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# **SKILLS OF EFFECTIVE STUDY**

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### Where to Study – Best Place for Study

Normally, a student should be able to study anywhere such as in his room, in a library, in a study space of college or university, in a cafeteria, or in a crowded bus. However, some places may be better for doing study than others. For instance, a student may study more properly in a calm place than in a cafeteria where there are many people around. The selection best place is very important for doing an effective and productive study.

Some students may take the factor of place selection for study very lightly but the students, who are keen on their academic outcomes and goals, do consider this as an important factor for their study. There are certain aspects which a student must consider while choosing the best place for doing the study, as follows:

#### **1: It's better to study at one place regularly – Don't change your study place too often**

A student should have one common place for his study and should always use that one place for his study. It should be purposefully viewed by a student as his study place. It can be a room in his house, a room in a hostel, or a study-space at his college or university. It should have a chair and table for doing study. When you study at one common place, it has a kind of psychological effect on you. It helps you enter into a frame of mind where naturally accept that this is your place of study and is only meant for doing study. It helps you carry on your study with concentration and attention.

This is why some students find it very helpful to do study at their study-spaces in their college or university rather than at other different places because it makes

them psychologically eager for their study. Therefore, it is never advisable for a student to keep on changing their study-place every other day. Yes, you may sometimes study at other places when it is not easy to get to your designated study-place, but you should have one common place and you should see that place as your study place and should always study at that same place.

### **2: Study at a place that has no or minimum distractions**

The place, where you study, must be free from distractions. Distractions are those things which can easily divert you from your study. Your study place should have no distractions such as appealing colour, complex sceneries, kids playing around, or noises of television coming from an adjacent room. These distractions can attract your attention to them while you study and thus, you may find it hard to concentrate on your study. The study is an activity that requires the most concentration and attention. Therefore, these distractions may interrupt you again and again while you study. If you want to do an effective and productive study, choose a place with no distractions or try to minimize these distractions at your study place.

### **3: Your study place should have the following characteristics:**

1. Your study room should be well-lit (have proper light) and well-ventilated.
2. Your study place should not be either too cold or too hot. For instance, if you live in some cold region, you should set your heater (radiator) for moderate temperature settings. Severely cold or hot temperature generally makes it difficult to perform physically and mentally well.

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3. There must be a clock on the wall at your study place. This helps you manage your time for different parts of your study, as well as to know when to take a short break when you study for long hours.

4. There should be your all study materials (e.g. books), laptop (if you do study online) and things that help you in doing your study (e.g. a paper holder, some paper to take notes, pen, etc.). If you have not these things, you will either have to go and bring them again and again during your study or to keep only thinking about them during your study.

5. There should be a jug of water (or water bottle), a glass or cup and a few biscuits (or cookies) so that you can have them if you need them in long hour study.

### **4: Your study place should have a chair and a table**

This point is mentioned separately due to its importance for study. Using a chair and a table is the best way to do your study. The place, where you study on regular basis, must have a simple chair and a table. Sitting in a chair and placing a book or a laptop on the table in front of you gives you a proper study position. First, it enables you to look at the book or laptop in an easy way because you have them straight in front of your eyes. Second, it gives your whole body an adequate position to feel easy and carry on your study for longer. Using a chair and table is important because your overall body should be in a healthy position when you have to study on regular basis. Never use a bed or overly comfortable sofa for study because it does not give your body the proper position for study as well as makes you feel a bit lazy and thus, you may soon feel somewhat sleepy.

### **When to study – Choosing the right time for study**

The selection of correct time for doing the study is important for the quality of the study. Students should always select the best time (the part of day, e.g., morning, noon, evening or night) for their study. The suitability of time for study varies for different students depending on their routine activities as well as considerations related to mental capacity. Routine activities and lifestyle considerations include factors such as the time to attend class lectures, the time to go for paid work, sleeping habits, and other activities such as going to the gym, or going for a walk.

The mental capacity considerations include the selection of time when the student feels mentally fresh and alert, and is thus able to concentrate on their study. Based on these determinants of selection of time, some students find it helpful to do study in the morning while other students prefer late-night study.

Ideally, you should be able to study at any time of the day. However, some parts (times) of the day may work better than others for productive study. Therefore, students must think which time is more suitable for them to maximize their study outcomes. This article would present a brief overview of various aspects of the selection of the best time for study and will help you figure out which part (time) of the day may work best for you.

Most students prefer studying in the morning for certain reasons as follows. First, it feels very natural and mentally acceptable to start study in the morning because this is the time when everyone from different walks of life starts their work. This has a positive psychological effect on students because they take study as a regular activity for them, and this makes it easier for them to start their study at a fixed time every

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morning. Second, when a student gets up in the morning after having a good amount of sleep, his body is relaxed, and his brain has restored its capacity fully to learn; and to process and store the learned information. He has a very clear focus and can do his study with concentration and attention. Third, since the library is open in the daytime, he is able to bring some helpful books from the library or to meet his teachers to take help in their study if they face difficulty in understanding some topic. Fourth, they know when they will finish their study in the afternoon or in the evening, they will have enough time for spending with their family or friends and for playing a game or going to gym. This means morning study allows them to have a balanced approach to all the activities of life.

A good number of students also prefer late-night study for reasons as follows. First, the night is very calm and thus, conducive for concentrating on the study. There are no noises which may divert your attention from your study. Second, generally at late night everything is closed, and everyone is sleeping so the student feels that he cannot engage in any task other than his study. By contrast, in the daytime, a student has the option to visit friends or go to the nearby store if he wants, and in this way, he can be easily distracted from his study. Third, some students think that their brains naturally work better study in the night than in the day. They believe that even if they try to do study in the day, their study outcome is generally lower than when they do study at night. Maybe they have been doing their study at night for years; and this has now become their stable habit. Maybe they have developed such sleeping habit which allows them to do their study only in the night.

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The above discussion reflects on different considerations of time selection for study as seen as important by two groups of students. The considerations seen as important by both groups can have their pros and cons. For instance, those who have to attend their lecture in the morning cannot do their self-study in the morning. Similarly, those who have the habit of late-night study may feel quite exhausted and sleepy while they attend their lecture in the morning. However, even if students have not to attend lectures in the morning there still can be some cons of both approaches to time selection for the study. At the same time, one of these approaches may even work best for many students who have not to attend lectures and if it is supported by their other circumstances.

The students, who attend lectures, may better select some part (times) of the day between when they come from college or university and when they go to sleep at night. For instance, a student comes home back from college at 2 PM (afternoon) and goes to sleep at 12 AM (night). He may better select some time within the duration between 2 PM and 12 AM. For instance, he may find it helpful to do his study in the evening. This way he would select the best time for his studies which can easily be integrated into his routine.

Here are some important points to choose study time and to make best of the available time.

1. For choosing the right time for study, consider the other academic and non-activities in your routine.
2. Choose a time for study which can easily be integrated into your routine without affecting other important activities of life.

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3. Some subjects need more time and attention than others. For such subjects, select the part of the day when you can easily concentrate on them.
4. For easy subjects, you can select those hours of the day where you may feel a bit tired, and it is convenient for you to study only easy subjects.
5. Make a plan about what to study, when to study, and how much to study. This plan can be for a month, week or day. This will serve as a roadmap for you and would keep you on the right track towards your academic goals.
6. Prioritize your activities according to their importance and give them time accordingly.
7. Whether you like late-night study or morning study, but always have a good amount of sleep every day.

### **Start Your Study Right Now - Avoid Delaying Habits**

It is pretty funny, but it is a fact that whenever students think of starting their study, they always decide to start it from tomorrow. It is a common habit of students to say: I will start my study from tomorrow. However, their tomorrow, to start their study, never comes. Most students decide that they will start their study from the next day and they would do it for sure. When the next day comes, they again make a new pledge to start study from the next day. Every day they refresh their pledge to start study from the other day because they feel tired that day or have some other tasks to do that day. This continues for months until the exam approaches. Then they have a lot of courses to study and prepare them within the short of their exam. This is a common habit but the students should realize that this is not good to keep on delaying their study and to never become serious about their studies. This affects



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their overall academic productivity and they sometimes end up getting less grades in their exams.

