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## ★ What is the best study method?

Anything, from not having distractions to using flash cards... Real advice that you have found actually works to help in obtaining and maintaining information.

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53 ANSWERS

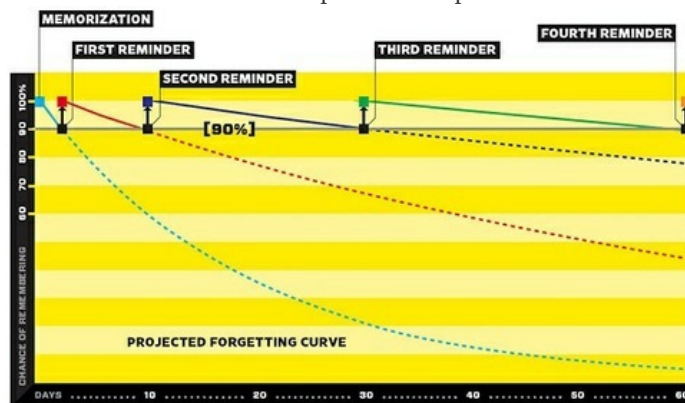
[ASK TO ANSWER](#)**Ahmad Ali**, Break every chain

8k upvotes by Amir Hamza, Ronak Jain, Anudeep Rentala, (more)

This is my research on how to study over two years. I succeeded to get a distinction in 8000 students from many colleges. I did not spend more than two months in my college.

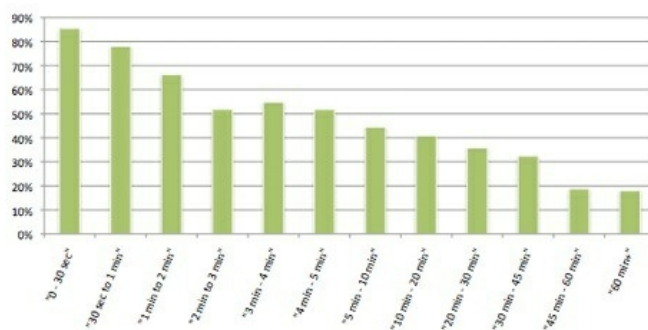
There are two important researches worth sharing before my study method. First research is on *human memory graph* and the second one is about *human concentration span*.

First research tells us that, when you read something your memory of what you read or heard is almost alive and its graph is horizontally at 100%, and it slowly declines over time. When you remind it after one day memory connections are strengthened. Now its declination is very slow as compared to without reminding. This speed decreases with every reminding of the thing you want to be memorable of. It is explained in the picture below.



Don't try to just memorize and be tensed about why I forget it soon. Try setting a remind plan without any tension. Read it, and then leave it. Read again at evening, then again next day and then next week. Exam yourself 15th day, and then remind after one month. Your memory graph will not decrease so easy now.

Second research is about human attention span.



As its clear from the above picture, human attention span is at 30% after 45 minutes. Mostly that is the time schools assign to one class . In universities it is increased to one hour. Increase it slowly, but better change your activity for some minutes after one hour and then start again with attention of 90% after being refreshed.

Another important thing regarding memory is reading a topic from many sources. It has two benefits, less boredom and many different aspects of the same scenario. Later one increases latency of information from different areas

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- ★ How can I be happy?
- ★ What is the best way to make note of all the random things I learn online, like on Quora?
- ★ Besides English, what are the next best languages to learn if your main goal is to extend your knowledge?
- ★ What can I learn in Computer Programming in just 10 minutes that could be useful for the rest of my life?
- ★ How did Drew Houston learn to hack on operating systems?
- ★ What is the best way to answer a student who says, "Why are we learning this? We are never going to use geometry or Shakespeare in the real world"?
- ★ What is the future of education?
- ★ What are some flaws in the Indian education system? How it will be improved? What steps should be taken to improve technical education in India?
- ★ Do you know any website for learning Vedic Maths online?

same scenario. Later one increases latency of information from different areas of mind when asked. The more connections your brain makes with the information, the more likely it will stick in your mind.

- Another important consideration is the **productive hours**. It may be different for few people but mostly early morning is the most productive time.
- Remember to keep the **room temperature a little warm**. It will help in focusing.

After a lot of study about how to study I devised a plan, which was refined over time and according to the results. Now here is a refined plan, in which are inherent many researches and experiences I have come across.

