

**5**

# Revision techniques

# Getting started

REGULAR WEEKLY AND MONTHLY MINI REVISION SESSIONS CAN HELP STUDENTS TO GET AHEAD.

It is important to have enough time to prepare for exams and tests. Starting early ensures everything can be covered and revised in a relaxed way, without pressure.

## Start early

It is easy to underestimate how long revision can take, especially if there are exams for several subjects. To be safe, start a few weeks before the exam, as the content will have to be revised more than once to ensure maximum retention. Having plenty of time allows for a stress-free revision period that can be used creatively, while still providing enough time for students to relax and pursue hobbies.

Start revision several weeks before the exam.

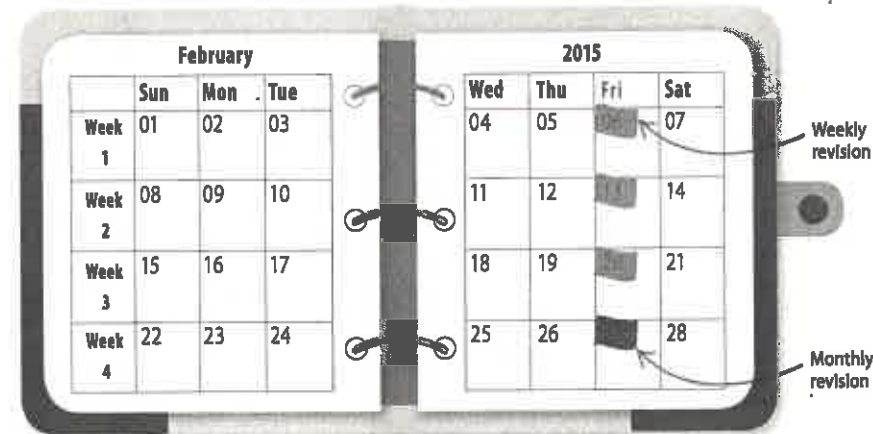
### Visual reminders

Visual reminders help with planning. Highlight the exam date in a calendar, then count backwards to determine when to start revising.



Highlight the exam date as a visual reminder.

| SEE ALSO            |                       |
|---------------------|-----------------------|
| 36-37               | Study space           |
| 38-39               | Getting organized     |
| 42-43               | Do not waste time     |
| 48-49               | Creating schedules    |
| 50-51               | Maintaining schedules |
| 102-103             | Using computers       |
| Revision timetables | 136-141               |
| Revision cards      | 144-147               |
| Healthy studying    | 200-205               |



Weekly revision

Monthly revision

## Revise all year round

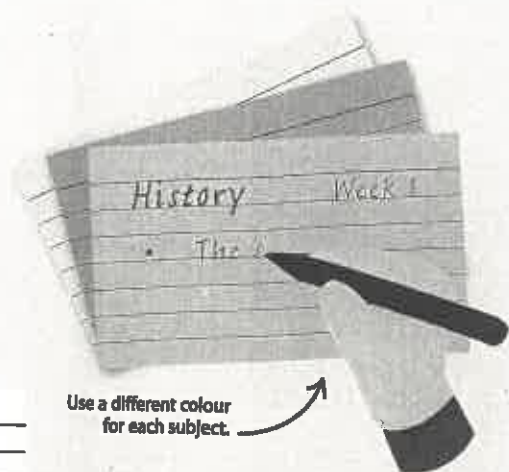
Each week, revise what has been taught at school and set aside time every month for little revision sessions. Students who make time for revision all year round give themselves a head start. This means they can spend less time revising in the weeks before the actual exams.

### Plan ahead

Schedule a time to revise the main topics at the end of each week.

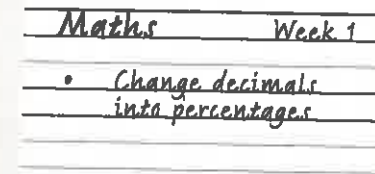
## Weekly revision

At the end of each week, prepare a summary of the main topics covered in each subject and put them on index cards. These cards can be colour-coded, using a different colour for each subject. Alternatively, the cards can be stored in a different box for each subject. Preparing index cards every week reminds students of what was studied, and also saves time later when exams are approaching, as the cards serve as revision material.



Add the subject and the number of the week on top of each card.

Use a different colour for each subject.

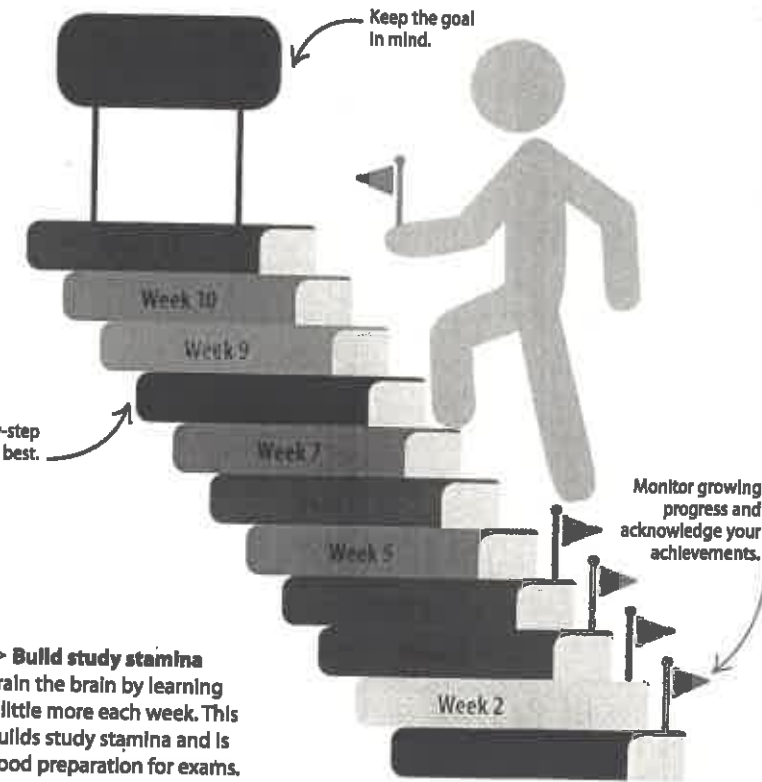


### Index cards

Summarize the main topics in bullet points and add details on the back of the card, if necessary. Drawings and diagrams are also helpful memory triggers.