### **1: Impacts of such habit of delaying study**

1. It wastes our precious time.
2. It is like cheating our self by simply satisfying ourselves with false pledges to take a start from the next day.
3. When we skip studies on regular basis, it becomes a burden on us with the passage of time. Then, we feel stressed during the exam because we have to study and prepare a lot of courses within the short time of the exam.
4. Doing so, we lose interest in our study and avoiding study becomes our habit.
5. When we skip attending our class lectures, we miss a lot of useful information that could have helped us in learning and preparing for the exam..

### **2: How and why should you start your study from**

Time is the most valuable resource for a student, and it flies and waits for none. A student should know the value of time and should utilize it properly. Successful students have the habit of starting their studies from the first day of their academic session because they know they have to learn things and prepare themselves for an exam at the end of the session. They understand that time passes, and it never comes again to be utilized again. Therefore, they utilize it when it is utilizable. They know being a student their primary and important task is to study and learn their books. They attend their lectures daily and do their study on regular basis. They never cheat themselves by satisfying themselves falsely to start from the next day and to allow themselves to waste time.

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It is very important for you, being a student, to take your studies seriously. You should be able to do your study any time. Never wait for the ideal situation to take a start. Every available time is ideal for study but if you change your thinking style about it positively. You should take a start right from today and right from now. Do not cheat yourself by making false pledges to satisfy yourself and to allow yourself to waste your time. Time is flying and will never wait for you. Stop wasting your time. Open your book and take a start right now. If you cannot start it now, you will never be able to start at any other time.

Therefore, do not wait for the next day. Right today and right now is the best time to start your studies. You can have many activities in your life other than studies such as watching movies, listening to music, playing games and so on. But your most important task is to do your study which should get more of your time, attention and energy. You have to give it preference over all other activities. You can also do your other activities but you should give more time to your study.

Never think about any excuse which may stop you from taking a start. Some of the common excuses made by the study to delay their study are 1) The weather is not good to start study today; 2) I am not in a good mood to start my study today; and 3) I think I should do my pending tasks today so that I can focus more on my study, and therefore, I should start my study from tomorrow. Please understand and accept that these are excuses to allow yourself to waste more time. When such ideas come into your mind, know them that they are excuses to cheat yourself again. Therefore, never make such excuses and take a start.

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Start from now and keep doing your study on regular basis. Attend your class lectures on a regular basis. Make some useful study-notes which can help you revise your courses when needed. Have a mature and responsible approach to your studies. This will help you achieve your academic goal perfectly. You will be able to score high in your exams and to become a brilliant student.

The spirit to start from now is one of the characteristics of successful people. Another important characteristic of successful people is their persistence. Persistence means to keep going and never stop even if you face challenges. Being a student, you may also face some academic challenges. You may find it difficult to understand and learn some topics of your book, but it should not lower your interest in your studies as well your general morale. All students have common academic problems, but the difference lies in how different students cope with these problems. So, you should know that problems are a normal part of life, and they are not meant to scare you, but to polish your skills. Being a student, you may find it difficult to understand some topic, don't be scared or disheartened. Study these topics a few times until you fully understand them. If still face a problem, you can ask your teacher for help. Similarly, you can learn it from some other book. The focus here is on persistence which is essential for good academic performance. Start your study and keep studying on regular basis. If you face some problem, deal with it tactfully and never stop.

The purpose of writing this page is to highlight a common problem of students – to plan to start from the next day but never to take a start. The purpose is to convey to

the student about the bad impact of this habit on their academic outcomes as well as to help them realize their problem and be able to avoid it.

### **How to develop interest in your studies**

The only thing that enables you to study effectively is your interest in your study. Productive study is only possible when you have the willingness, desire, love and thirst to learn. However, some students may find it difficult to develop a love for their study. They may view the study as a burden on them and thus, they may only study due to the fear of failure in their exam which may benefit them very little in their academics. Successful students always have an internal desire to learn which helps them learn with perfection and ultimately score high in their exams. Here, in this article, I will tell you how to develop interest in your studies.

The only thing, that can bring a positive change in you, is your own style of thinking. If you want to change yourself, you will have to bring some positive changes in the style of your thinking. Similarly, you have to change certain habits and some external factors which lower your interest in your studies. Let's start with the correct style of thinking for enhancing interest in studies. In order to develop interest in your studies, you should bring changes in the style of your thinking in the following ways:

1. Think and accept that being a student you have certain responsibilities.
2. Have motivational and inspirational thoughts regarding your studies.
3. Think about how much sincerely you are performing your tasks as a student.
4. Know the importance of education for your career as well the betterment of those around you.

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5. Take your education seriously. Think maturely and behave in a sensible way towards your education.
6. Always believe in yourself that you can achieve maximum scholastic achievements if you study enough to do so.
7. Being a student, accept the realities of a student-life. You may have certain problems (e.g. financial problems) but you have to carry out your studies even when there are challenges.
8. Failure in the exam should never discourage you. They are part of student life and can easily be dealt with if the correct approach is adopted.
9. Never think you are academically weaker than any other student. All students are equal, but the difference depends only on how seriously a student take his study.
10. Have a sense of competition to perform well in your studies than everyone else.
11. Prioritize your tasks and know which is the most important for you – your studies.
12. Set your academic goals and start working to achieve them.

**Realize your identity.** Being a student, you have to study your books and appear in an exam at the end your academic session – accept this fact. This is your job being a student: to learn things effectively and score well in an exam. This what a student is meant for. You may have many other activities in life such as playing games, watching a movie, listening to music, and using social media websites. However, your first and the most important task is to study – know this task and stick to it. No other task is more important than your study for you. You have to study to get higher grades in the exam and to become a brilliant student. Identify your this real responsibility being a student and accept it as your responsibility. Never cheat

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yourself by engaging in activities that waste your time and not performing your real task – your study.

**Develop love in your heart for your studies.** Never see the study as a boring activity for you. Think, you have to study because you enjoy studying and learning. Never take your study as a burden on you but as an enjoyable activity for you. You should have that inner desire to study your books which helps you get more time for your studies by enabling you to stay away from other useless activities and helps you to do study with your full concentration and attention.

**Be serious and responsible towards your studies.** This is because your study is important for your own life as well as for the lives of those around you – your family. Your education is also important for contributing to the wider community (society) in different ways because education makes you a productive citizen. You have to become that successful person with the help of your studies – a person who proves beneficial for himself, his family and mankind. Your parents have great expectations from you. They have seen big dreams about your success. You have to work hard to fulfil their expectations and to let their dreams come true. This means you must take your education seriously.

**Being a student, you have some responsibilities and obligation which you need be concerned about.** For instance, you have to attend your lectures; study various books; make study-notes; and prepare yourself for your exams – these are all that you should always think about. These are the primary priorities of your life that should receive your more time and attention. You can have other activities in life too. For instance, playing games, watching movies, listening to music, and hanging out

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with friends. However, these are secondary priorities of your life and should be given secondary importance. You can have some time for these activities to recreate and refresh yourself but not to the extent that they may distract you from your primary task – your study. You should focus on your studies more than other activities. It means to minimize the secondary activities (e.g. games, music, movies) because they waste much of your time. I am emphasizing this because nowadays these secondary activities are the main cause of students' low interest in their studies. These are distractors for a student. Therefore, you have to seriously think about it and take some practical steps to be able to avoid these distractors. Think, what is the major distractor for you. For instance, it is the mobile phone which does not let you do your study because you always keep on checking it for new messages and notifications. It is better to avoid it at least at the time of your study by switching it off while you study so that you can fully concentrate on what you study.

**Have high ambitions regarding your studies and have confidence in yourself to achieve these ambitions.** Most successful people were very average people before they became successful. They became successful only because they were highly ambitious and had confidence in themselves. It means you have to set some goals for yourself and work day and night to achieve these goals. Being a student, your goals should revolve around learning more and more; and becoming successful in your academics. When you set these goals, feel motivated and believe in yourself that you can make great academic achievements if you work in the real sense. Always feel like in a sense of competition in relation to your studies and be confident in your efforts. This will surely help you get fruitful rewards.