### Planning and managing your study

1. Make a timetable; mine was 11 hours for study. It is first step to success. (I was studying, and interested in it, so I was giving most of my time to studying; you may have less than 11 hours of course. It just shows my dedication towards academics and the dreams I had after graduation. I was in a poor family; I knew that without hard-work, I won't be able to get along. After getting a position, I was able to continue my study for free. I also received prize money from the government and a special training for more motivation and visits. Yes, I got a Talent Award too.
2. Humans can concentrate for 40 minutes on a subject, or maximum 1 hour. Do change your study material/subject after every 40 minutes or 1 hour. But later on you can increase this time slowly to 2 hours. I did this.
3. Start time table by learning new things, after looking at the last day topics. Later chapters in books mostly have references from former ones. Learning new things at start gives you hope and makes you motivated.
4. Don't start one subject or module after the other; take a break of 5 to ten minutes. In this time eat some chocolate, fruits and vitamins. Do some sit stands and go out to look in nature and have an analog (natural phenomena) thinking to refresh. This is a right click and refresh for you on your desktop to start another application.
5. Study each subject three times a day, design time table such that every subject has 3 shifts per day.
6. Take notes in the first shift, and rehearse them in second shift and so on. Notes should not be exact copy of the book text.
7. Re-allocate time for your modules in timetable after every, maximum two weeks. Or take your exams after one week and re-allocate based on the exam results.
8. Exam yourself sometime in the middle of the time table.
9. Have some extra time to look topics of this day you have studied, at the end of study time table.
10. Second day, start with looking at the topics of the last day. But never do an exam at the start of study time. Increase difficulty slowly from start to end.
11. Do some statistics on important and less important subjects or difficult and easy subjects and divide time with statistics methods. For example by first assigning the difficulty level to each subject like 40% and 60% etc.
12. If studying something which could be easily implemented in home or lab, don't miss it. I, when studying biology, had tried to produce a new family of a tree though it was just a try and nothing resulted. I have been programming to simulate the physics concepts which helped a lot.

### Subject specific study techniques

1. For math subjects, try to solve a question, if you fail, just do it with your hands by looking at some help book. After you finish copying by hands, you will infer what was missing. This is called learning with hands not mind. This is because some time an answer tells you about the solution in math.
2. For physics subjects, start with writing the topics equation, prove it on

paper same as stated above in (math method), then start with the theory. Attach equation with the topic.

3. For English, write difficult words on the note book. Learn them first.
4. For theory subjects, read a lot on the same topic from different sources, read the topic on book, leave it. Now read it on Wikipedia and leave it. Learn it on some other book. This is easy and very useful method. Don't try to learn from your book only this will bore you and you won't remember well.

### Exam Tips

1. End preparing for exams about one week before. Design your exams timetable so that your intense preparation ends about one week before the first day of paper. This will help in
2. Tension free preparation. Inside your heart you know I have one week, as a backup.
3. One week extra preparation. The last EXTRA week is now more valuable than one month. Everything you will do in this week will be extra and very motivational for you.
4. If there is 2, 3 days break between papers, don't stick with one subject. As mentioned above it kills productive study and focus. Change study module for the sake of attaining mind focus and refreshment, at least.
5. Review your notes the day before paper. This will give you an overview of all topics plus strengthening the memory connections for those topics.
6. After paper is over, don't throw the question paper into dust bin, thinking that it's gone now. It can help your mind settle down. Read and examine how much you did correctly.
7. Keep calculating marks you obtained in each paper and adding to total. It will motivate you, like we do in scoring games.
8. Don't forget the one and only solution for refreshment and energy of mind, the exercise and healthy foods in exams.

### Miscellaneous facts

1. Don't listen to love music or such type of songs. Listen to some good motivational music like "K'NAAN - WAVIN' FLAG".
2. Do take some time for spirituality or loneliness, for many reasons it's important.
3. Play some sports or exercise, not too much.
4. Eat different things in daily life and especially in break times.
5. Listen to news for some time. If learning English, listen to BBC.
6. Play with children, they are also learning, observe them and their interest.
7. Do spend some time with family and share your status.
8. If possible, do have some time to teach someone. It will be best, if you can teach what you are learning yourself.
9. For your tasks apart from study, make a to-do list. It's very important to lessen the distraction and burden from your mind.
10. Understanding the problem, half solves it.
11. Imagine your success every day, imagine the future. You are investing on your future.
12. Spread knowledge.

