

Don't Fall into the Common Traps of Studying!

1. *"I Don't Know Where to Begin"*

✓ **Take Control.**

- Make a list of all the things you have to do.
- Break your workload down into manageable chunks.

✓ **Prioritize!**

- Plan around your study time! (don't skip classes, begin studying early, etc.)

2. *"I have So Much to Study . . . And So Little Time"*

✓ **Preview.**

- Survey your syllabus, reading material, and notes.
- **Identify the most important topics emphasized**, and areas still not understood.

*** Previewing saves time, especially with non-fiction reading, by helping you organize and focus in on the main topics.

- Adapt this method to your own style and study material, but remember: previewing is not an effective substitute for reading.

3. *"This Stuff Is So boring, I Can't Even Stay Awake Reading It"*

✓ **Attack!**

- Get actively involved with the text as you read. Ask yourself, "What is important to remember about this section?"
- Take notes or underline key concepts.
- **Discuss the material with others in your class.**

✓ **Study together.**

- Focus and help each other stay on task, especially with material that you don't find interesting, rather than reading passively and missing important points.
- Get yourself excited about a certain point. Try and find something interesting about what you are learning.

4. "I Read It. I Understand It. But I Just Can't Get It to Sink In"

- ✓ **Elaborate.** We remember best the things that are most meaningful to us. As you are reading, try to elaborate upon new information with your own examples.
 - Try to integrate what you're studying with what you already know. (You will be able to remember new material better if you can link it to something that's already meaningful to you.) Some techniques include:
 - **Chunking:** An effective way to simplify and make information more meaningful.

*** For example, suppose you wanted to remember the colors in the visible spectrum (Red, Orange, Yellow, Green, Blue, Indigo, Violet); you would have to memorize seven "chunks" of information in order. But if you take the first letter of each color, you can spell the name "Roy G. Biv", and reduce the information the three "chunks".
 - **Mnemonics: Any memory-assisting technique that helps us to associate new information with something familiar.** Use study groups and make inside jokes to help you remember information.

*** For example, to remember a formula or equation, we may use letters of the alphabet to represent certain numbers. Then we can change an abstract formula into a more meaningful word or phrase, so we'll be able to remember it better.
 - Sound-alike associations can be very effective, too, especially while trying to learn a new language.
 - The key is to **create your own links** so you won't forget them.

5. "I Guess I Understand It"

- ✓ **Test yourself.**
 - Paraphrase the information, don't regurgitate it!

6. "There's Too Much To Remember"

- ✓ **Organize!** There are many techniques that can help you organize new information, such as:
 - Write chapter outlines or summaries; emphasize relationships between sections.
 - Group information into categories or hierarchies, where possible.
 - **Use note cards!**

7. "I Knew It A Minute Ago"

- ✓ **Review.**

- After reading a section , try to recall the information contained in it.
- Go the extra mile: do that extra practice problem. It will help you in the long run!

8. "But I Like To Study In Bed"

✓ **Context.**

- **Avoid an atmosphere that might lead to slacking.**
- Recall is better when study context (physical location, as well as mental, emotional, and physical state) are similar to the test context.

9. "Cramming Before A Test Helps Keep It Fresh In My Mind"

✓ **Spacing:** Do NOT rely on cramming.

- Start studying now and keep studying as you go along.
- Recall increases as study time gets spread out over time. You will perform better when you have *learned* the information.

10. "I'm Gonna Stay Up All Night 'til I Get This"

- ✓ Sleep deprivation lowers mental acuity and impairs judgment. And it's just bad for you!
- ✓ Take care of yourself. Eat well, sleep, and get enough exercise.