

# Establishing Good Study Habits and Skills in College



Attending college is a great investment in your future. As you begin your college career or even as you start a new semester, it is important to consider how you will achieve your academic goals. This will require a dedication to establishing good study habits and developing your study skills. Creating regular study habits from the first day of class is an important factor in your success.

## Study Smarter Not Harder

Becoming a successful college student isn't necessarily about studying harder, it's learning how to study smarter. Keep in mind that there is no substitute for attending class. One of the keys to learning something well is repetition; repetition through lecture, reading, discussion and review. Here are some tips on how to create good study habits and skills to build your pathway to academic success.

### Be Organized

- Track due dates, test dates and deadlines in a notebook or computer calendar
- Set goals for completing certain tasks
- Enter frequent reminders on your calendar prior to a deadline
- Schedule daily study times and stick to the schedule
- Keep all notes and articles in one notebook, binder or computer directory
- Two app options to help you stay on track are: *Class Timetable* and *My Class Schedule*

### How to Improve Note Taking

One of the most effective ways to remember (and understand) what you are learning in class is to take effective notes in the classroom. Try these five methods to find the best note taking method for you:

- **The Mapping Method** The page is organized by topic. The main topics branch out into subtopics with detailed information about each.
- **The Outlining Method** Each section starts with a heading of the main topic. Each subtopic and supporting fact is written underneath the proper heading.

- **The Cornell Method** The paper is divided into 3 sections: a main, six inch section for in-class notes, a two and half inch margin to the left to write cues when reviewing your notes and a two inch summary section on the bottom.
- **The Charting Method** The page is divided into columns labeled by category. The details of each category are filled out in the rows below.
- **The Sentence Method** Each line on the page is a new and separate topic. To organize your notes even more, you can use headings for each main topic.

For a full explanation of each of these methods check out [www.oxfordlearning.com/5-effective-note-taking-methods/](http://www.oxfordlearning.com/5-effective-note-taking-methods/).

### Increase Your Retention of Information

- Type your class notes into your computer within 24 hours
- Use a highlighter to note key points in an article or textbook
- Write notes in colored ink to improve retention by 50-80 percent

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# Establishing Good Study Habits and Skills in College *(continued)*

- Scan a chapter for headings and subheadings prior to actively reading the chapter
- Read a chapter and go back and underline key points (reading out loud improves retention)
- Create study cards to review during moments of downtime

## Form a Study Group

Small study groups will generate more options while brainstorming. Small groups can better evaluate ideas and the decisions made within the group will enhance harmony, interpersonal skills and effective communication.

### Tips to Forming a Study Group

- Form a group with people that motivate and inspire you
- Look for classmates that are alert and focused in class
- Limit the group to three to five people
- Establish a set meeting time and place
- Assign each member to summarize a key concept covered during class lectures
- During the last 10 minutes of a study session, briefly review the concepts and identify topics to be reviewed during the next session

Remember that different individuals have different learning styles and you may find that what works for some individuals may not work for you. Try a variety, if not all, of these tips to determine what will work for you. Keep a positive attitude and remember the key to learning is repetition.



Sources:

[www.oxfordlearning.com/5-effective-note-taking-methods/](http://www.oxfordlearning.com/5-effective-note-taking-methods/)  
[centuracollege.edu/blog/10-effective-study-habits-for-college-students](http://centuracollege.edu/blog/10-effective-study-habits-for-college-students)  
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