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**Academic challenges must never lower your interest in your studies.** For instance, you get a low score in an exam, never get discouraged. They are part of student life. Do not lose heart and try to make it again. Falling is never losing unless you stop getting up to try again. Losing is only when you stop getting up to try again. It means, do not quit trying again and again, you will surely make it. Similarly, if you have some complications in your studies such as learning problems. Do not be disappointed. Every student has some problems, and you are also a student like them. Every student struggle until they overcome their complications. You also have a similar mental capacity as other students have. If you find some study topic difficult to understand, do not decide at first sight that it is difficult and should simply be skipped. Study it several times until you understand it. Take help from your teachers and other books. Maybe you are constantly facing such problems, but do not give up your efforts. With the passage of time, you will improve a lot.

**Remember!** Your eagerness to learn is indispensable for learning effectively. This is because study requires a lot of attention, concentration, courage and sometimes even some sacrifices such as avoiding some favorite activities. This is possible when you have an inner love for your study; you take your study seriously and become a responsible student. Make study an enjoyable activity for yourself so you can benefit from your study in the real sense.

### **How to study effectively – The art of study**

One of the characteristics of successful students is that they know the art of study. Students appear in various exams where they are assessed based on learning they have acquired through studying certain books. This means that students should have



the correct approach towards the style of study that enables them to acquire learning from books adequately and to ultimately help them score well in their exams. The purpose of study may not be always to prepare for an exam, but it is surely always to gain effective learning and understanding of what you study. Some important aspects of the effective study are as follows.

### **1: Willingness to learn**

Willingness to learn is indispensable for productive study. The first thing that a productive study requires is your desire to learn. Being a student, you should develop an interest in your study. This is the first step towards effective study. If you do not have a love for your study, you can never study effectively even if you have learnt thousand good tips for study. Study is an activity that requires full attention and concentration. When you have the thirst for learning, you will naturally pay full attention to and fully concentrate on what you study. If you do not have that inner desire for study, it is generally difficult to pay attention to and concentrate on the content while studying it.

Some students take their study for granted. Others may view their study as a burden on them, and thus, they only study due to the fear of failing in an exam. When you view your study as a burden on you and study simply to pass an exam, you may pass the exam with average marks, but you never benefit much from your study.

However, the students, who love their study, always get the highest marks in their exam, but the important thing is that they gain real learning because they do not take study as a burden on them but as an enjoyable activity to learn.

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Every student has certain activities such as playing games, watching movies, listening to music, using social media websites and so on. It is important to have a balanced approach to all the activities in life. However, these activities may sometimes act as distractors for students to divert them from their study. This is where the importance of desire to learn comes into play because it enables you to sacrifice some of these activities for your study when needed. It enables you to sit for hours to study your books. It instills in you a sense of responsibility towards your study.

### **2: Understanding the aim of reading**

The second thing a student should understand is the aim of reading. Reading does not only mean uttering the words of a sentence of a paragraph and running on them. Every sentence of a book has an important piece of information. The aim of reading is to gain that information from sentence while reading them. Simply uttering the words of a sentence and not grasping the idea contained within each sentence has no advantage. These sentences are not written without a purpose. The author of these sentences wants to convey some idea or information purposefully. This means that students should read each sentence with attention so that they can gain the real learning. This is called learning things conceptually which is the aim of effective study. You should always read the paragraphs very carefully. If you do not get the idea by reading a sentence once, do not skip it, re-read it and read it many times until you are able to pick what is said in the sentence. Take a highlighter to highlight some sentences with the most important pieces of information. You may also use a pen to write down some important ideas on a separate page while reading the paragraph. Most students use this tip because they think when they write down important ideas

on a separate paper while reading the paragraphs of a book, it helps them understand the content of paragraphs very easily. In the beginning, when you start to read this way, you may have a weak picking power but with the passage of time, it would become your habit, and you would develop a good picking power. This shift from reading purposelessly to reading purposefully is essential for effective learning.

### **3: Studying with concentration and attention**

As noted earlier, concentration and attention are important factors of productive study. While you study you should be fully attentive and concentrated on what you study. Your mind should be free from all other irrelevant thoughts while you study. For instance, you should not be thinking about the movie you watched last night or a party you are going to attend the next day. Similarly, if you have distractors around you that divert your attention from the study, it is better to remove them first. For instance, you are hearing a sound coming from a television played in the adjacent room, better go and turn it off so you can read your study-content with full attention. Likewise, switch off your mobile phone if you are getting notifications and messages on them constantly during your study.

Some other tips for good concentration power are to have full sleep every night; to eat healthily; to go on a walk for at least 30 minutes daily, and to take short breaks during study rather than sitting for study for long hours. Some people also find studying always at the same place good for concentration, such as your designated study desk at your university.

### **4: Generating questions in your mind**

When you study a paragraph effectively, your mind naturally generates certain questions. This is characteristic of brilliant students that they raise questions about what they learn because they know how to do study in the best way. When you read something and your mind does not generate any question there is some possibility that you have not learnt it in real because there is always some room for uncertainty which is cleared by the questions being raised about them. If your mind does not generate any question, this means you have simply accepted, what was written, as it is. Every topic must not have grounds for raising questions, but you should think about different aspects of what you read. If you do so, it is likely to provoke your mind to raise some questions about what you study. This is important because this way you learn a thing in its entirety and gain confidence in what you learn.

### **5: Few things may need to be memorized**

While conceptual learning is important, a few things may also need to be retained in your mind when you learn them. In other words, some things simply need to be memorized. Remember, by memorizing I never mean 'cramming' which a wrong approach to learning. However, several things do need to be memorized such as scientific formulas, particular terminologies, names of specific stages involved in a scientific process and so on. They are generally parts of big topics. When you learn these big topics conceptually, you need to retain in your mind these specific terminologies, formulas, and the names of stages of a process. Without retaining them in mind, you may not be able to have complete learning the big topic. You have no option other than memorizing them.

For instance, you study a process in your science subject where different stages are involved. These stages have been given specific names. When you learn the process completely, you also need to retain the names of these stages involved in the process.

### **6: Discuss your study topics with others**

Discussing what you have studied with others helps you learn with perfection. When you study something, you should narrate it to someone (e.g., your classmate, friend or family member). It may not be necessarily a twoway discussion, but you simply tell someone, what you have learnt, in a friendly way. It can be like telling a story to someone or like making someone learn what you have learnt. Make this your habit because it helps you a lot. While we are discussing, what we have learnt, with others, our brain is processing the information in a way that helps in strengthening the learning and retaining it in brain for longer. This is because the learning becomes a two-stage process, first to learn by studying something and then to learn it further by discussing it.

Similarly, group discussion by students is very helpful where every student shares his learning. This helps in learning those areas which a student might have not understood or skipped while studying a topic himself. This helps generate many mind-provoking questions which helps in learning a topic conceptually and in its entirety. Similarly, these are purposeful group discussion where every student has to study a topic so that they can talk on it in front of other students. Have this thing in mind that you have to talk on it in front of other students, you intentionally focus

more on various areas of what you are studying so that you can reproduce them in front of other students. This again helps you take your style of learning seriously.

### **How to concentrate on study**

The study is an activity that requires the most concentration. The study is not simply reading the lines of a book. It involves understanding and grasping ideas contained within every sentence you read. Therefore, it requires a clear focus and sustained concentration to do a productive study. However, nowadays, most students experience concentration issues. Some students may find it hard to focus fully on what they study. Other students may have a very short attention span which makes problem in understanding things in a sequence. For instance, they are unable to retain ideas when they move from one sentence to another sentence. Some students may have good concentration when they start their study but after studying for an hour or two, they feel mentally drained and unable to focus more on what they study. This affects your overall academic productivity negatively.

These concentration issues are quite common nowadays. However, you can deal with it very easily by focusing on your lifestyle, habits, style of thinking, correct approach to study and some other specific strategies. Here are some important strategies which can help you deal with your concentration issues.

#### **1: Study in a place where you can concentrate more – A place having no distractions**

Always study in a place with no distractions. Distractions are things which can easily prevent you concentrating on your study. The place where you study should have no

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distractions such as television, appealing colors and lights, complex sceneries or kids playing around. This is why some students find it very helpful to study at their desks (or study spaces) in their college or university because these study spaces have very few distractions compared to a room of the home. Moreover, at those study spaces, they naturally enter into a frame of mind where they can totally focus on your study. If you have to study at your home, your room should be simple, well-lit and ventilated. Try to minimize the distractions as much as possible. Better use a chair and table for your study rather than using a bed.

