How to Revise Successfully

Revising for tests, exams, or any other form of assessment can be stressful or even anxiety producing. However, with a few changes to how you go about revising, you might just find yourself swapping anxiety for anticipation.

Steps

1. Find somewhere suitable to study. Any revision place needs to be comfortable (but not too cozy that you fall asleep), quiet, and free of distractions. Some people like to choose one place only, while others enjoy moving between the almost distraction-free environments of the home to the slightly more alive atmosphere of the library. Choose whatever works most for you and is not going to be height is comfortable for you and the computer is level with your eyes. Check if the lighting is adequate and the room temperature is not too hot or cold.

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**Draw a plan or timetable for your revision and stick to it.** Working to a revision timetable helps you to make clear goals of attainment for each revision session and reassures you that you have checked off what needs to be covered during revision. Revision plans has shown repeatedly to reduce revision anxiety to those who follow them because there is always something for you to turn to and a reassurance that you are doing everything in good time.

- It is recommended that you write the revision plan by hand. You can print out its background form but write by hand. The connection between the brain and the hand is a way of helping you to stay in control and to memorize what is required with more depth than simply typing and printing.

- Set reasonable targets that you know you can reach. You could revise throughout the year by spending 15 minutes each day making notes. By doing it in short stretches, you will remember more and feel less stressed. A month before your exam, you will have finished all your notes so you can spend a few hours a day reviewing notes and doing timed writing practice. Make sure to check them off as you accomplish them. It may even be a good idea to reward yourself with a treat on the completion of a target to help you get there. It is a good motivation to not consider giving up as an option.

- Include times for meals, breaks and anything unrelated to studies. Do not forget to sleep!

- Leave spare time in case something happens, such as a short illness or a family emergency. If you do not need this time, turn it into re-revising time. (See below.)

- Know or estimate how much time you need for revising each topic—that way, you can allot plenty of time in the timetable.
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**if you are attending some tutorial classes then also revise the lessons.**

- Leave space for a final re-revision prior to the test or exam. This is not about going over each topic in detail—it is simply added time for one last going over the material and reassuring yourself that it has all ordered in your mind.

- Social arrangements are an important escape from revision but make sure they do not take up too much of your time.
**Revise actively.** Rather than simply reading, break out the other possible ways for getting information to stick in your mind. It is hard to stay focused on the same topic using the same learning method all the time. By turning your revision into active revision, you can liven it up a bit and help your memory work more effectively. Active revision includes:

- Mind mapping. This is a fun and concise and effective way of making revision notes.
- Read the information you need to learn. Do not stop there. Actively think about what you have just read. Ask yourself questions and think about the consequences should certain elements of it be changed or should certain features occur differently. Whether it is science or history, small changes can make big differences and your thinking process is the important part.

- Draw freely. Many people find breaking down information into drawings helpful to better understand what they are dealing with. Diagrams, mind maps, and freehand drawings, can be useful ways of improving both your understanding and creating a much easier memory aid than simply relying on words. Do not be afraid to use colors in much the same way—color your drawing or highlight the text.
- Find someone who knows nothing about the topic and explain to them. Even if it is explaining to the mirror or your cat, just take the time out to talk to someone as if the person is learning about it for the first time, and you are the teacher. It is hard to forget information once you have done this.
- Do a switch on the last method and pretend you are on TV or the radio being interviewed about the topic. Ask yourself a series of questions and reply as succinctly and clearly as you can, pretending people are listening and wanting to learn all about it.
- Role-play being your lecturer or the teacher.
* Write down your notes from memory and then return to your original notes and fill in the gaps with a red pen, this will help you to identify what you do not know.

* Summarize what you've learned. How many ways can you boil down the answer? What is the smallest response on the topic you can give that still makes sense and says all that needs to be said? Carry summaries with you as memory jolts to revise anywhere you are—on the bus, walking through the park or laminate cards and revise in the shower!

* It is recommended that you write or create your own revision notes. If all you do is copy them or borrow someone else's, you will only learn what they have grasped and it may be incomplete. Even if it is complete, it will not stick in your mind the way that your own notes will; as a bonus, you will learn as you write and, once you have them, you are halfway there.
5. Find support. Do not presume that you are alone in the revision effort. Your family supports you even where they cannot understand what you are learning. Ask them to test you, clarify problems for you, read to you, and help you to stay organized. Parents and siblings who have already experienced revision will have some good ideas to help you prepare. Moreover, family and friends can be good moral support when you are feeling down or anxious about the revision; if you ask nicely, you may avoid the usual chores.