## Monthly revision

Revise the weekly index cards at the end of each month. This allows students to see the bigger picture – for example how topics fit together – and it also refreshes their memory of the content covered at school. Regular monthly revision sessions make learning easier, as students can remember bite-sized units of information more effectively without feeling overwhelmed. It also helps to build up study stamina, as each month there will be a little more to revise than in the previous month.



Keep the goal in mind.

A step-by-step approach works best.

Monitor growing progress and acknowledge your achievements.

**Build study stamina**  
Train the brain by learning a little more each week. This builds study stamina and is good preparation for exams.

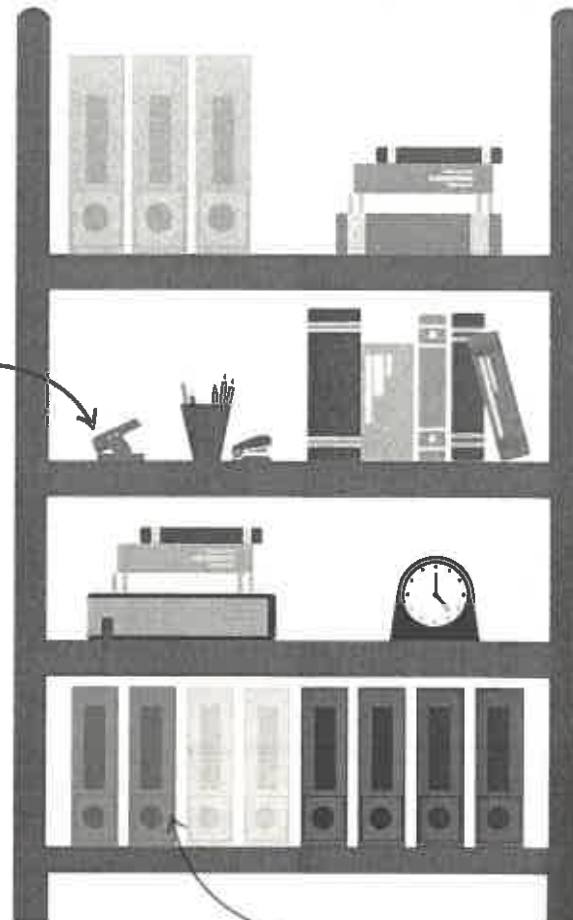
**“Success is the sum of small efforts, repeated day in and day out.”**  
Robert Collier (1885-1950), Author

**Filing and organization**

A tidy room can unlock creativity and study potential. Avoid having too much loose paper around. Big piles of paper only lead to procrastination, confusion, and loss of time in trying to find the right materials. It is important to keep all notes, worksheets, and books organized neatly, so that they can be found quickly when needed. Make sure to have at least one tray or shelf for storing folders and loose papers at the end of each day. The contents of the tray can then be reviewed and filed at the weekend.

Put folders back on the shelf.

Keep a penholder and other stationery together on one shelf.



Subject folders are arranged by colour – a different colour for each subject.

**Daily organization**

At the end of each day, students should put folders and papers back on the shelves and prepare their bag for the next school day.

**HINTS AND TIPS**

**Create a filing system**

It is a good idea to create a filing system long before exams start, ideally at the beginning of the school year. Having all materials organized and stored neatly will help students to find them easily when they are needed for revision.

**Have a specific place** or shelf for all school materials.

**Create a separate folder** for each subject.

**Use sub-sections** if necessary, such as "class work", "homework", "revision materials", or "week 1", "week 2", "week 3", etc.

**Label all folders** and sections with descriptive names.

**Prepare an index** or content page and add to it on a weekly basis.

**Schedule a fixed time** each week for revision and filing.

**Make sure** the filing system is easy to use.

**Label class handouts** as soon as they are received. Add the subject, date, and number on each page. For example, the first handout should be marked with the number "1" and the second with the number "2". This helps to file papers in chronological order.