### **2: Avoid other activities while you do your study**

Some students have a habit of using cell phones for texting friends, listening to music and using social media sites while they are studying their books. Similarly, while studying on a laptop, they may use social media sites at the same time. This is not a good habit. When you do so, even after hours of sitting, you do very little study in the real sense because you waste all your time and attention on those other activities. When you are studying, avoid all other activities so that you can concentrate on your study and also give more time to your study. If you are receiving messages and notifications on your phone while you are studying, it is better to switch off your phone so you can fully concentrate on your study and be able to study effectively and productively.

### **3: Throw other thoughts out of your mind while you study**

When you are studying, you should only think about your study. If you are thinking (while you are studying) about the movie you watched last night or the party you will attend the next day, you are not paying full attention to what you are studying.

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When you sit to study, you have to forget about every other thing. Realize that this is your study time, and you should be totally focused on your study. If there is any pending task which is creeping into your mind and you cannot stop thinking about it, it is better to go and do that task first and come back to your study. Generally, you may have not some pending task, but still, some irrelevant thoughts may haunt your mind while you study. You have to throw these irrelevant thoughts out of your mind. In the beginning, it may seem a little difficult but with the passage of time, you will acquire this habit of concentrating on your study and not thinking about other things

### **4: Eagerness for study**

Eagerness for the study is indispensable for concentration. You should have a love for your study. If you have the internal desire to study and learn things, you will naturally be able to concentrate on your study. However, if a student takes study as a burden on him, it becomes difficult for him to concentrate on his study. Therefore, develop a love for your study. Make study an enjoyable activity for yourself.

### **5: Take short breaks – Avoid studying for long hours in one sitting**

The way the human brain is designed, it is not advisable to study for long hours in one go. Studying for many hours without breaks affects your mental capacity to concentrate as well as lowers your interest in your study. This is why some students complain that when they study for many hours, at some point they feel totally drained and unable to focus more. You should take short breaks when you have to study for a long time. Take short breaks after every one or two hours to relax your brain and regain your concentration power for further study. During your break time, you can engage in some recreational activity, for instance go for a short walk, or



listen to music and then come back to your study. Short breaks help you sustain your concentration power for longer.

### **6: Have a good amount of sleep daily**

Sleep is essential for physical as well as mental health. It relaxes you and your brain. It helps your brain restore its full concentration capacity. Have at least seven or eight hours of sleep every night. Some students have the habit of keeping awake till late at night. However, 'early to bed early to rise' works the best when it comes to overall physical and mental health.

### **7: Physical and mental exercise are important for concentration power**

Physical exercise on a regular basis is good for brain health. It enhances blood flow to the brain. During physical exercise, your body releases certain hormones which keep you happy and help in normal brain function. It is better to make a habit of at least going for walk for 30 minutes every day. In addition to physical activities, some exercises are specifically good for brain health such as the exercise of concentrating on a dot on a paper, and Yoga.

### **8: Eat healthy diet**

Certain proteins, vitamins and minerals are essential to brain health. Therefore, eat a healthy diet. You should include things in your diet which have nutrients good for brain. For instance, omega 3 is believed to be good for brain health which is found in fish. Therefore, including fish in your diet would be a good idea. Similarly, you should reduce the amount of caffeine (tea or coffee) because they may act as temporary stimulants but renders you sluggish after some time of its. Therefore, excessive consumption of tea or coffee may not be a good thing in long term.

### **9: Prioritize your tasks**

Prioritizing and scheduling your task is very much important. When you make a schedule and stick to it, you give proper time to every activity, such as your study, games, physical exercise, music, hanging out with friends. This is a systematic approach to performing all activities in a good way. However, for studies, it would help more because when will you study, you would only think about your study and be able to focus more on your study without thinking about other activities.

### **Perseverance in Study – Be Persistent, Don't stop!**

Perseverance means to keep your efforts continued despite difficulties until the aim is achieved. The quality of perseverance is crucial for success in every field of life.

People have certain goals in their life. To achieve these goals, they have to undertake some efforts. They also face challenges in the pursuit of their goals. In such a situation, most people get discouraged and stop their efforts. However, some people cope with these challenges tactfully and keep their efforts continued. They are never scared or discouraged by challenges. They never stop struggling and finally they get the success. This reflects on the fact that the difference between successful and unsuccessful people is that whether they are persistent in their effort or not.

Perseverance is also very much important for a student. Every student has academic goals such as to study and learn their books; to be able to reproduce their learning in the exam; and to score high in the exam. To achieve these goals, they have to carry on certain efforts such as attending their class lectures, doing study, making-study notes, visiting the library for books, and preparing themselves for an exam. They may

also face certain challenges in the pursuit of their academic goals, which may discourage them. Therefore, students should be always persistent in their efforts to achieve their academic goals.

Perseverance in the study means to keep doing study regularly and to never give up it even if they are difficulties or situations which may discourage you and divert you from your studies. However, the majority of students are not persistent in their studies. They may do their study one day; then give up it for several days; and then start it again for a day or two. They generally repeat this practice – of starting and quitting study – during their academic sessions. This habit is not good for effective study. The correct approach is to keep on doing studies and attending class lectures regularly. Such approach helps the student enhance his academic productivity. By contrast, the habit of doing a study one day and quitting it for several days affects the academic outcomes negatively.

In this article, we will discuss three areas with regard to perseverance: 1) common obstacles to perseverance in the study, 2) the importance of perseverance for studies, and 3) how to become persistent for study?

### **1: Why do students give up their studies? – Obstacles to persistence**

The common causes for giving up studies, by students, are as follows:

1. Some students do not have a love for their study. They take study as a burden on them and thus, do study only due to fear of failure or getting less marks in the exam.

Since they have no eagerness for their study, it makes it difficult for them to continue their study for longer.

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2. Students sometimes may find a topic difficult to understand. They either get discouraged or they simply think to study it some other day (rather than trying harder to understand it on that very day or to get the teacher's help to understand it).
3. Most students get too excited when they have to start their study newly. They may study more on their first day which gives them a sense of overconfidence or satisfaction that he has studied a lot. This sense of overconfidence and satisfaction make him somewhat careless about also doing his study the next day.
4. Another aspect of studying more than one's capacity on the first day is that it may exhaust the student mentally and he may feel unable to study the next day.
5. Student life includes common activities such as playing games, watching movies, listening to music, using social media sites or hanging out with friends. Some students give these activities more time than their need; and they forget their foremost and primary task that is to do their study. This is a common problem nowadays that students, rather than have a balanced approach to all activities, may give more time to their non-academic activities.
6. Some students do not plan their studies and work haphazardly. They do not have a clear plan which may keep them studying on regular basis.
7. Some students have problems in their study place which unconsciously makes it difficult for them to continue their study on regular basis. The study place should be well-lit, well-ventilated, and neither too hot nor too cold. Similarly, the study place should be free from distractions which may divert students' attention from their

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study such as a sound of a television coming from an adjacent room which is turned on there for some hours daily.

### **2: Why is persistence important for study?**

Persistence is important for studies in the following ways:

1. It helps students save time and complete their courses on time. When a student studies his books daily, he easily completes his courses before the exam. By contrast, the students who do not study regularly, their courses become a burden on them with the passage of time. Such students feel stressed during the exam because they have to cover a lot of their courses in the short time of the exam in order to prepare themselves for the exam. Sometimes, they may also end up getting less marks in the exam.
2. Another aspect of persistent study, that is the most important, is that it helps in learning topics in sequence easily. The topics in the books are generally in a sequence where the learning gained from a topic helps in understanding the next topic. When a student studies and learn topics one day, and then he studies another topic the next day, the leaning he has gained from the previous topic helps him understand the next topic. When you quit study for somedays, you have forgotten what you had learnt from the previous topic. It is quite natural when we learn something, that learning fades in our brain with the passage of time.
3. If a student studies due to fear of failure or getting less marks in exam, he may study only on some specific days (with long gaps in them) during the academic session. Such study may enable them to get average marks and to only pass the exam, but they do not benefit from their study in the real sense.

4. It makes the student take his study seriously and thus, instills in him a sense of responsibility towards his academic activities.

