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FREE STARTER KIT

# Study Smarter Starter Kit

7 study methods that actually work, plus a 1-week planner and an exam-night checklist.

# Study less. Remember more.

Most students study hard but not smart: re-reading, highlighting and last-night cramming. They feel productive but fade fast.

This kit gives you 7 methods that learning research keeps backing up. Each one fits on a single page. Don't try them all at once: **pick two this week**, then add more.


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# 01

# Active recall

## Close the book. Pull it out of your head.

Re-reading feels productive but mostly builds familiarity. Trying to remember something without looking is what makes it stick.

### How to do it

1. Read one section once, carefully.
2. Close the book and write down everything you remember.
3. Open the book, check, and mark what you missed in a different colour.
4. Next time, start with what you missed.

**Try it today**
Pick one topic from today's class. Write 5 questions on it and answer them tomorrow without notes.

**Avoid:** Highlighting whole pages and calling it revision.

# 02

# Spaced repetition

**Revise just before you forget.**

Memory fades fast after you first learn something. Each time you revise at a growing gap, it fades more slowly.

## How to do it

1. Learn the topic (Day 0).
2. Revise it on Day 1, Day 3, Day 7 and Day 14.
3. Use active recall each time, not re-reading.
4. Keep a simple list or calendar of what is due each day.

**Try it today**
Write today's topic in your planner on 4 future dates: +1, +3, +7 and +14 days.

**Avoid:** Revising everything the night before. Cramming fades in days.

# 03

# Teach it simply

**If you can't explain it, you don't know it yet.**

Explaining a concept in plain words, as if to a younger student, quickly shows you the gaps in your understanding.

## How to do it

1. Write the concept's name at the top of a blank page.
2. Explain it in simple words, with an example.
3. Wherever you get stuck or use jargon, go back to the source.
4. Rewrite the explanation shorter and clearer.

**Try it today**
Explain one formula or definition out loud to a friend, a sibling or your phone's voice recorder.

**Avoid:** Copying textbook definitions word for word.

# 04

# Past papers first

## Practise the exam, not just the chapter.

Answering real questions under time pressure is one of the most effective ways to prepare. It also shows you what examiners actually ask.

### How to do it

1. Collect the last 3 to 5 years' papers.
2. List which topics repeat most often, and start there.
3. Do at least one paper timed, with no notes.
4. Mark it honestly and revise only your weak answers.

**Try it today**
Find one past paper for your next exam and save it where you'll see it.

**Avoid:** Reading model answers without trying the question first.

# 05

# Mix it up

## Switch between types of problems.

Doing 20 problems of the same type feels smooth, but exams mix them. Mixing topics trains you to recognise which method each question needs.

### How to do it

1. Choose 3 related topics or problem types.
2. Make a set of practice questions that mixes them.
3. Before solving each one, name the method you will use.
4. Check whether you chose the right method.

**Try it today**
In your next maths or science session, alternate between two chapters instead of finishing one.

**Avoid:** Only practising the type of question you are already good at.

# 06

# The 25-minute focus routine

**Short sprints beat long, distracted hours.**

Focusing in short, timed blocks with real breaks makes starting easier and keeps your attention fresh.

## How to do it

1. Put your phone in another room, or on Do Not Disturb.
2. Set a timer for 25 minutes on one single task.
3. Take a 5-minute break: stand, stretch, drink water, no scrolling.
4. After 4 rounds, take a 20 to 30 minute break.

**Try it today**
Do 2 rounds before dinner and write down what you finished in each.

**Avoid:** 'Quick' phone checks during a round. They end the round.

# 07

# Sleep is part of studying

**Your brain saves what you learned while you sleep.**

Sleep helps turn what you studied into long-term memory. Cutting sleep before an exam often costs more marks than it saves.

## How to do it

1. Aim for 7 to 9 hours, at roughly the same times each night.
2. Stop screens 30 to 60 minutes before bed.
3. Do a quick recall session before sleeping.
4. Revise it again first thing the next morning.

**Try it today**
Set a fixed 'study stops here' time tonight and stick to it.

**Avoid:** All-nighters before the exam.

# Your 7-day study planner

Write the topic for each focus block. Tick a circle for every 25-minute round you finish. Add spaced-repetition dates in the "Revise" column.

| Day | Learn (new) | Practise | Revise | Rounds |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Mon | | | | ○ ○ ○ ○ |
| Tue | | | | ○ ○ ○ ○ |
| Wed | | | | ○ ○ ○ ○ |
| Thu | | | | ○ ○ ○ ○ |
| Fri | | | | ○ ○ ○ ○ |
| Sat | | | | ○ ○ ○ ○ |
| Sun | | | | ○ ○ ○ ○ |

# The night before the exam

- [ ] Revise only your summary notes and weak topics. Don't start new chapters.
- [ ] Do one round of active recall on the most important formulas and definitions.
- [ ] Pack your bag: admit card, ID, pens (2+), pencil, eraser, ruler, calculator if allowed, water.
- [ ] Check the exam time, venue and how long it takes to get there.
- [ ] Eat a normal dinner. Skip heavy, oily or new foods.
- [ ] Stop studying at a fixed time and keep screens away before bed.
- [ ] Sleep 7+ hours. Set two alarms.
- [ ] In the morning: a quick 10-minute recall, breakfast, leave early.
- [ ] In the exam: read the whole paper first, and start with what you know best.
- [ ] Leave 10 minutes at the end to check your answers.

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