**Have a separate folder** for important papers, such as essays, school transcripts, or certificates.

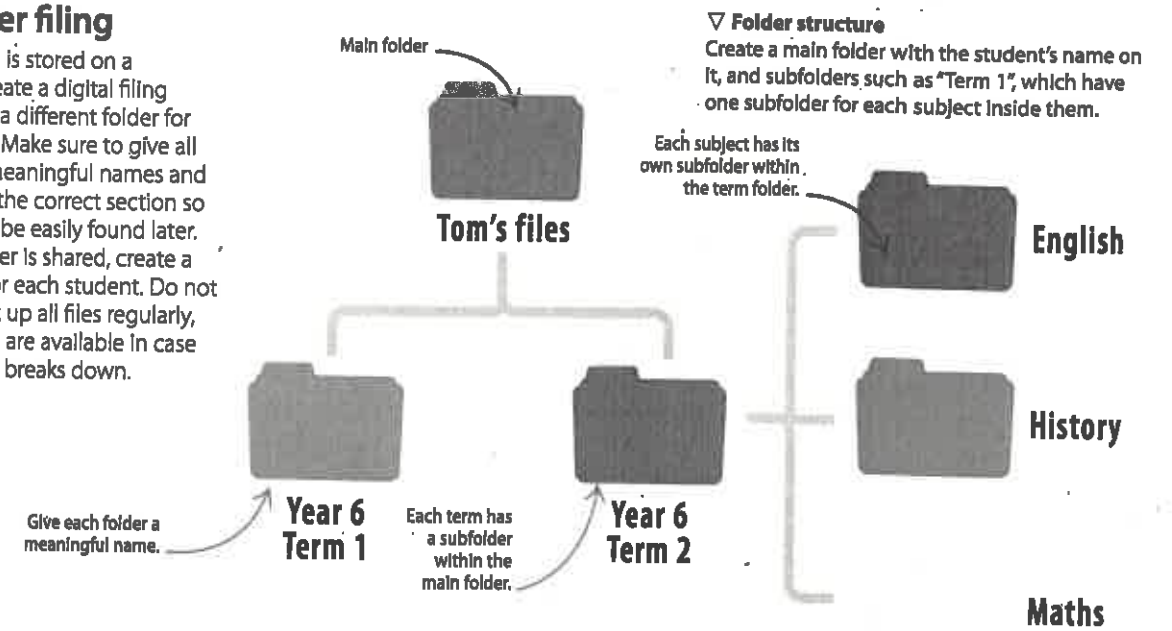
**Review the filing system** regularly and adapt it if it does not work.

**"A place for everything, everything in its place."**

Benjamin Franklin (1706–1790), inventor, scientist, and statesman

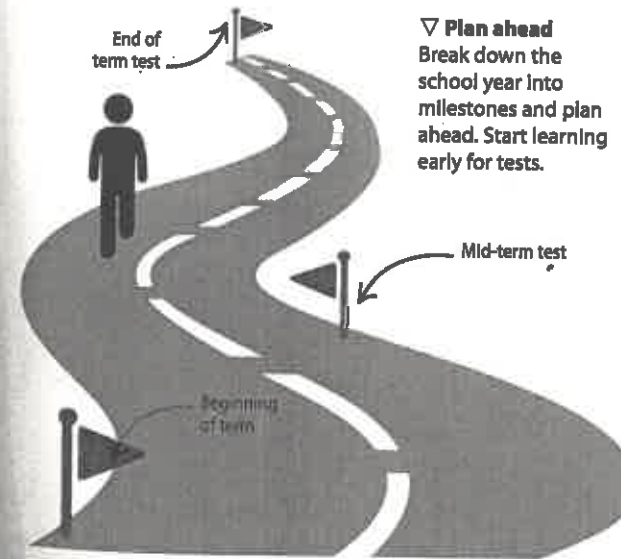
**Computer filing**

If information is stored on a computer, create a digital filing system. Have a different folder for each subject. Make sure to give all documents meaningful names and save them in the correct section so that they can be easily found later. If the computer is shared, create a main folder for each student. Do not forget to back up all files regularly, so that copies are available in case the computer breaks down.



**Use journeys to learn in stages**

Each school year is like a journey that can be broken down into semesters, terms, and weeks. At some point during that journey, the knowledge imparted will be tested. This can happen once or several times a year. Looking at the whole year and all the subjects at once can be overwhelming. But if the content is broken down into digestible stages, it seems much more manageable.



**Knowledge growth**

Revision is like growing a plant. With a little bit of work, on a regular basis, students can see great improvements over time. Put a seed into the soil, then give it some water every week and watch it grow. It does not turn into a tree overnight, but it grows steadily, almost without us noticing it. Learning takes time, too, so studying a little bit on a daily basis – while focusing on the next small goal – will bring great results over time.

**Regular learning**

Like a plant growing in stages, students can grow their knowledge steadily by learning a little bit every day.

Learning small amounts regularly expands knowledge like a growing plant.



# Common problems with revision

THERE ARE A VARIETY OF STRATEGIES THAT STUDENTS CAN USE TO MAKE REVISION MORE EFFECTIVE.

Some of the most common problems with revision include leaving things to the last minute, memorizing content without understanding it, and procrastination.

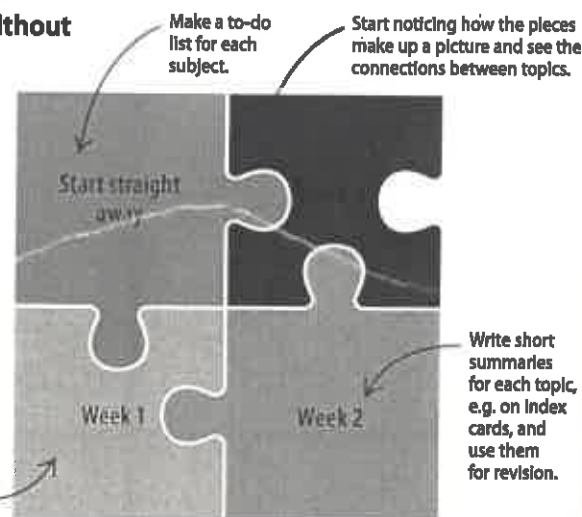
## Leaving things to the last minute

Having to learn a large amount of information in a short period of time can be challenging. A person would not skip eating for a whole week and then plan to eat all weekly meals in just one day. This does not work for revision either. Bite-sizing learning and revising bits and pieces regularly works better than trying to process large amounts of information in a short amount of time.

### ▷ Bite-sized learning

To avoid leaving things to the last minute, it is best to start early and make a revision plan. A brain can digest smaller chunks of information better than larger ones.

Allocate time to revise each subject separately – start with 10 minutes for each topic within a subject.