### **3: How to become persistent for study?**

Some important factors of developing the habit of persistence in study are as follows:

1. The first thing, that is required for perseverance in the study, is the student's interest in his studies. Develop a love for your study. Do not take study as a boring activity. Develop your interest in your study; and make the study an enjoyable activity for yourself. 2. Always plan about your studies. Think about how many courses (subjects and chapters) you have to study in the academic session and how much time do you have to complete them on time. Make a clear plan and follow it. Your plan should reflect what to study and how much to study each day.

2. It is a common habit of most students to always say: I will start my study tomorrow and would surely start it tomorrow. Their tomorrow, to start their study, never comes. This is like cheating our self by satisfying our self with a false pledge to start from the next day and to allow ourselves to waste time. You should start it from today and keep studying on the regular basis.

3. Never wait for an ideal day to do your study. Every day is an ideal day for doing the study.

4. If you find any topic hard to understand, don't be scared or discouraged. Simply think about what you can do about it such as to study it from other books or taking help from a teacher. Don't leave the difficult topic for any other day. You must learn it today. Nothing is difficult if you have the passion to do it today.

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5. Be serious and concerned about your studies. Being a student, your primary and most important task is to study and learn your books and prepare yourself for the exam.
6. You may have other activities such as playing games, watching movies, using social media sites and hanging out with friends. You should have a balanced approach to all activities of your life. However, your study is the most important for you among all your activities and thus, should get comparatively more of your time, attention and energy.
7. Do not study for long hours in one sitting. Take short breaks during the long study. It will refresh you and help you restore your concentration power, and will let you not lose interest in your study. This is crucial for sustainable study.
8. Remember! If you have given up your study for a period of time and you have to take a new start, do not study more than your capacity, particularly on that very first day. As noted earlier, it may make you overconfident, and resultantly you become careless to think of studying the next day. Similarly, this may exhaust you to the extent where you lose your energy and interest to be able to do study the next day.
9. Have a healthy lifestyle such as take physical exercise (at least a short walk) daily, eat a healthy diet; and have a good amount of sleep daily. These are important for sustainable study. Among these factors, your sleeping habit is the most important in relation to the persistent study. The time you sleep and get up has an impact on all your routine activities including your study. Avoid keeping awake till late at night unnecessarily. 'Early to bed early to rise' is a generally good sleeping habit and is also good for persistent study.

## **Time Management for Studies**

Time management is one of the qualities of brilliant students. Time management refers to scheduling tasks and assigning them the proper amount of time. It is the planning about studies to utilize the available time productively. It involves thinking about how to take out time from other activities to be used of study or how to avoid those activities which may waste your precious time. The life of students encompasses academic as well as non-activities. The academic activities include attending class lectures, studying books, making study-notes, making preparation for exams and attempting exams. The non-academic activities include playing games, watching movies, listening to music, using social media sites, and hanging out with friends.

The academic and non-academic activities are equally important, and students should normally have a balanced approach to all activities of life. However, the major concern of a student is and should be his academics. This is the real job of a student. This is what a student is meant for – to study his books and prepare for their exams. With this in mind, a student must manage time for his studies to achieve their academic goals. The most important aspect of time management for study is to get more time from other routine activities for studies. However, some students may find it difficult to manage their time adequately and to maximize their academic outcomes. Therefore, this article teaches the techniques for good time management for students, as follows:

### **1: Plan about your studies**



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A very known saying is 'when you fail to plan, you plan to fail'. This saying reflects the importance of planning for success in an activity. A student should always plan about his studies. He should think that which books to study, how much to study, when to study, and how to make preparation for the exam. He should make a clear plan for himself which serves as a roadmap for him. For instance, student may think about how many subjects or topics he has to study in the academic session and how much time he has to study them before the exam. He calculates the total number of topics (within all subjects) and available times in terms of days. Then, he divides the total number of topics on total number of days, it gives him an idea that how many topics should be studied daily to complete the subjects before the exam. This is a simple example. Your plan can be slightly different depending upon the nature of your studies. However, you should make a clear plan. It will keep you on the right track towards the achievement of your academic goals. When you know how much work you have to do each day, you feel concerned about completing your work each day. On the other hand, working haphazardly without a plan, a student may end up having a huge burden of study at the end of their academic session.

### **2: Fix your priorities in the order of their importance**

Make a list of your routine activities including academic as well as non-academic activities. Prioritize them in order of their importance. First, this will let you know what to do first and what to do next. Second, it will help you in allocating the right amount of time to each activity according to its importance. This is the general approach to time management. However, being a student, you should have a slightly different approach to scheduling your activities.

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As you are a student and want to manage time for studies because it is the first and foremost activity for you. It means you to take out some time from other activities to be used for your studies. Therefore, look at the list of activities you have prioritized in order. See, which activities can be reduced, and which activities can be skipped altogether. For instance, taking physical exercise (such as going for walk or any other physical activity) is essential for physical as well as mental health, therefore, it should be given some time to in your schedule. However, you can fairly reduce the time for activities such as watching movies, listening to music and using social media websites. These are the common culprits which waste a lot of time of students. Therefore, you may take a bit aggressive approach to minimize them, such as by not wasting time watching movies and using social media sites all day. This would involve some habit changes, but if you think about it seriously, you will save a lot of time for your studies.

### **3: Know the real worth of time – change thinking style**

Time is the most valuable resource but unfortunately, many of us do not realize its real worth and spend it in many useless activities. However, for effective time management, the realization of the real value of time is important. Being a student, you should understand that your time very precious. You cannot afford to waste it. You have to utilize every second of time productively in your studies to achieve your academic goals. When you realize the value of time and accept it, you will naturally be able to refrain from wasting it. This realization is the first step towards good time management.

### **4: Learn to study more in little time – speed up your study**

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Some students may spend hours studying a single topic because they may also engage in other activities while they are studying such as using a mobile phone to text friends or opening another website page in the browser while they are studying on their computer. A student must have the habit of speedy study. They should be able to study more in little time. They have to prepare a lot of courses and the slow speed of study will help them. Therefore, you should develop the habit of speedy study and you can do this by practising it. If certain factors like the aforementioned things are affecting the speed of your study, it is better to switch off your phone or not to open any other website while you are studying on your computer.

### **5: Make your study place conducive for your study**

The place where you study also counts for proper time management. Your study place should let you continue your study for a longer time. Your study place should well-lit, well ventilated and neither too cold nor too hot, so you can utilize your available time productively. Using a chair and table is the best way to do study. Do not use your bed or an overly comfortable sofa for study that may make you somewhat lazy and sleepy. Your study place should have a clock there on a wall so you can easily know how much time you have spend on a specific subject.

It is better to study at one common place daily which you accepted psychological as your study place. When you study at one common place, it helps you easily enter into a frame of mind to take a start quickly and keep studying for a fairly good time. Do not change your study place too often.

### **6: Have good sleeping habit**

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Sleeping habit has a lot to do with time management. Some students have a habit of keep waking till late at night and getting up in the morning and sometimes late in the noon. This changing sleeping habit affects your all routine activities including your studies. You should have fixed timings for your sleep so you can follow your routine in a scheduled manner. This is an important aspect of the manageability of time.

Moreover, have a good amount of sleep because it is essential for your physical as well as mental health. Take about seven or eight hours of sleep every night. It will help your body relax as well as help your brain restore its full working capacity for the next day.

### **7: Allocate some time to other activities too**

Some non-academic activities are an important part of life. For instance, taking physical exercise and playing physical games are good for your health as well as they refresh you and thus, help you sustain your study for a longer time. Similarly, some recreational activities such as listening to music may also be assigned a little time in your schedule, so you may not miss them and keep thinking about them while you are studying.

## **How to Make Good Study-notes**

Good study-notes are crucial for effective learning and preparation for the exam. The common sources of learning for a student are class lectures, books and online study resources. Every student learns from these sources and prepares themselves for the exam. Study-notes are the extract of important points from these sources of learning and help you learn your topics easily, effectively and speedily. In addition to their help in the revision of courses in normal routine during an academic session,

they act as the real game-changer when it comes to making preparation for an exam.

During exam days, students generally have a very short time to cover a lot of courses for their papers. Study-notes help them to cover their courses very speedily and perfectly. Since they provide the most important points, the student understands each topic in its entirety without reading the whole book.