\* If you note I have written number 1 for no love music, in the details, I mean we should have zero distraction outside and inside of ourselves to create a creative state of mind, give all your attention to study when you study! Do one thing at a time. Don't have another part of your mind allocated for the mobile phone beside, or an open Facebook tab.

Good luck.

Updated 4d ago.

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174 upvotes by Maja Mandić, Vijayakumar Ramdoss, David Alizadeh, (more)

I graduated from university, first in my class, with a near perfect grade-point average. I'm not particularly smart. I know how to study, however. Here's a few things I did to propel my academic performance ahead of my peers.

1) Immersion through multiple, different sources. Don't rely solely on repeated encounters with the assigned text(s). Get a bunch of input from different sources. The basics will be redundant, helping to solidify your learning foundation, but because the delivery of info is varied, you're much more apt to remain an attentive audience. You're looking for "resonant" descriptions that leave an imprint on you, like that oh-so-special teacher you had in grade three. This is important because so many textbooks suck at delivery, but not all in the same ways. A particular (or peculiar) diagram in a book you found on your own at the library could be the answer to your dream of an intelligible exposition/illustration of Concept 'X'.

2) MInd maps. Sketch, doodle, devise insane visual or auditory or tactile correlations. A series of dry interrelated concepts could become a banana tree whose hanging fruit are yellow trucks, high heels, jewels, and oak saw horses. Absurdity makes abstractions memorable.

3) Frequent re-visits. Like with your sick friend, or mom, frequent, but brief touchdowns signal the importance you place on the nearness of your inter-relationship, in this case, with knowledge.

4) Sit in the room where you'll be examined...ahead of the scheduled exam time, with your material. Connect details of the material with the room's character, its blinds, paint chips, ceiling tiles, light switches, colour, ambience. Entering the examination room ought to be a metaphorical return to the cozy comfort of the womb. Your material, will "be" the room and it will feel "warm" because you took the time to make it so...ahead of time. You've prepared your relation within the environment for your very best performance.

5) If in university, pick courses as early as possible, and start doing light, but frequent readings on the subject every day through the summer, before fall semester starts. You might even find a favorite author! Your relaxed familiarity with the upcoming material, on day one, class one, will deliver you huge momentum to help carry you throughout the term. You're on your bike, accelerating well before the foot of that big hill you're about to ascend. Get a running start.

Written 29 Jun.



174

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**Peter Kershaw**, Make mine a double

79 upvotes by Ryan Dawson, Garnaik Sumeet, Dan Walding, (more)

There's some pretty detailed stuff here so I'll keep it short.

When I studied engineering many years ago I found that the best way to learn was to teach. So I would stick large sheets of lining paper to the wall then lecture the cat. He was very attentive though I'm not sure how much he understood. But it really helped to clarify the more difficult concepts.

I also kept very neat colour-coded notes which helped me recall information visually when I needed it.

With the tricky maths (Laplace Transforms in my case) you just keep doing them and one day it all just falls into place. As you do more and more difficult stuff you wonder why the earlier problems seemed so hard.

Written 15 May.

Upvote 79 Downvote Comments 3+



**Quora User**

131 upvotes by Melia Widjaja, Claire Lane, Quora User, (more)

Interact with the material. The more connections your brain makes with the information, the more likely it will stick in your mind.

During college I found that I could read a whole page of a textbook and then not be able to recall what I had read a minute ago. It was a lot easier for me to retain the information if I actively thought about how I could apply it to some problems. Textbook authors know this so they put those review questions at the end of chapters/sections. Do them!

Some people try outlining chapters, but eventually they get too good at outlining that it becomes a passive activity. Actually trying to solve problems makes your brain think about the material in a novel way that helps you remember it.

Written 21 Oct, 2011.

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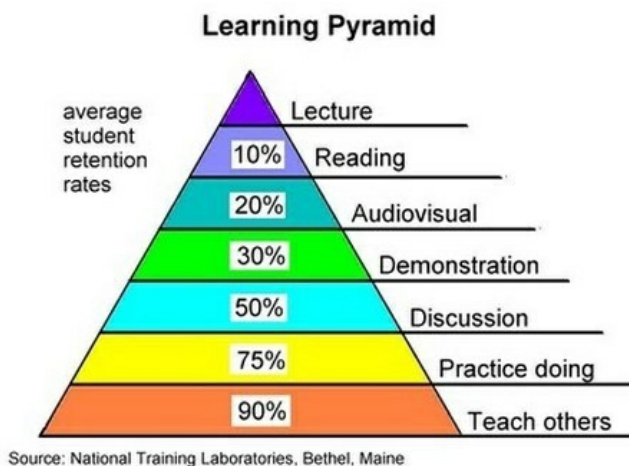


**Ramakrishna Rajanna**, Nobody is perfect, I am nobody

102 upvotes by Prabha Satya, Eva-Andrea Bodor, Curtis Mabilangan, (more)

Ahmad Ali gives a concise answer on memorization and revision.