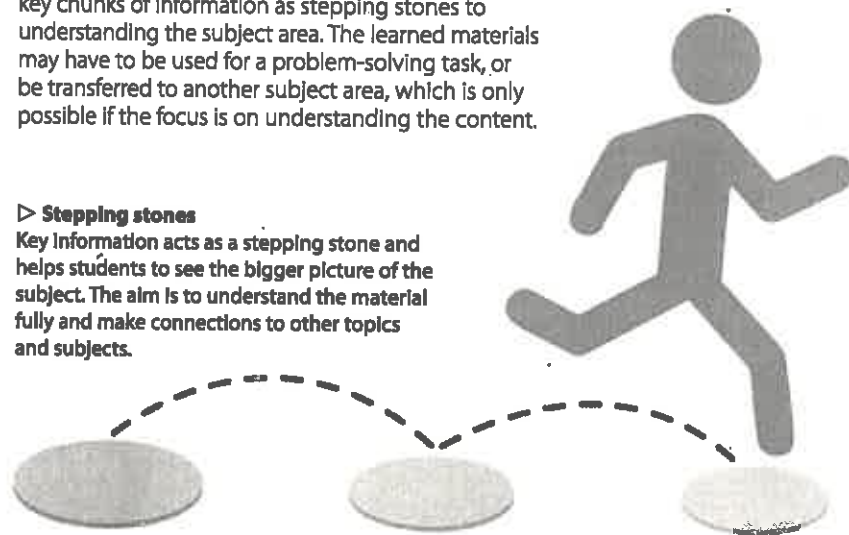
| SEE ALSO |                         |
|----------|-------------------------|
| 24-25    | Getting motivated       |
| 26-27    | Active learning         |
| 40-41    | Concentration           |
| 42-43    | Do not waste time       |
| 76-77    | Enhancing memory skills |
| 184-185  | Memory and the brain    |
| 192-195  | What is exam stress?    |

## Making links

Memorizing chunks in isolation is not helpful. It is important to see the material in context and use key chunks of information as stepping stones to understanding the subject area. The learned materials may have to be used for a problem-solving task, or be transferred to another subject area, which is only possible if the focus is on understanding the content.

### ▷ Stepping stones

Key information acts as a stepping stone and helps students to see the bigger picture of the subject. The aim is to understand the material fully and make connections to other topics and subjects.



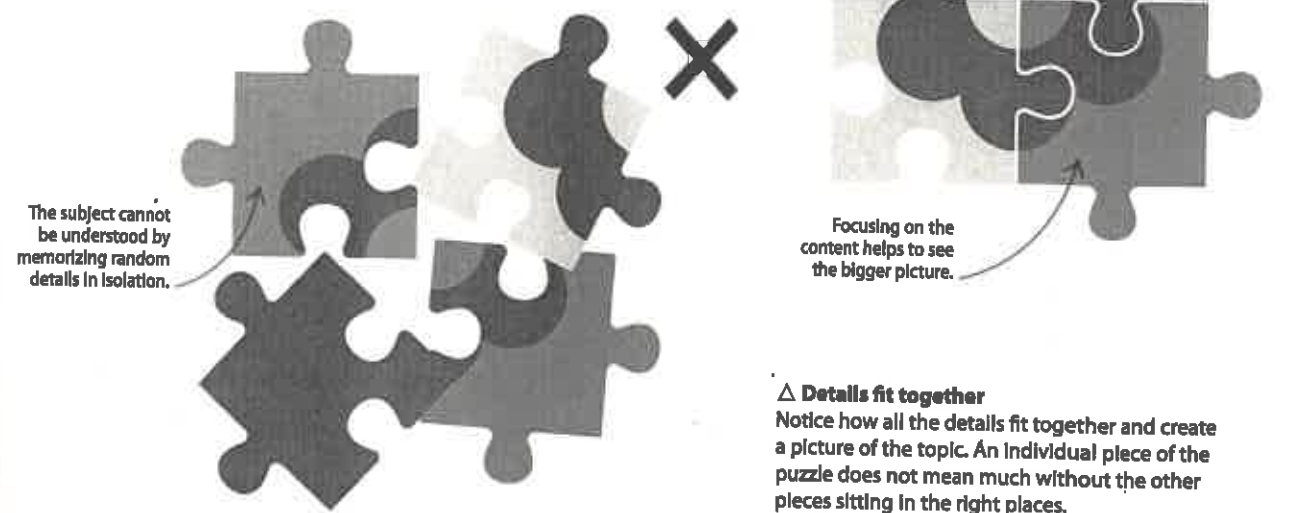
**HINTS AND TIPS**

Here are a few strategies to help you understand a subject better:

- Write notes** in your own words.
- Ask questions** in class if something is not clear.
- Compare notes** and discuss the content with friends and classmates.
- Connect** the new information to what was previously taught.
- Make a story** out of your notes.
- Predict** the next topic – for example, ask yourself how can that “story” be continued?

