

## **Power Studying Tips for** **College Students**

The following tips have proven to be extremely powerful guides for organizing, thinking, studying, and learning in college.

### **Study Space**

**Tip:** Your study space should be as quiet and comfortable as possible. Avoid studying in noisy places such as cafeterias, recreation rooms, or lounges.

**Tip:** When studying, keep a waste basket handy.

**Tip:** Have a consistent place for everything, and above all, keep it there!

**Tip:** Have everything needed for study handy beforehand. Don't waste valuable time looking for books, notes, or other information. After you have assembled the items you need, put them where you can reach them easily.

### **Study Habits**

**Tip:** Begin study no less than 30-90 minutes after a meal.

**Tip:** Never study within 30 minutes of going to sleep.

**Tip:** Prioritize! Make a list of what you intend to study, prioritize the list, and stick to it!

**Tip:** If possible, study no more than 30-40 minutes at a stretch. Many students retain more by studying for short periods with breaks in between. It all depends on what you're trying to study, but generally, after a period of study, take a break.

**Tip:** Take study breaks away from your desk or wherever you are studying. Let the break be a time to think about other things. Use some break time to reflect, not constantly review what you have just studied.

## The Classroom

**Tip:** Distractions in the classroom are deadly. To help avoid distractions, sit near the front of the class. You're less likely to miss something important, and there are far less distractions at the front than any other location.

**Tip:** Think! Thinking is one of the most important things you can do in class. If you just sit there passively, and not think, class can be deadly. Think about what the teacher is saying **BEFORE** writing down anything. Writing down each word is a **WASTE OF TIME**. Reorganize in your mind what the teacher says, and then write it down. This way you will be connecting the teacher's words with **HOW** you think. If you do this, your notes will make a lot more sense later on.

**Tip:** Pay attention to the course outline or syllabus. Generally, important points and materials are referenced here and repeated. Don't be afraid to ask the teacher if there is something you don't understand. Most teachers will be glad to clarify for you.

## Preparing for Class

**Tip:** Efficient students do not underline! Underlining is not a productive way to emphasize textbook material. It's best to use a highlighter.

**Tip:** Read the table of contents of your texts carefully. If the textbooks have chapter summaries, read them first! If you don't understand the material from the summaries, go back and highlight. Take notes on what you have highlighted and review your notes. **Tip:** Break study material into short segments of length dependent on its difficulty. Remember, concise notes are more powerful than copious notes. Think about the material! Then take notes on what you don't know or are not sure of.

## Test Taking

**Tip:** For essay examinations, try the "**memory dump**" technique. If permitted, write down everything you've memorized - facts, names, dates, ideas, events, and so on **BEFORE** you do anything else. Sometimes reading through the essay questions can distract you from what you've studied. The "**memory dump**" technique requires that you write down everything possible **BEFORE** you begin writing essay answers. This way, you are less likely to forget something important.

## A Final Word

The study skills presented here depend on one thing, and that is your willingness to **WANT** to improve and do well in school. If you really don't want to make the effort and sacrifice, no amount of suggestions, ideas, or outlines can help much. You are the one who is responsible for your education, and effective study skills can help you. To that end, one last word of advice -- **work smart, not hard**