- Seek the nurturers in your family and friends. You need emotional support as much as other support and if you can trust in someone to talk to about your anxiety or worries, this can help you to offload many unneeded troubles to a caring listener. Even having someone, you can trust like this available online or by phone is better than no one.

- Revise with peers or friends. One caveat—this is presented as one option of all your options—do not make it the only one or you will risk doing lots of chatting and not a lot of revising. Moreover, do not assume that you need to revise with the usual friends; you may actually be better off revising with peers who are more suitable because they share the love of the subject or have proven to know the work well. Once you have put together a suitable group, meeting regularly in between your other revision activities is a great way to reduce anxiety levels and support one another, as well as find ways to test each other and raise any issues related to revision. And you can cyber-meet via chat rooms if you haven’t time to catch up in person.

- See your teachers and professors as part of your support network. Ask for their assistance when it becomes clear you need it; knowing earlier rather than later in your revision will make it easier to approach them and get their help.
• Be good to people who help you with your revision. Tell them how much you appreciate them while you are revising; afterward, take them out for a treat or give them a small token of appreciation to express your gratitude.

Take breaks to give your concentration a boost. If you take breaks regularly, your concentration will be better and you will find yourself retaining more information than if you try to plow on through all the time. As mentioned above, plan the breaks into your revision timetable.
7. Test using old exam or test papers. Answering past exam or test papers in the same time limit, as the real exam or test will be gives you an opportunity to test yourself under the same constraints. It will be a chance to see whether there are gaps in your knowledge that you need to go back over and it'll also be useful to see if you can get down all that you want to say in the time allotted. Do the practices under timed conditions by using a timer, which could be on your phone or on the computer.
8. 8

**Spend a lot of time working on recall.** Even though you have read it, seen it, and heard it, most of it escapes you. This is because of how we function as human beings—we only retain that which we put in the time to go over again—and then again. When reading, stop every few minutes to recap and recall what you have just read. A good way of recalling is writing your notes down from memory and then filling in the gaps with a red pen. Use the active revising methods outlined above to help you recall better. You can also take notes while you read. For example, write down important things like setting, times and dates, places etc.
Stay relaxed. Spend time doing something relaxing each day, such as listening to your favorite music, going for a walk or swim, spending time with your pets or talking with a good friend. These activities will help you to feel relaxed and connected to others and the world as you keep working through the revision. You can also practice relaxation exercises, meditation, or simply just lying back and chilling out now and then.

- Stress good or bad? Stress is important on the exam day as it drives you to achieve a lot, however being stressed when you revise is a bad idea as it will not make you work more efficiently and will make it harder to remember.
- Look after yourself. Eat healthily and exercise regularly.
- Although social events should be minimized, never cut them out completely. Choose quality ones that will allow you to make the most of the occasion.
- Worst case scenario. When you are feeling stressed about an exam or a timed writing piece write down the worst possible things that could happen, which will put your fears in perspective and you will feel more relaxed.

Tips

- Get somebody to test you, or read texts, cover and repeat. This helps your brain with confidence and memory.
• Make revision cards and highlight the information; do not copy everything from the textbook! Do past paper questions. See how to answer the exam questions to gain as much marks as possible.

• Mix subjects. Know your strong and weak subjects and mix them up on your timetable. That way, you do not force yourself to do all the nightmare topics at once but intersperse the harder information with the more interesting revision.

• Try to do new activities such as mind mapping or drawing to keep revision more interesting and enjoyable, as this will make the information easier to recall!

• Ask your parents or someone responsible to let you use your phone or other gadgets for only a limited time of the day. Try your best to avoid distracting yourself.

• You can record your revision on your phone, so when you get to bed you can listen to the problems you cannot remember repeatedly. This will help it to stay in your head.

• Don't make pointless notes or just copy huge chunks of text. Look at past exam papers, see how questions could be asked, and base your revision on topics that are likely to come up. As explained above, follow the active revision approach to get the most out of your revising.

• Stay calm! Exams are pressurizing, so the calmer you are, the more likely you are to do well.

• Have confidence. If you are positive about exams, you are much more likely to take in the necessary information and to remember it when it counts.

• Teach what you're trying to revise to someone else - you learn 95% of what you teach someone else.

Sources and Citations