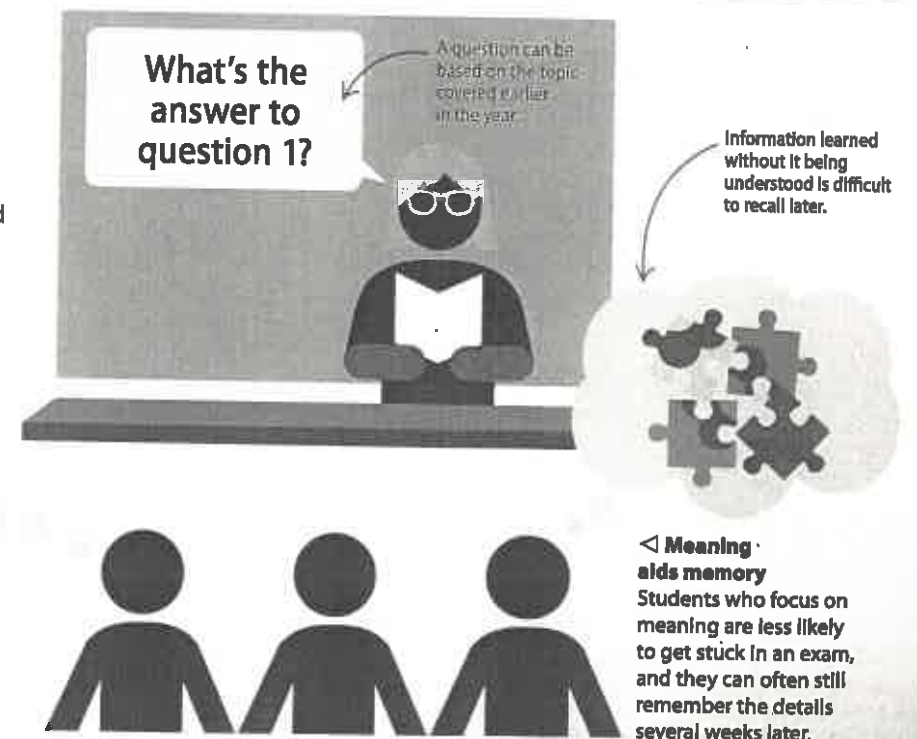
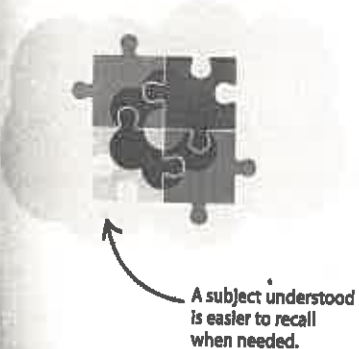
## Memorizing without understanding the content

Exams aim to test knowledge and understanding. Memorizing large chunks without understanding their meaning is like putting pieces of a puzzle together randomly, without thinking about the bigger picture. Teachers do not want students to recite memorized words; instead, they need to know whether the material has been understood.



## Recalling information after a test

Studies show that information that has been specifically memorized for a test is often forgotten shortly after the test. However, information whose meaning has been properly understood is internalized and stored in the long-term memory, where it can be accessed again later.



» Procrastination

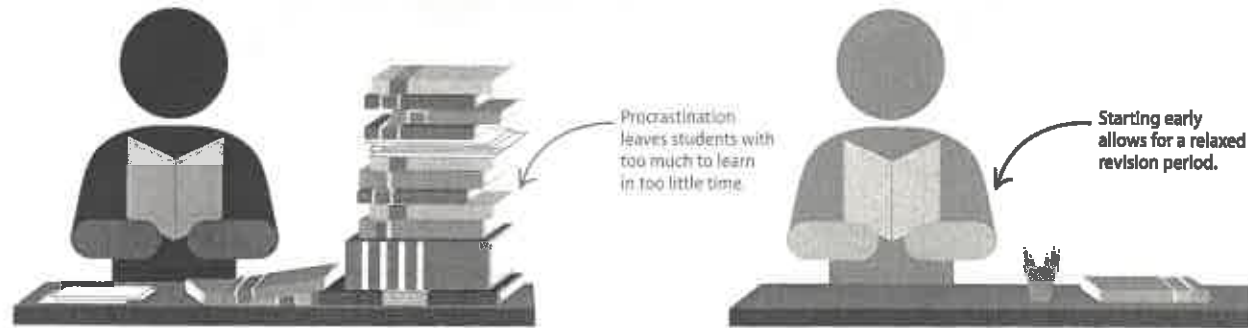
Putting off revision leaves students with more work to do in a shorter amount of time later on. This makes them feel overwhelmed and increases the pressure and stress level. The best antidote to procrastination is to plan for short, regular revision sessions, and to include rewards after studying. Also, completing a revision session on time gives the students a sense of achievement.

▽ Starting early

Short, regular study sessions are more effective than long hours of revising. There is only so much students can learn in one day, so it is better to start early.

I should have started sooner!

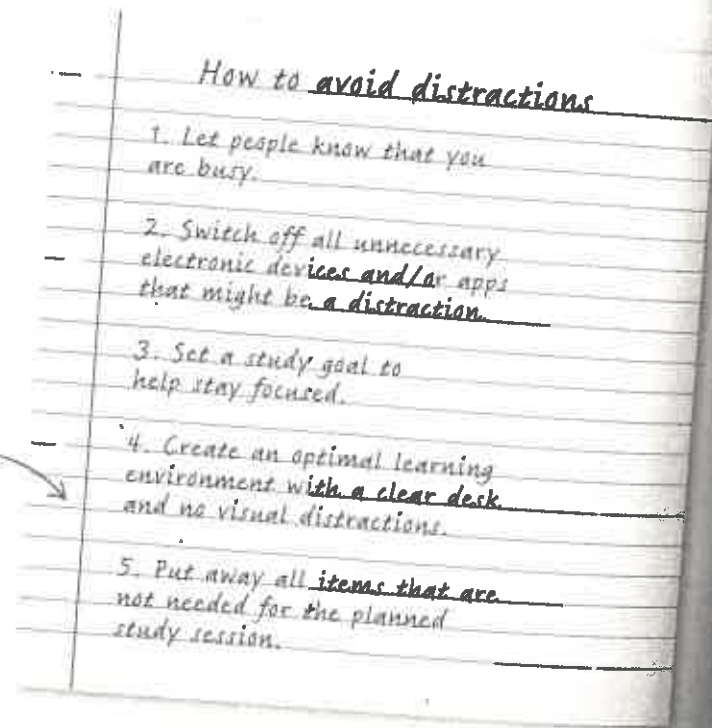
I CAN do it!