However, the point is that the study-notes should be made in a way that they can serve as a useful source for achieving the intended academic goals. Therefore, it is very important to understand the correct techniques of making useful study-notes.

In this article, we will discuss various aspects of good study-notes as well as techniques to make them.

### **1: Characteristics of good study-notes**

The characteristics of good study-notes are as follows:

1. Easy to understand and learn.
2. It saves your time.
3. It contains the important ideas from class lectures, books and online resources.
4. It is a comprehensive extract of learning from different study materials, so you don't need to read many books.
5. It enables you to present your answers in an exam in the best way.
6. Being made by you, you feel confident about it and acquainted with it.
6. It can be easily revised when needed.
7. The process of making study-notes is itself helpful in learning. When you write down the important points on paper while you are studying a topic, this process itself makes it easier for you to learn the topic as compared to simply reading the

topic without writing anything. This is because when you write the points while you study, you give your brain some time to process and store the learnt information

### **2: Preparing good study-notes**

Making useful notes is a two steps process: 1) collecting points from class lectures, books and online study resources, and 3) giving a proper shape to the collected points to make the final study-notes. These two steps are explained as follows:

#### **A:Collecting notes during class lecture**

1. Teachers are experts of their subject who have gained their knowledge through studying books and teaching them for years. The learning, that teachers provide, can generally not be acquired by students simply by reading their books. Similarly, the teacher's learning is not from one book, they have generally studied many books and provide you with the extract of different books. The purpose here is to reflect on the importance of taking notes from teachers' lectures.
2. You should have a notebook or loose pages and a pen while attending a class lecture to take notes.
3. While a lecture is delivered, be attentive and focused on the lecture.
4. Listen to the ideas shared by your teacher very carefully. Write down the important pieces of information shared by your teacher.
5. In most lectures, the teachers provide some points for conceptual learning which should be noted down.
6. Pay more attention to terminologies, definitions and jargon shared by your teacher and note them down with you.

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7. The teacher may share some important information that helps in understanding the topic but may not be present in your coursebooks. These types of information should be noted down.

**B:** Collecting notes from books and other study resources

1. Books and guides constitute a huge source of learning. Similarly, nowadays, the internet is widely used for accessing online study resources.

2. Using different sources (e.g., book, guide, and internet) for learning the same topic is the best approach to learn the topic in its entirety.

3. If you are using these different sources for learning, your study-notes should include all the ideas (important points) gained from these different sources. This way, your study-notes will present the complete picture (learning) of a topic. This ensures your high score in the exam because teachers assess you based on how many aspects of the topics you have discussed in your answer.

4. Using different sources for making study notes also helps you because you will have everything at one place, and you would not need to study all these sources again.

5. Whether you study one source or many sources, the important thing is the art of taking study-notes. You have to study the source with concentration and attention. Write down every important piece of information but everything from the source may not be necessarily noted down for making study-notes. Your study-notes should not be a straight copy of your book and should not include unnecessary long explanations. It should only include the important points. With this in mind, you should also be careful not to skip the important piece of information.

6. As noted earlier, that you do not have to include everything in your study-notes.

This means to include the pieces of information which makes the crux of the topic as well as helps you easily remind of its relevant explanation (even if that is not included in study-notes) and help you understand the topic completely when you will use them for study in future.

7. While making study-notes, you must consider the terminologies, definitions, names of the types of things and names of specific stages involved in the topic

8. The study-notes should be made with the exam in mind. You have to consider these points which are likely to be asked in the exam.

### **3: Giving proper shape to the collected notes**

Since a student collects points from class lectures, books and other sources, these points are collected at different times and on different pages. Similarly, the points collected from a lecture may be in a dispersed form on a page because, during the lecture, the student is primarily focused on learning the lecture. Therefore, these points should be brought into a proper shape to be used as useful study-notes, as explained below:

1. The purpose is to bring your dispersed points together.
2. You may write your study-notes as paragraphs or bullet points.
3. Most school or college students prefer to write their study-notes as paragraphs whereas some university students prefer writing them as bullet points.
4. Whichever style you prefer, present your points in a proper sequence.



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5. Use headings and sub-headings for points so they can be distinguished as separate topics or parts of the topics. Better use different colors for headings and sub-headings.
6. Add diagrams and tables in your study-notes where needed.
7. One important aspect is that bring your study-notes in a shape which helps how to present your ideas in an exam. In the exam, you should present your ideas in an impressive way to score high in the exam. This means, what sequence should be used to present the ideas and which ideas to be included. For instance, it helps you understand if it is better to present ideas by grouping them and giving them headings and if a conclusion needs to be drawn at the end of the answer.
8. Some pieces of information should be highlighted with the help of a highlighter to be able to prepare them for MCQs.
9. Writing study-notes in your own handwriting is better (than writing them on a computer), however, the writing should be clear and easily readable in future.

### **4: Saving your study-notes**

1. It is better to use a notebook for writing your study-notes rather than loose pages.
2. If you are using loose pages, give each page a number, and save them in a folder.
3. Keep them in a safe place so you may not lose them, because they are your valuable resource that will help you achieve your academic goals.

## **Making a Study Schedule - Study Planning**

### **Planning for study**

Good planning is a key to success in every walk of life, but it becomes even more important when it comes to academics. Success in your studies depends on how well you plan your tasks. The secret of successful students lies in properly planning about their academics. They plan their academic activities such as attending class-lectures on daily basis, doing self-study, making study-notes, and preparing themselves for exams. Their work is never hap-hazard. They know what to do, when do and how to do. This helps them follow a study time-table based on adequate study planning. For instance, they know that some subjects require more time and attention than others. Therefore, such subjects are given more priority while scheduling the courses.

Planning makes it easier to get the desired success in an exam because a good plan keeps students on right track for the achievement of their academic goals. Every student must properly plan his studies to become a successful student. It helps in saving time and completing the courses before exam; and not to get stressed during the exam. Those students, who do not plan properly, are usually stressed during the days of exam because they have to cover a lot of courses in a short time; and sometimes end up getting less marks in their exams.

The study plan should be based on the calculation of how much work is required during the academic session to complete studies before the exam. For making a good plan, you should think that how many class-lectures will you attend in an academic session, and how many books (or courses) will you need to study. Similarly, if you need to study other study-materials, you also take that into account while planning about your studies. For instance, you want to make some good study-notes so that you can easily revise them for preparing yourself for an exam. Then, you should think about the time that is available to you for carrying out your study. Similarly, also consider other activities of your life such as some hobbies and games, etc. Once you consider all these aspects of planning, write down your all points on a page. Think about it how to schedule all the activities to make a productive and

workable plan for yourself. It will serve as a roadmap reflecting on the number of chapters, lessons, and topics according to a schedule.

### **Making a Schedule for Studies**

Now, as you have learnt the importance of planning for academics, you should make a good schedule for your studies. A good schedule makes you punctual and helps you do every task at its correct time. It helps you understand how much part of your course you should complete daily, weekly and monthly so complete your preparation for the exam in time. Therefore, you should make a clear schedule and stick to it.

Now, as you have learnt the importance of planning for academics, you should make a good schedule for your studies. A good schedule makes you punctual and helps you do every task at its correct time. It helps you understand how much part of your course you should complete daily, weekly and monthly so complete your preparation for the exam in time. Therefore, you should make a clear schedule and stick to it.

Let me explain to you how to make a simple schedule for your studies. It is a simple schedule just to give you an idea of how to make a study schedule for yourself. Your schedule may slightly vary according to you the nature of your courses, however, this will give you a basic idea of how to make a schedule.

1. Determine the total number of subjects (or books), chapters, topics, exercises for lessons, and other studyunits which you musy study to prepare for an exam at the end of your academic session.
2. Calculate the total time available to you during your academic session or period till your exam. Determine how many days, weeks and months are available for preparation.
3. Divide the total number of study-units (e.g., subjects, chapters, lessons or topics) on the total time units (e.g. days, weeks, months) available for your study. It would

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give you an idea about how much study you should do each day, each week or each month to complete your courses within the available time.

4. For instance, if you divide the total number of topics on the total number of days, you will get an idea about how many topics should you study each day to complete your course within time. For these topics (to be studied each day), you can also choose specific times (e.g. 10 AM, 12 AM, 3 PM, etc.) of the day to study them according to these times.

