TEA. TEA.
- You might choose to study on campus if studying at home is difficult. Places to study on campus include the Writing Center, Math Center, library, HUB quiet lounge, computer labs, and Tutoring Center. Find the spot that works best for you.

Use Reading Strategies

Use the SQ3R method, especially for reading-intensive classes.

1. Survey: Glance at the entire chapter to get an overview of what you will be learning. Scan the title and subtitles, section headings and subheadings, and any boxes of information in the margins.
2. Question: Write questions aimed at what you believe the reading is about. This keeps you alert as you read.
3. Read: Annotate while reading. (See below.)
4. Recite: Read aloud. This will involve two of your senses, giving you better memory retention.
5. Review: Review your notes daily, moving them from short-term to long-term memory.

Annotate Your Text

Annotating is an extremely useful tool for understanding and remembering what you read. Keep different colored pens, pencils, and highlighters handy while reading. Mark text that stands out, raises questions, and causes reactions. Mark observations and connections you find. Mark words you do not know, look them up, and write the definitions in the margins. Use different colors for different categories, ideas you agree/disagree with, positive/negative reactions, etc.

Get Involved – Create a study group

A study group is a great idea to help stay motivated and on top of things. Learning from your peers is helpful because you will hear others' ideas as well as share your own. Remember to make sure everyone has a chance to share—*don't let one person dominate the conversation*.

DON'T STOP – If you get stuck, try something else

- Organize stuff. Clean up your study area and straighten papers. When finished, write down what you remember about the subject and check your class notes to see how it compares.
- Use a notepad or your computer to write out the name of the project, the expectations, and two or three different ways you could start.
- Google it or ask friends or family. Find out other people's opinions on the topic you are working on. Hit up the library; it has an extensive online database.
- Write down your thoughts in a handy journal if you find yourself drifting or daydreaming, and then go back to studying. Check the journal at the end of the quarter—it may be fun to read!

This handout was created by the Writing Centers at YVC.

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