Eliminate distractions

Getting distracted is one of the most common problems when it comes to revision. Students need to be able to concentrate and focus their attention on what they are learning. Being interrupted not only stops the flow, but also prevents the information from being processed in the brain, which means it cannot be remembered later. Take measures to prevent distractions while studying.

Students can personalize the list by including factors that often distract them while studying.



▷ Tips to stay focused

To avoid such distractions, it is best to switch off electronic devices while studying, and to focus on a set goal.

Lack of motivation

Another common problem is lack of motivation, which can lead to procrastination. Students should start by exploring and addressing the reasons for their lack of motivation. If they are tired, they need to get more sleep. If they do not find the material interesting, they need to find a way to make it interesting. There are many ways for learners to motivate themselves. Every person is different, so experiment with several strategies and find out what works best.

▽ Strategies for motivation

Students can create a list of things that motivate them and use it to get started with revision.

REAL WORLD

Being creative

Being creative and having fun improves motivation. Some students like to create their own revision materials out of handouts and notes from lessons. It can help to make them look appealing and colourful. Self-created visual representations of what needs to be learned also improve a student's memory.



Be creative with learning – make it fun and it will get done.



Start with 20-minute revision sessions.



Create challenges to overcome.



Use music or favourite songs to get started.



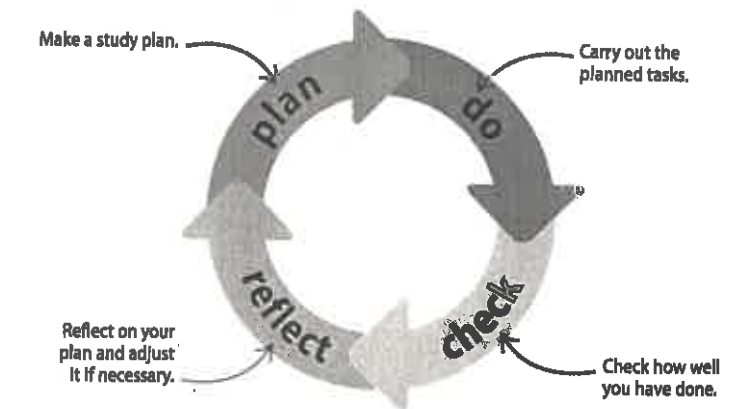
Set a reward for afterwards – something to look forward to.

Feeling overwhelmed

If there is a lot to do, it is normal to feel a little overwhelmed. The key to overcoming this is to start by making a to-do list. Then break bigger tasks down into smaller, manageable steps and plan when to do each one. Once a small plan or schedule has been created, students will feel calmer and on top of things.

▷ Easy learning cycle

'Plan', 'do', 'check', and 'reflect' are steps that can be used to improve a student's learning cycle and make the process more efficient.



# Revision timetables

STUDY SCHEDULES REMIND STUDENTS WHEN TO REVISE EACH SUBJECT AND FOR HOW LONG.

Revision timetables give an overview of what needs to be done each day. They help students to stay calm and on track with their revision, and allow them to see how much they have achieved.

## Make a priority list

Some preparation is needed before a revision timetable can be produced. Start by making a list of all subjects with exams, then prioritize them according to a student's strengths and weaknesses. Give each subject a priority number between, for example, 1 and 5, where "1" is for the subjects in which the student excels, and "4" and "5" indicate areas where he or she struggles. The numbers tell students how much time they should add to their revision timetable for each subject. More revision time needs to be allocated to weaker subjects.

Subjects that a student knows well will require less revision time.

Subjects with the numbers four and five should be given the greatest priority.

Priority numbers For each subject, determine how easy or difficult it is, and how much has been remembered from the lessons.

**SEE ALSO**

- 48-49 Creating schedules
- 50-51 Maintaining schedules
- 128-131 Getting started
- Chapter Resources 236-239

**HINTS AND TIPS**

### Organize study material

Use coloured labels in your books and folders to separate topics, so that they can be found easily when it is time to start revising a particular topic. It is a good idea to get into the habit of filing materials throughout the year. Use a different colour for each subject.

## Select which subjects to revise

The aim of revision is to understand the material taught at school, and to be able to demonstrate this knowledge in exams. A student may find some subjects easier than others, or may be able to remember the material fairly effortlessly – for example, if the lessons were enjoyable or involved creative project work. If a particular subject is remembered well, it may not have to be revised as much. Make a list of all subjects and find out whether exams need to be sat for them. Then, allocate a priority number (see p.136) to determine how much revision time will be necessary.

| Main subjects to revise | Exam (Yes/No) | Priority scale |
|-------------------------|---------------|----------------|
| English                 | Yes           | 4              |
| Maths                   | Yes           | 5              |
| History                 | Yes           | 3              |
| Biology                 | Yes           | 2              |
| Music                   | No            | –              |
| Physics                 | Yes           | 2              |
| Art and design          | No            | –              |
| Geography               | Yes           | 3              |