5. Once you complete this calculation, draw a two columns table. Write the dates in one column and the study unit (e.g. topics, lessons, or chapter) in the other column.

### **An example for understanding**

Suppose a student of O-Level has four subjects and five months for preparation. He may make a schedule for himself by calculating total study-units of his courses and total time available for them, as follows:

1st Subject has 170 topics

2nd Subject has 205 topics

3rd Subject has 175 topics

4th Subject has 200 topics

Total Topics :  $(170+205+175+200) = 750$  Topics Total days :  $(30 \text{ days} \times 5 \text{ months}) = 150$  Days

Divide total topics on total available days:  $750 \text{ topics} \div 150 \text{ days} = 5 \text{ topics per day}$

It gives the student an idea that if he studies 5 topics each day, he can easily complete has all courses in the available time.

### **How to make a Study Time-table**

The most valuable resource of a student is time. A student should understand the value of time in order to become a brilliant student. He should know how to use his time productively. A time-table is a tool that helps students utilize their time properly and keeps them on the right track towards their academic goals. Without a timetable, students are likely to waste much of their precious time. The timetable helps students manage their time for studies as well as other activities of life such as their hobbies and games. It helps students give every task proper time in a balanced style. It prioritizes your study activities and tells you when to do them and how much to do. A timetable is important for achieving academic goals. Therefore, students must make a timetable for them and should follow it. The timetable should be workable and easy to follow as well as it should help you make best of the available time. This means that a student should adopt the correct method of making a timetable. Let me tell you stepwise about the correct method of making a useful timetable.

#### **1: Write down the names of common activities that you do daily**

Make a list of all activities that you do in your routine. It should include your study activities as well as other activities of life such as playing a game, listening to music, and sleeping, etc. Write down them on paper to have a clear view of them.

#### **2: Write down the names of subjects or books that are included in your course**

Every student has several books included in their academic course which they have to study and prepare for the exam. These are the books which you are taught by your teachers in your school or college. Write down the names of these books or subjects on paper.

#### **3: Calculate the time that you have other than the time for college or school and sleep**

Attending classes at school or college is a part of student life. Every student takes his class lectures on a daily basis. When he comes home back from school or college, he

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has free time to do different things until he sleeps in the night. The timetable is generally made for this duration of time. Therefore, for making a timetable, you should calculate how much free time do you have other than your school (or college) time as well as sleep time. Suppose a student comes home from school or college at 2 PM (in the afternoon) and sleep at 12 AM in the night. The time duration between 2 PM and 12 AM is 10 hours. This is the available time, for which, the student has to make a timetable.

#### **4: Allocate time to each subject and other common activities**

Once you calculate the available time, the next step is to divide this available time on your subjects and other activities (e.g., games for refreshment). This allocation of time to each subject or book should be done very carefully to have the best timetable. Read the following points:

1. Some subjects require more time than others. Therefore, allocate time to each subject based on its length (in terms of topics, lessons or chapters) and the ease or difficulty to study and understand it.
2. . Some subjects require more attention and concentration than others. For instance, the difficult subjects. Such subjects should be assigned those hours of the day when you feel relax and able to study them with full concentration and attention.
3. Easy subjects may be assigned time in the late hours (in the night) because, at the night, you may feel a bit tired and would not be able to fully concentrate. Therefore, it would be good to study easy subjects at night.
4. At some places between the subjects, allocate some time for refreshment activities such as physical exercise or playing a game. They refresh your mind for continuing your study.
5. Allocate times to all activities in a way so that your timetable is workable, and you can easily follow it.

#### **5: Write your timetable on a paper**

Take white paper. Draw a table having two columns and several rows. In the first column, write the times allocated to each subject or activity. In the second column,

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write the names of the subjects or activities. The name of each subject and its time should be in the same line (or row) of the table so you can easily see which time is for which subject. Your timetable is ready. This would be a common timetable that you will follow each day. However, if you want to make different timetables for different days of the week, you can simply add more columns to this table; and each column will have a different arrangement of subjects for different days.

### **6: Paste your timetable on a wall in your study place**

After making a good timetable for yourself, it is better to paste it on a wall in your study place rather than keeping in a drawer or cupboard. It should be on the wall all the time so you can easily see it. Similarly, when it is on the wall, it will also reflect as a reminder for you to remind you that you have to follow a timetable and would thus, help you utilize your time productively.

### **How To Sharpen Your Brain**

Brain sharpness means the readiness of the brain to perform promptly to understand and analyze things. Since the brain works behind all our actions, the quality of brain sharpness is required for good performance of all actions whether they physical or mental actions. However, some actions are majorly dependent on the brain where the sharpness of the brain matters the most. For instance, we have to find a solution for a complex problem in our routine life. Similarly, for effective learning while studying a book as well as for retaining the learnt ideas in the brain, good cognitive power is required. In the context of the studying books, we sometimes call it **pick-up power**.

Sharp minded people always perform well in their life. In our life, we deal with situations, where we have to observe and think about different aspects of the situation keenly and promptly. This is where our brain is processing certain information and weighing different aspects of the situation to help us arrive at an intended conclusion such as to solve a problem, to make a decision, to respond to

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someone, or to react to the situation in some specific way. Our performance depends on how readily our brain processes the information to help us reach the desired conclusion. This whole process generally involves 1) observing through sensory organs such as eyes and ears, 2) interpreting the observed information by the brain, 3) processing the observed information as well as some relevant information gained through past observations by the brain. The process depends on how quickly the brain acts in these areas.

Sharp mindedness is a sign of powerful thinking. It helps you cope with stressful situations. It helps you find answers to queries. It helps you understand things and react to them promptly. It enables you explore more dimensions of a thing or scenario than an average mind. It gives you the power of creativity. Brain sharpness helps in every walk of life. However, some people may face problems related to brain sharpness. Sometimes using simple techniques, you can improve the sharpness of your brain.

There are certain ways to become sharp-minded person, as follows:

### **1: Exercise your brain by using it to solve problems**

Many people join a gym and lift heavy weights on a regular basis so that the muscles (biceps and triceps) of their arms can become strong for heavy weight-lifting. The same is the case with the brain. The more you use it, the more you enhance its power. Like any other organ, brain-power can also be enhanced by exercising it regularly.

Many people join a gym and lift heavy weights on a regular basis so that the muscles (biceps and triceps) of their arms can become strong for heavy weight-lifting. The same is the case with the brain. The more you use it, the more you enhance its power. Like any other organ, brain-power can also be enhanced by exercising it regularly.

1. Playing games such as chess, puzzle games, scrabble, etc.
2. = 2. Solving analytical and mind-provoking questions and problems. 3. Learning a new thing such as a language. It helps in awakening the sleeping faculties of the brain.
3. Making paintings, sceneries and hand-made things.



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4. For students – Trying to learn difficult topics, writing explanations, exploring aspects of a topic as many as possible.

### **2: Think critically and logically – Have a scientific thinking style**

Some people do not have a correct thinking approach. They look at and think about only the apparent and superficial aspects of things and never try to go deeper into it. They observe things externally and ignore the internal unseeable aspect of things. This is not a good habit, but the good thing is that it can be changed with practice. If you want to sharpen your brain, you have to think critically, rationally and logically. This is called a scientific thinking style. You have to pay attention to the seeable as well as unseeable aspects of a phenomenon.

For instance, if you need to solve an issue, think about its various dimensions such as causes of the problem, impacts of the problem, and various possible solution to the problem. You should also think about the pros and cons of each of these solutions to the problem because most people may ignore these unseeable aspects of the solution and they may end up making a new problem with their chosen solution to the problem. This is just an example and the style of thinking approach may vary from situation to situation.

Similarly, when you need to study a topic, you should not simply accept what you read. It is better to think about its every dimension. When you do so, your brain will generate a number of questions regarding content of the topic you are studying. You will also try to find answers to those questions. In this way, you will learn the topic in its entirety. The aim is to try to go deeper into things as much as possible. If you make a habit, you will develop good brain power with the passage of time.

