

Understanding Your Learning Style

Everyone has a preferred learning style and understanding yours can help you tailor your study methods to suit your preference and better optimize your learning.



Learning Style	Description	Best Study Methods
Visual	Understand and retain information best when they can see it. They benefit from diagrams, charts, pictures, films, and written or drawn information.	Use diagrams, flowcharts, color-coded notes, flashcards with visuals, and educational videos.
Auditory	Earn best when information is heard or spoken. They benefit from lectures, group discussion, speaking things out loud, and listening to what others have to say.	Listen to lectures, record and playback notes, participate in group discussions, and use mnemonic devices with sounds.
Reading /Writing	Understand information best when it is presented in a written language format. They enjoy reading and writing in all forms, including reading books, writing essays, and looking up words in the dictionary.	Write out notes, read textbooks and notes, use flashcards, and write summaries or paraphrases of complex topics.
Kinesthetic	Learn best when they can use a hands-on approach. They retain information best when they can move, touch, explore, and do. They enjoy experiments, simulations, videos, and activities that teach concepts through experience.	Use hands-on activities, perform experiments, take field trips, and use physical objects or models to study concepts.

Experiment With Different Methods

It's important to try out different study techniques to see what works best for you. You might find that a combination of methods works best for different subjects or topics.

Reflect On What Worked

After trying out different methods, take a moment to reflect on what worked and what didn't. This will help you refine your study methods and create a strategy that works best for you.

Creating Effective Study Flashcards

These are excellent tools for memorizing vocabulary, formulas, or any specific pieces of information. By writing down the information and repeatedly going through these cards, you can effectively commit facts to memory.

- **Choose the Right Information:** Start by selecting the information that needs to be memorized. This could be vocabulary words, historical dates, formulas, or any other specific pieces of information.
- **Write Question on One Side:** On one side of the flashcard, write a question or a prompt that refers to the information you need to memorize. Keep it short and clear.
- **Write Answer on the Other Side:** On the other side of the flashcard, write the answer to the question or prompt. This is the information you need to memorize.
- **Use Visuals if Necessary:** If it helps, use diagrams, colors or images to aid your memory. This can be especially helpful for visual learners.
- **Review Regularly:** Go through your flashcards regularly. Start with daily reviews, then as you get better, you can review the flashcards less frequently.
- **Shuffle the Cards:** To prevent memorizing the order of the flashcards instead of the information, make sure to shuffle the cards every time you review them.
- **Test Yourself:** Try to answer the questions on the flashcards without looking at the answers. This helps strengthen your recall ability.

The Feynman Study Technique

Named after the Nobel Prize-winning physicist Richard Feynman, this technique is perfect for understanding complex concepts. It involves explaining the topic in simple terms, as if you were teaching it to someone else. If you struggle, it highlights areas you need to revisit.

- **Choose a Concept:** Start by picking a topic or concept that you are struggling to understand. It could be anything from a mathematical formula to a historical event.
- **Teach it to a Child:** Pretend you're teaching the concept to a child or someone with no background knowledge of the topic. Use simple and straightforward language. If you find it difficult to do so, this indicates areas where your understanding is lacking.
- **Identify Gaps in Your Understanding:** Go back to your source material to relearn the areas that you struggled to explain in simple terms.
- **Review and Simplify:** Once you have filled the gaps in your understanding, explain the concept again. This time, try to simplify your explanation even further. If you can explain the concept in layman's terms, it is a good indication that you have a solid understanding of the topic.

The Pomodoro Technique

This time management method helps students study more effectively by breaking your study sessions into 25-minute chunks with 5-minute breaks in between. This can help maintain focus and avoid burnout.

- **Choose Your Task:** Decide on the task or topic you want to study. This could be a chapter in your textbook, a set of math problems, or a science concept.
- **Set a Timer:** Set a timer for 25 minutes. This will be your focused study time. Try to eliminate all distractions during this period.
- **Begin Studying:** Start your task and study with full focus until the timer goes off. If you get distracted by a thought or a task, write it down on a piece of paper and get back to studying.
- **Take a Short Break:** Once the timer goes off, take a 5-minute break. This is your time to relax, stretch, grab a snack, or do something non-study related.
- **Repeat the Process:** Repeat the process of studying for 25 minutes and taking 5-minute breaks. After completing four cycles of this, take a longer break of 15-30 minutes.
- **Adjust as Necessary:** Feel free to adjust the timings as necessary. Some students might find shorter or longer study periods more effective. The key is to take regular breaks to avoid burnout and keep your mind fresh.

Active Recall

This technique forces your brain to remember information without looking at the source. It involves actively trying to remember an answer, rather than passively reading information.

- **Choose Your Study Material:** Start by selecting what you need to study. This could be a chapter in your textbook, lecture notes, or study guide.
- **Read Through Your Material:** Read through your study material once to familiarize yourself with the information. Try to understand the concepts instead of memorizing them verbatim.
- **Close Your Material and Recall:** Close your study material and try to recall the main points from memory. You can do this verbally, write it down, or explain it to someone else.
- **Check Your Accuracy:** Open your study material and check the accuracy of what you recalled. Pay close attention to any information you missed or recalled incorrectly.
- **Repeat the Process:** Repeat the process until you can accurately recall the information. Over time, try to recall the information after longer periods of time to improve your long-term memory.

Studying for Big Exams Like the SAT & ACT



Start Early

The more time you have to prepare, the less stress you will feel. Starting early allows you to pace your studying, rather than cramming at the last minute.



Practice Tests

The best way to prepare for standardized tests is to take practice tests. These tests help you get accustomed to the format and time constraints of the actual exam, and can highlight areas you need to focus on.



Review Mistakes

Always go over your mistakes to understand where you went wrong. This will help you avoid repeating these mistakes in the future.



Rest Well

Make sure to get a good night's sleep before the exam day. Rest is crucial for your brain to function properly, and lack of sleep can negatively impact your performance.