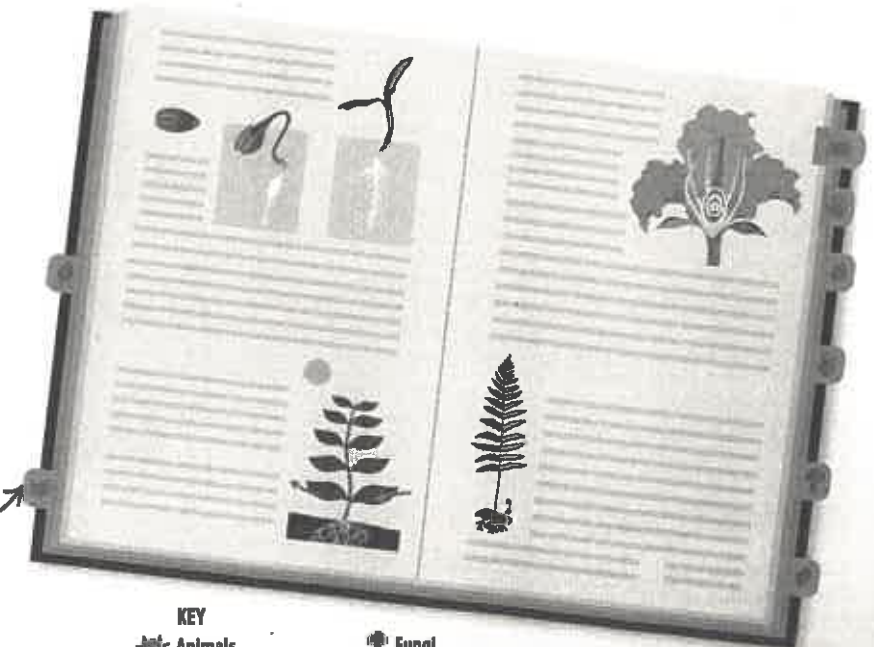
Priority list This is an example of a priority list. Students can create their own and estimate which subjects need more time for revision.

## Break down subjects into individual topics

It is important to break subjects down into individual topics, so that specific time slots can be allocated to each topic in the revision timetable. It is more manageable for students to revise one individual topic at a time, rather than a whole subject area that might seem too overwhelming. Go through books and notes to identify topics for each subject, and then make a list.

Use different sticky labels for different topics within a subject.

Label your material Cross-reference the same topics in books and notebooks, so that material that belongs to one topic can be identified later.



- KEY**
- Animals
  - Plants
  - Fungi
  - Human body

**» Selective learning**

Once the topic lists have been created for each subject with exams, a priority number can be assigned to each topic. This number will determine how much time will be needed to study each topic. A revision timetable can then be produced, using the priority numbers as a guide to working out how many time slots may be needed for each topic, as well as the length of each study session.

| GEOGRAPHY             |  |                |
|-----------------------|--|----------------|
| Main topics to revise |  | Priority scale |
| Water and rivers      |  | 3              |
| Ecosystems            |  | 5              |
| Glacial landscapes    |  | 2              |
| Weather and climate   |  | 1              |
| Climate change        |  | 4              |

| BIOLOGY               |  |                |
|-----------------------|--|----------------|
| Main topics to revise |  | Priority scale |
| Plants                |  | 2              |
| Animals               |  | 1              |
| Human body            |  | 2              |
| Fungi                 |  | 4              |

**△ Topic lists**  
Students should start by making a topic list for each subject. A priority number can then be assigned, which reflects how well the student remembers the topic.

**How much time for each topic**

A strong topic that is relatively easy or already well-remembered, with priority number one, needs only one slot in the timetable. For example, a 30-minute revision session might be enough for a strong topic, and a weaker topic with priority number four or five may need several individual and longer time slots in the timetable to ensure maximum retention by the students.

|                            |  |
|----------------------------|--|
| <b>1</b><br>Strong         | <b>1 x 30-min revision session</b>                 |
| <b>2</b><br>Good           | <b>1 x 45-min revision session</b>                 |
| <b>3</b><br>Average        | <b>2 x 45-min revision sessions</b>                |
| <b>4</b><br>Difficult      | <b>2 x 60-min revision sessions</b> ★              |
| <b>5</b><br>Very difficult | <b>3 x 30-min + 2 x 45-min revision sessions</b> ★ |

**△ Time slots**  
The above time slots are merely suggestions and may need to be altered according to the topic and the student's age.

**HINTS AND TIPS**

**Do a test run**  
The number of allocated time slots also depends on the amount of content and the level of complexity of the material. It might be useful to do a "test run" to see how much can be revised in 30 or 45 minutes. The number and length of the time slots can then be adjusted accordingly.

**Take breaks**

Shorter revision sessions with regular breaks have been shown to be more effective than one longer study period. Younger learners should start with a study session of 30 minutes, followed by a 10-minute break, while teenagers can easily maintain their concentration for 45–60 minutes, followed by a 15-minute break. Taking breaks between revision periods is important. Breaks give the brain time to process the information and help to maintain a student's concentration.



Set a timer or alarm clock to sound when a study session is over and it is time to take a break.

**◀ Set a limit**  
Setting a time limit helps with getting started. Everyone can get themselves to study for 30 or 45 minutes.

**Create a revision timetable**

Students should create an effective revision timetable and colour-code it. Starting early with a weekly plan helps to keep on top of things and clearly shows what needs to be revised when. It makes revision easier, as learners simply have to follow a schedule. Students should include review or summary sessions to rehearse and test the studied materials. They can also schedule free slots for swaps in case something comes up.

**"Those who fail to plan, plan to fail!"**  
Winston Churchill (1874–1965), Statesman

| Day     | Morning          | Afternoon                             | Evening  |
|---------|------------------|---------------------------------------|--|
| Monday  | Water and rivers | Coasts                                | Ecosystems                                     |
|         | Free             | Free                                  | Free   |
|         | Water and rivers | Ecosystems                            | Review: Water and rivers + Coasts + Ecosystems |
| Tuesday | Free             | Lunch                                 | Dinner   |
|         | Plants           | Human body                            | Ecosystems                                     |
|         | Free             | Free                                  | Time for sports                                |
|         | Animals          | Review: Plants + Animals + Human body | Weather and climate                            |
|         | Video games      | Free                                  | Review: Ecosystems + weather and climate       |

**◀ Weekly timetable**  
Students should colour-code the sessions by subject. They should also include breaks as well as enough time for hobbies, socializing, and seeing friends. This will help to avoid overworking and becoming stressed.