The first part of memorization can be done best in the following way:



img source: internet

Teaching is the best way to share knowledge and to grow knowledge. I remember some of things I taught even after 10 years without any revision!

For pure memorization you can use Association techniques

Lets say you are learning spanish

1. gracias = thanks (Associate that gracias sounds similar to gratitude which is being thankful)
2. qué = what ( qué looks like queue . When you see a long queue you wonder "what " the queue is for)

Similarly make associations to what you already know. The funnier the association, the better you will remember.

To remember a list of items, mnemonics help a lot

To remember the planets in our solar system in the correct order we used the following mnemonic in our childhood

"My Very Educated Mother Just Served Us Nine Pizzas" (for [Mercury](#), [Venus](#), [Earth](#), [Mars](#), [Jupiter](#), [Saturn](#), [Uranus](#), [Neptune](#), [Pluto](#)).

Most important of all, enjoy what you are learning. Best of luck in your studies.

Updated 6 Jul.

Upvote 102 Downvote Comments 6+



**Anonymous**

46 upvotes by Quora User, Sam Siu, Quora User, (more)

Ivy league grad who got an A- or so average (70% of my classes were curved to a B-) with an average of maybe 10 hours of studying a week and maybe 20 hours a week before exams. So arguably, my study habits are effective given my outcome, the curve, and the relatively low level of work I put in.

- 1). **Create frameworks of understanding** -- try to be able to understand 'why' a set of facts is presented to you the way they are.
  - 2). **No flash cards unless it's clearly a rote memorization problem** -- flash cards greatly impair developing understanding. The only people I ever saw use flash cards were mentally mediocre B-students.
  - 3). **If your school lets you bring 'cheat sheets' like many do, really cram those sheets** -- I'm talking size 3 font squinting shit. Bring a magnifying glass if you have to.
  - 4). **TEST YOURSELF** -- this is by far the most important part. 'Do I really understand the material?' Try to find as many questions on the subject matter as possible and try to answer them. By self-testing, you will understand where the gaps are. It is critical you find and complete as many test questions as possible.
  - 5). [Edit]: **Read others' notes / share notes / try to acquire old test materials** from students taking the course the prior semester (as long as it's considered 'ethical', obviously it is the onus of the professor not to re-use materials from the previous semester). It is critical you understand how the professor thinks, so you won't be taken aback if they have screwball questions (very frequent, especially in the Ivy League where they test for real understanding, not fact regurgitation).
- For example, I had a very weird statistics professor once who actually had, as a correct answer "They don't know, it's probably a guess" which is the least-compelling-sounding correct answer you could ever ask for. While I got the question correct, I felt absolutely horrible bubbling in that Scantron, and had I known that he had 'weird' multiple choice answers, I probably wouldn't have wasted many minutes agonizing over my answer.
- 6). **Study early -- I never crammed, nor did I ever really 'study hard'**. I just read a little bit each day and kept on top of the material, making sure I really understood every lecture by the next lecture. This process is SO MUCH more time efficient than cramming at the end. You internalize a lot more, and it barely feels like you're working: you're just asking yourself questions and going along until you find the answer. Plus, lectures build on each other. Failing to understand material typically leads to a snowballing failure.
  - 7). [Edit] **Go to professor and TA office hours** -- Make sure you understand what **other** students' points of confusion are. Sometimes, they will catch issues that you haven't thought of (usually, office hours students are hopeless, but some of them are pretty sharp). "If X is Y, then why isn't Z equal to X?" sort of questions from other students typically found small gaps in understanding.
  - 8). **Work your ass off during exam time** -- I may only have studied 20-30 hours a week during exams, but that's because I have a very good memory, and am reasonably good at logic. The final question you should ask yourself is: "Am I the master of my domain?" If you cannot say 'Yes' two days before the hammer falls, get back to work.

Updated 1 Oct.

Upvote

46

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