There’s an old saying in business: “What gets measured, gets managed.”

But in the world of studying, it’s a little harder to “manage” what’s difficult to measure. After all, many people figure that there’s no way to measure a student’s progress until you’ve taken the test itself. Consequently, many people feel like they’re left in the dark for weeks–and even months–ahead of the test itself.

If you want to know whether or not the [tutoring services](https://www.4satprep.com/about-us/instructors/) you’ve paid for are working, it pays to learn how to accurately measure a student’s progress.

Set Specific and Definable Goals

There is no such thing as tracking progress unless you define some parameters.

If you were running track, you might time how quickly you can run a mile. Or you might measure the distance in which you run over a period of 10 minutes. The *exact* variable doesn’t matter, so long as it allows a clear, 1:1 comparison between one week and another week.

That’s how it should work in studying as well. Here are a few suggestions as to the specific and definable goals you can pick:

* The score on a study test. Some people opt for one study test before the big SAT exam–but why not use the performance on this test multiple times to measure how much information is being retained?
* Design your own tests. If you’re working with flashcards to remember vocabulary, track how many words were accurately guessed out of the whole bunch. A few weeks later, do the same test and see how much improvement was made

You might even consider constructing a few brief tests to look at progress across a range of skills, such as reading comprehension, mathematics, and a written essay. What is the most important thing? Create a goal with which you can make measurable progress. Without measuring, you won’t be able to watch the progress first-hand.

Create a Bi-Weekly Test

Now that you have your goals, you can experiment with setting a bi-weekly test. Feel free to try different breaks between tests, but try not to use them too close together; otherwise, you’re leaving minimal time for meaningful progress.

There are a few benefits to this bi-weekly test:

* It will also serve to review knowledge. Reviewing a piece of information once and expecting to retain it might work if you already have a photographic memory–but most people don’t work that way. Information is more frequently retained when it’s repeated. Even if the first bi-weekly test isn’t successful, it will serve as a study session in and of itself
* The results of these bi-weekly tests will serve as feedback as to the improvements that need to be made

There’s a large degree of customization involved when you track a student’s progress. That’s why it’s important to consider [private tutoring services](https://www.4satprep.com/private-tutoring/). A tutor will be able to track this progress, create new lessons based on that progress, and ultimately deliver a better result than “blind studying.” After all, what gets measured gets managed.