

## Study Skills

### **How to improve one's concentration.**

- Once you understand your learning style, you will be more likely to know how to meet your own needs.
- Students can accurately predict their own learning styles.
- Students who can accurately predict their teacher's learning or teaching styles learn better than students who cannot make this prediction.
- A student's learning style is the same, regardless of subject.
- Students score higher on tests when they are tested in the environments best suited to their personal learning styles-bright versus dim lighting, silence versus sound, etc.
- Persistent and responsible students achieve higher grades and score higher on tests.
- A key to quick learning and memory retention is to change the information to be learned into the format that the brain can comprehend easier.
- The more a student can learn through combining visual, auditory and kinesthetic modalities, the more permanent the information will become.

### **Learning Styles:**

People don't only learn at different rates, but also in different ways. Some students want their teacher to write everything out on the board. Others prefer to listen. Some like to sit in small groups and discuss a question, while others like to listen to a lecture, translating it into pictorial doodles in their notebook.

The following are some ways people learn, and some tips help each type of learner do better. Once you understand your learning style, you may be able to adjust your approach to the classroom and your study habits for maximum benefit. Older students tend to have multiple learning styles because their experience (jobs, military service, spouse and children) has taught them to adapt. The most important thing to remember is: do what works for you!

### **Visual Learners: (You have to see it to believe it)**

#### Characteristics:

- Needs to see it to know it.
- Strong sense of color.
- May have artistic ability
- Difficulty with spoken directions
- Over-reaction to sounds.
- Trouble following lectures.
- Misinterpretation of words.

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### Learning Tips:

- Use graphics to reinforce learning—films, slides, illustrations, doodles, charts, notes, and flashcards.
- Written directions.
- Use flow charts and diagrams for notetaking.
- Visualize spelling of words or facts to be memorized.
- Write out everything for quick and frequent visual review.

### **Auditory Learners: (If you hear it, you remember it.)**

#### Characteristics:

- Prefers to get information by listening—needs to hear it to know it.
- Difficulty following written directions.
- Difficulty with reading and writing.

#### Learning Tips:

- Use tapes for reading and for class and lecture notes.
- Learn by interviewing or by participating in discussions.
- After you have read something, summarize it on tape.
- Verbally review spelling words and lectures with a friend.

### **Tactual Learners: (If you can touch it with your hands, you will remember it.)**

#### Characteristics:

- Prefers hands-on learning
- Can assemble parts without reading directions.
- Difficulty sitting still.
- Learns better when physical activity is involved.
- May be very well coordinated and have athletic ability.

#### Learning Tips:

- Experimental learning (Make models, do lab work, and role play).
- Frequent breaks in study periods.
- Use a computer to reinforce learning through a sense of touch.
- Memorize or drill facts to be learned while walking or exercising.
- Write several sentences containing terms, definitions, or rules for better comprehension.

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### **Five Principles of Learning:**

1. Be genuinely interested. If you are genuinely interested in what you are learning, you will retain information more effectively. Nobody can give you a desire to learn. You have to find it within yourself. Stop for a moment and ask yourself why you study. If your reasons are to pass the test, to get a good grade, to graduate—take another look at principle #1.
2. Personalize. To be genuinely interested in a subject means finding where that subject relates with your life. Whatever you succeed in learning will quickly evaporate unless you can find the connection between the subject you are studying and your own life.
3. Put it into words. When we write something or repeat a word or phrase out loud, we are more apt to remember it. Use every possible occasion to make the abstract concrete by putting it into words.
4. Learn with others. Studies show that cooperation—not competition—leads to learning. Studying with others works best when everyone in the group comes prepared. When you are preparing for tests, or when you feel unproductive working by yourself, it may benefit you to find a class partner to work with.
5. Reward yourself. We learn more information more permanently when learning is rewarded. As you plan your reading and studying, break the work up into manageable segments and plan a reward for yourself at the end of each segment. It doesn't have to be much—just something to look forward to. You should also reward yourself when you have an academic success, such as making the honor role, passing a hard class, etc.

### **How to Improve Your Memory**

‘The art of memory is the art of attention.’ – Samuel Johnson

### **Memory Tips:**

1. **Memorize from general to specific.**  
-study the big picture and then learn the details.
2. **Cramming Does Not Work.**  
-cramming only commits the information to your short-term memory, so you will forget what you really never learned.
3. **Flash Cards.**  
-Make your own flash cards or use a tape recorder.
4. **Be Interested.**  
-pay attention and try to learn things for the long term.
5. **Visualize.**

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-Picture in your mind what you wish to remember.

6. **Relate Old With New.**

-form associations between the new ideas and information that you learned in previous chapters or class meetings.

7. **Seven Is The Magical Number.**

-repeat difficult information seven times a day for seven days.

8. **Highlight.**

-Highlight key ideas in your textbook and outlines. Pay attention to words or phrases that are in bold.

### Memory Strategies:

1. Acrostics

These are phrases or poems in which the first letter of the word or line functions as a cue to help you recall the words that you are trying to remember.

Example: “**E**very **g**ood **b**oy **d**oes **f**ine”. This acrostic is used to remember the order of musical notes on a musical scale (E,G,B,D, and F).

2. Acronyms

These are words that are formed out of the first letters of a series of words.

Example: “Roy G. Biv”. This is used to remember the order of the colors of the spectrum (**R**ed, **O**range, **Y**ellow, **G**reen, **B**lue, **I**ndigo, and **V**iolet).

3. Narrative

Some find making up a story with lists of words throughout the narrative aids retention.

4. Teach someone else

Attempt to teach the material or tutor someone. It is amazing how you think you know something until you try to explain it to someone else. Teaching or tutoring requires you to organize your thoughts and present them to someone else clearly and simply. To test the effectiveness of your teaching or tutoring, ask your listener to explain the concept back to you.

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