



STUDENT REVISION GUIDE:

Tips to Achieve Your Exam Goals



Exam periods can be a stressful time. A good revision strategy is the best way to guarantee you achieve your potential, helping you to absorb and remember the information you've been taught and use the knowledge that you have successfully on the day.

We hope that reading through this guide will help give you some tips and ideas of what to do when you're revising as we take you through revision timetables, study space, revision techniques and the exam day! Helping you go on to achieve the grades you want.

Last but not least, good luck with your exams!





Revision timetable

Your revision timetable is essential in making sure you use your time wisely. It will help you cover all of the important topics, and help you decide which subjects need the most time. Even more importantly, a timetable will make sure that you get the balance between revision and rest.

Calendar - get a calendar to create your timetable in. There is a temptation to create an elaborate timetable from scratch but this is an easy way of wasting time. A calendar is all set up ready to be filled in right away.

Prioritise - find out your exam timetable and note down the dates, times and lengths of the exams you'll be sitting in the calendar. This makes it easier to prioritise what to revise and when.

Commitments - enter any regular commitments you have that need to work around your revision, such as social events or sports that you normally take part in. Then decide when you work best in the day and block out those times for study.



Allocation - work out which topics and areas you feel least confident in and allocate a bit more time to these. Don't be tempted to focus on those areas you are already strong in.

Time - calculate how much time you have for revision and split this time up between the subjects. Remember to give the most time to those subjects which need the most work, but also include time for your favourite subjects each day - this will stop any one day being a nightmare revision day!

Breaks - make sure that you schedule breaks - study little, study often and stay flexible too. Step away from your desk for a minute if you're struggling, and if you're on a roll, take the time to see it through without breaking your concentration or train of thought.



Study space

The right revision space is really important. Take a little time before you start revising to make sure that the place where you are going to study is set up in the way that best supports you.

Clutter and distractions - an untidy desk or room presents too many distractions and opportunities to do something other than study. Remove distractions like the TV, Phones, books, games so they don't present a temptation to do something else.

Be comfortable - have somewhere comfortable to sit so you can focus on your work. You are likely to be sat for long periods so find a seat and desk arrangement that doesn't strain your back. Move around the room too, sometimes walking around rather than staring at your notes can be helpful in organising your thoughts.

Light - Make sure that there is enough light in the room - if it's too dark you may be squinting at your books and notes which can be exhausting. Too bright and this can tire your eyes causing headaches. Natural light whenever possible is the best option.

Noise - it's also important to get the noise levels right. Some people will find that they need background noise to get any work done while others will benefit from perfect silence. Whatever your preference, you should try and find a place where the noise will be consistent and suited to your preferences.

Remember... there are more important things to be focusing on. Don't let your study space become a form of distraction in itself; you need to focus on studying and not organising all of your post-it notes for the fifth time!

Revision techniques

Everyone will have a style of revision that works best for them, but whatever strategy you use, it's important to actively revise. Simply reading through your notes or textbooks isn't a good use of time. Here are a few tried and tested approaches.

Past papers - just ploughing through past papers on their own is rarely a useful strategy. However, using them as a framework for study can work really well. Choose a question from a past paper and then revise the content you need to know in order to answer that question. When you're ready, do the question without your notes and mark your answer from the answer scheme. This will help you see where the gaps are and give you pointers for how to improve.

Teach someone else - you can't teach something until you know it well yourself. When you finish learning some content, find someone else to teach it to. This might be friends, your parents or other members of the family, but if you can't get them to understand it, then you probably don't know it well enough yourself.



Revision cards - these force you to distil what you need to know into bite-sized chunks. Technology provides various options, in addition to the traditional physical cards, but whatever you choose to use, it is the process of thinking how to condense the information and actually writing it down which is the important part of the process.

Spread your notes - have your revision notes everywhere! If there are quotes, or formulae for example that you need to remember, then have them on post-it notes around the house. This way you are able to do a sort of low grade revision at all times as you move around, even in the bathroom!

Don't be scared to ask for help - If you are really struggling with a particular topic ask your teacher for advice. This may save you hours of time. Your teacher should be able to share with you how they remember how to solve that particular equation or how they remember the meaning of a particular word etc. And speak to your friends as they may be stronger on some topics than you are, whilst you might be able to help them with other topics too.





Exam day

It's important to remove as much of the stress from the day as you can. You want to be focusing on your performance, rather than what you might have forgotten to take with you!

The night before - check what time your exam starts, and where you need to be. Have your bag packed and ready to go, think about what equipment you'll need for the exam and make sure it is all there. This makes the morning less of a rush and helps to calm you so that you can (hopefully) get a good night's sleep!

Get up early - you don't want to be in a mad rush the day of the exam so set your alarm early enough to give you time to get ready, have a good breakfast (this is key - you don't want to be sitting in the exam hall with your stomach grumbling).



Destress - exams are always a stressful experience, but try and find ways to destress. Whether it's focusing on your breathing, listening to your favourite music, or going for a walk, find a relaxation technique that works for you. Being calm as you approach the exam is vital in ensuring that you do your best on the day.

Don't panic - however hard you revise for a subject there is often that one question that crops up and throws you! The key is not to panic. If you've read it through a few times and it is really stumping you, leave it and move on to the next one.

Check, and check again - if you finish the exam early then always make sure that you check your answers... And then check them again. There's nothing more frustrating than seeing an easy fix to gain a few more marks on the day and making sure you go back over your answers is the only way to avoid this.



Final thoughts

Whatever happens, stay positive. Remember, there is no such thing as failure - if you don't pass this time then you have learned what not to do next time. If you have focused on your revision and you can honestly say you did the best you could, pat yourself on the back and tell yourself this is just one step towards success.

Best of luck, go and reach your goals!





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