

How to (and not to) study

The following information is based on research in psychology about how people learn material in college. Thus, these are not just suggestions based on intuition, but suggestions based on science. This information comes from this source:

Gurung, R. A. R., & McCann, L. I. (2011). How should student study? Tips, advice, and pitfalls.

Association of Psychological Science Observer, 24, 4, 33-35.

Winning study strategies

- 1) Schedule daily studying and homework time.
- 2) Make lists of things to accomplish during studying.
- 3) Put off pleasurable events until work is completed.
- 4) Read the textbook
- 5) Review the class textbook/assignments before going to class.
- 6) Create mnemonics and vivid mental images to aid learning.
- 7) Memorize the material through repetition.
- 8) Generate examples to apply the material.
- 9) Record information relating to study tasks (e.g. , keeping a study log)
- 10) Self-verbalize the steps to complete a given task.
- 11) Use chapter review questions to self test.
- 12) Use a study partner.
- 13) Review the items missed on the exam, including items guessed at.
- 14) Make an outline before writing a paper.
- 15) Check work before handing in an assignment.

What NOT to do when studying

- 1) Spending too much time on key terms or summaries to the extent of paying less attention to other pedagogical aids (e.g., review questions).
- 2) Highlighting too much text (i.e., not knowing what the important information really is), thus increasing study load.
- 3) Using chapter review questions (and their answers) as more content to study versus using them to test their own knowledge.
- 4) "Studying with a friend" where this *does not* involve testing each other, taking review questions, creating examples, or reviewing notes.
- 5) Listening to music, watching television, text messaging, or surfing the internet while studying.