



Which of these are problem areas for you?

- I usually wait until the night before a test to study and then I cram.
- I can't study at all on some nights because of sports, church, etc.
- I usually study with the TV or music on.
- I do my homework while talking on the phone with friends.
- I don't do my homework at school because I daydream, doodle, or talk and all my work time slips away.
- I sometimes take notes but I have a hard time reading or making sense of them
- When I take notes I don't get what the teacher considers important in them.
- I don't do well on essay tests even if I study hard.
- I blank out on tests.

If you checked either of the first two statements you have trouble with time management. Never wait until the night before a test to cram.

Try to study a little each day to master the material. Plan your schedule at the beginning of the week. If you know you will have church on Wednesday, study for Thursday classes on Tuesday. Plan your schedule for the week by having a long-term schedule showing fixed commitments like church and practice and then you can see what you remaining options are. Then plan for the major events of the week that are not fixed like a dance or part or ballgame. This part of your schedule may change weekly. Make sure you list assignments that you know will be due during the week. Last put in the list of short term tasks that may be assigned daily and mark them off as you finish them.

The next three statements are about concentration or focus. When you are working at home, set up your area to work in with physical comfort in mind. The right lighting and temperature and a comfortable chair will always help with focus. Have all the material you need nearby so that you don't have to stop to find items you need. Have no distractions like TV, music, or telephones. Decide on the order in which to do the tasks paying special attention to due dates. Work in stretches of 30 – 45 minutes and then take a break.

If you are having trouble with note taking these tips may help you.

- Spend more time listening than writing.
- Instead of trying to write word for word, listen for main ideas and paraphrase, use key words, or outline.
- If it is written on the board it is important.
- Ask questions if you don't understand.
- Go over notes and rewrite them when needed.

If your problem is testing, as in the last two statements, start by studying material thoroughly. We call this over-learning. When you take the test, try to relax. Breathing with slow deep breaths will help you. Avoid negative self-talk. Make sure you are well rested. If you know there is an essay part to the test, you can study by trying to decide what those questions will be or what area of the subject matter they will come from and write practice answers. When you write an essay make sure it is readable, punctuated correctly, and has complete sentences.