### **3: Practice some mindfulness meditation techniques**

There are some mindfulness meditation techniques which are practised by many people. These techniques help a lot in improving memory, focus, concentration and overall brain power. One of these techniques is breathawareness meditation. This is a commonly practised meditation technique for having good brain power. For breath-awareness meditation, a person sits at a calm place; relaxes his body; inhales breath deeply and exhale it slowly; and fully concentrate on his breath while inhaling and exhaling it and ignores other things in the surrounding. This practice is believed

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to enhance focus, concentration and overall brain power. You can practice such a mindful meditation for 15 to 20 minutes daily.

#### **4: Eat a healthy diet having nutrients good for the brain.**

Certain proteins, vitamins and minerals are essential for brain health. Include these foods in your daily diet which consist of these nutrients. Similarly, Omega-3 is believed to have a good impact on brain health. Fish is a rich source of Omega-3 and can be included in the diet. Fruits have antioxidants such a vitamin E and beta carotene which protect brain cells from damage. Reduce consumption of foods which have high amounts of sugar.

#### **5: Physical exercise is essential for brain health**

Physical exercises enhance blood flow to all parts of the body including the brain. Similarly, during physical exercise the brain releases certain hormones which makes you feel happy as well as enhance your brain function. Physical exercise is also believed to strengthen brain cells and their connections within the brain. Make it a habit to do some sort of physical exercise daily. It can be a running exercise or a short walk on daily basis.

#### **6: Have a good amount of sleep daily**

Like other parts of the human body, the brain also needs some rest to be able to perform well. Sleep is very much important for brain health. When we sleep our brain relaxes and restores its full capacity to be used the next day. Similarly, during sleep, the brain processes and stores the information that we have learned during the day. Therefore, have a good sleeping habit. Take 7 to 8 hours of sleep every day. Sleep quality also matters for brain health. Interrupted sleep is generally not good. Try to sleep in a calm place so that your sleep may not be interrupted again and again.

#### **7: Avoid excessive use of tea and coffee**

We all enjoy tea and coffee because it acts as a stimulant for our brain. However, its excessive consumption is generally not good for brain health in the long run. It does act as an instant stimulant but leaves you sluggish after some time. Similarly,

according to some studies, overconsumption of beverages due to their high content of sugar may not be good for brain health in the long run. Tea and coffee have normally a good amount of sugar in them. Therefore, their normal use is good but excessive use may be avoided.

### **How to Improve Your Memory Power for Study**

One of the qualities of brilliant students is having good memory. Students have to understand and learn things as well as to retain that learning in their mind for a period of time so they can reproduce their learning in their exams. Apart from this normal aspect of memory power, good memory power is also important for the process of learning things in a sequence. For instance, some students may have such a short span of memory that they can even not retain ideas from the previous line when they start reading the next line of their book. Therefore, a good span of memory is required for understanding the ideas (of a topic of study) in a sequence as well as for understanding the topic in its entirety. This means that memory power has two aspects: 1) the longer aspect to retain things for a long time such as to be able to write, what you have learnt, in your exam, and 2) the shorter aspect to retain things in a sequence. Nowadays, the issues of memory power with regard to both these aspects have become quite common. This affects the overall academic productivity of some students.

However, if you are a student and want to enhance your memory power, here are some useful tips to enhance your memory power for your studies.

#### **1: One time study is not enough – Revisions helps improve memory**

Studying a topic once is never enough to retain its ideas in brain for months. It is quite natural that when we study and learn something, this learning fades in our brain with the passage of time. It means that the studied topics should be revised at different times during an academic session. For instance, when you study and learn a topic, you should read it again after a month or two when you have time. When you

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revise it twice or thrice this way, the learning is strengthened in your brain, and this becomes a fairly permanent part of your memory. This is how the human brain works. No matter, how well you study and learn something but if you do not revise it after some period of time, you will forget it as you have never studied it. Revision is important; and most students practice it for strengthening their learning and retaining it in the brain for a long time.

### **2: Writing down the main points while you study – Reading loud to retain ideas**

These are very helpful tips. While you are studying a topic, you should write down its important points on a separate paper. By doing so, you learn the topic in the best way as well as the learnt ideas are getting stored in your brain while you write them on a separate paper. This is because when you simply read, you just run on sentences without giving your brain enough time to process and store the information. Many students have this habit of writing down points on a paper while they study because it helps them in learning ideas and retaining them in their brain for longer. Moreover, the written points of the topics can also be used as study-notes for studying them in future.

Another good tip is reading sentences aloud while studying them. When you read some topic, you should read its sentences loud (at a normal volume of your voice so at least you can hear them while you read them) rather than reading them silently. Some students find it helpful in learning a topic and retaining that learning in their brain for a longer time. This is because this gives your brain an opportunity to learn by reading as well as by listening to it when you read them.

### **3: Associating an idea with another idea to retain it in mind for a long time**

According to some theories of Psychology, we learn and remember things by associating them with other relevant things. It is true when it comes to learning the ideas of a topic in its sequence as well as the topic in its entirety. Everything, we study, has many pieces of information (or ideas). Therefore, when you study a topic, try to associate its one idea with another idea of the same topic. This is simply like remembering the ideas of a topic the way we usually remember the pieces of information of a story in a sequence. For instance, a story has pieces of information in a sequence, its every piece of information gets naturally associated with the next

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piece of information occurring in a sequence; and this is why, we can easily remember the whole story. However, for remembering the ideas (pieces of information) of a topic, we should intentionally develop some association between them in our mind to easily remember them.

### **4: Build a sketch of ideas in your mind – a story form for long topics**

As noted earlier, remembering by association helps. However, some topics are long; and they have many stages involved in them. For instance, a topic of chemistry where the chemical process includes a number of stages, and every stage has a good amount of information in them. You have to learn such topics as well as remember them in the proper sequence.

You need to develop a sketch of all the processes (e.g., stages, phases, etc.) of the topic in your mind. Then, convert it into a form of a story in your mind such as that this thing happened first, then this other thing happened and so on. When you build a memorizable story sketch for it, it becomes quite easier to remember all parts of the topic.

### **5: Make short abbreviations (or phrases) for remembering complicated ideas**

Every book has some formulas, equations, and specific terminologies. These are very specific things which the student must memorize. They should learn but they should also memorize them in their original form. For instance, you have to remember a formula or an equation to use them to solve a numerical question in your exam. It sometimes becomes very difficult because there are generally many such formulas and equations in a book; and the student has to remember every formula or equation in its exact form. It sometimes confuses students to remind themselves of these formulas in the exam. It is better to use a short abbreviation or phrase for such equations and formulas, as explained in the following example.

**Example 1.** We may see the following common formulas in 10th grade Mathematics and Physics.

$$\sin \theta = \text{Perpendicular} / \text{Base}$$

$$\cos \theta = \text{Base} / \text{Hypotenuse}$$

$$\tan \theta = \text{Perpendicular} / \text{Base}$$

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It is maybe a bit difficult to remember these three formulas in their original form without mixing their parts in mind. Therefore, some students have made the following sentence to easily remember these three formulas.

Some people have curly brown hair through proper brushing.

### **6: Physical exercises as well as Brain exercises for enhancing memory**

Physical exercise is good for brain health because it enhances blood flow to the brain as well as help the body release certain hormones which are good for brain health.

Make a habit of at least going for a short walk daily.

Some specific exercises are especially important for brain health because they engage your brain in some activity. Brain, like any other part of the body, gets strong with use. Puzzle games specially designed for the brain, chess games, yoga and scrabble games are good for enhancing brain function. Similarly, recall-games are good for enhancing memory where you may look at some scenery for some time; and then go to another room and try to recall all the things shown in the scenery. When you do so, you give your brain an exercise to enhance its memory power .

### **7: Eat Healthy – A diet rich in nutrients for memory**

Certain proteins, vitamins and minerals are essential to brain health. Include things in your diet containing those nutrients in the right amount. For instance, include fish in your diet because they have good amount of Omega-3 fatty acid that is generally viewed as beneficial for brain health. Eat fruits and vegetables because they have good antioxidants such as carotene and vitamin E. These antioxidants protect the brain and junctions of brain cells from damage. Reduce the consumption of sugary foods.

### **8: Have a good amount of sleep**

Sleep is good for overall health, but it becomes even more important when it comes to brain health and memory power. When we sleep, our brain process and store the information that we have learnt all day. Sleep relaxes the brain and helps it restore its full capacity to understand and memorize things. Take about seven or eight hours of sleep every night to enhance your brain function.

### **Reference**

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