Topics can be reviewed together in one revision session for a subject.

**KEY**

- Geography
- Biology
- Social life and hobbies
- Breaks



» Build in rewards

Rewards are a great way to get motivated and start a revision session. Students can use small incentives and redeem them after the study slot is completed, and perhaps look forward to bigger ones for the end of the day or week, when all studying has been done. Rewards may include time with friends, favourite snacks, playing on electronic devices, TV time, games, hobbies, or trips to the cinema. Each person is motivated by something different. Students can draw up a list of their favourite rewards – the redemption of which can be agreed with parents and friends.

▷ Rewards increase motivation  
When setting tasks, students should plan rewards for successfully completing them. This aids motivation and helps to avoid distractions. Instead, distractions such as TV can be enjoyed as treats after studying.

Task 1: Revise Water and rivers + Coasts + Glacial landscapes  
Reward: Ice-creams

Task 2: Revise Plants + Animals + Human body  
Reward: 1/2 hour of playing games

Redeem rewards after studying.

Students can treat hobby time as a reward.

Stay on track

It is important to stay on track with revision and follow the created timetable. A flexible schedule including several free periods is best, as it allows students to move things around if necessary. Furthermore, learning to create effective timetables is a process. At the end of each week, students should review what has been achieved and make adjustments accordingly to improve the following week's plan. Over time, students will learn what works for them and what does not, and can amend their plans accordingly.

HINTS AND TIPS

Keep up motivation

Students should reflect on what motivates them and use that as an incentive to keep them going. They could set a goal and put up a visual reminder of the rewards or incentives near their desk. When learning, they can be creative and use a variety of revision strategies to stay motivated and on track.

▽ Improvisation  
Free slots can be swapped with other slots when something comes up. This allows students to stay on track with their revision timetable.

| Day     | Morning          | Afternoon      | Evening  |
|---------|------------------|----------------|--|
| Monday  | Water and rivers | Coasts         | Ecosystems                                     |
|         | Free             | Lunch          | Dinner   |
|         | Free             | Free           | Free   |
| Tuesday | Water and rivers | Ecosystems     | Review: Water and rivers + Coasts + Ecosystems |
|         | Free             | Time for hobby | Social life                                    |
|         | Free             | Free           | Free   |

Now have tutorial at 11, so move Geography study to first free period.

Revision review

It is not enough to revise just once. Regularly reviewing what has been studied helps to remember things better. It is useful to allocate review sessions in the revision timetable. These sessions are often slightly longer than a regular study period. Students could use them as self-assessment, to test themselves, write summaries for each topic from memory, and then check that all the important points have been included. Alternatively, materials can be reviewed with parents and/or classmates, for example by using flashcards.

▷ Plan review sessions  
Schedule a review session of the main topics studied that day. Students can summarize each topic to check how much they have remembered. This will boost their memory.

| Day       | Morning          | Afternoon                             | Evening  |
|-----------|------------------|---------------------------------------|--|
| Monday    | Water and rivers | Coasts                                | Ecosystems                                     |
|           | Water and rivers | Free                                  | Free   |
|           | Biology Tutorial | Ecosystems                            | Review: Water and rivers + Coasts + Ecosystems |
| Tuesday   | Plants           | Human body                            | Ecosystems                                     |
|           | Free             | Free                                  | Time for sports                                |
|           | Animals          | Review: Plants + Animals + Human body | Weather and climate                            |
| Wednesday | Video games      | Free                                  | Review: Ecosystems + weather and climate       |
|           | Free             | Free                                  | Free   |
|           | Free             | Free                                  | Free   |

Timetables may need adjustments

Some learners find it difficult to follow their timetable. If this happens, they need to address the reasons behind the difficulties. Perhaps the timetable was too ambitious or not flexible enough. Maybe the study sessions were too long. Only a timetable that can be followed easily is a good timetable. Here are a few suggestions for how to stay on track.

Students can compare their timetable against the checklist to see if they have planned the schedule well.

Creating a good timetable

There are several points that students must keep in mind while organizing their study sessions. The checklist shown here lists some of the common things to remember while making a timetable.

Timetable: things to remember

- Study sessions have to be manageable
- Include lots of breaks and free slots
- Schedule a reward to look forward to after each study session
- Start with a short study session
- Timetables should have room for improvisation, if necessary
- Consider working with classmates



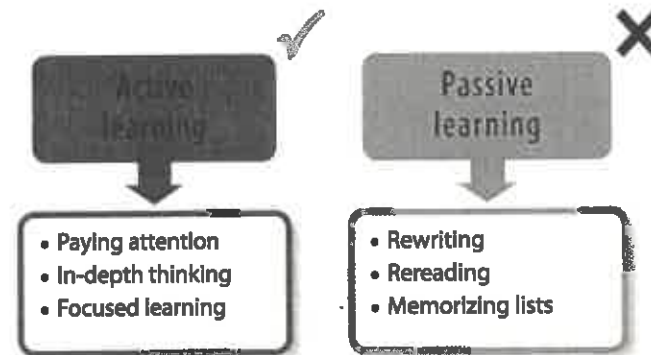
# Using active learning for revision

ACTIVE LEARNING STRATEGIES LEAD TO BETTER RETENTION AND MAKE THE REVISION PROCESS MORE INTERESTING.

The word "active" refers to "act" and "action", and involves getting consciously involved in the learning process. An active learner uses a variety of strategies.

## Active and passive learning

Passive learning refers to studying without being engaged and without thinking. If the brain is not challenged and engaged, it goes to sleep. Through active learning, the learner pays attention to the material, categorizes it, and uses higher-level thinking skills and a variety of active learning tools to stay focused. Information learned in this way is processed and stored in the long-term memory more easily.



SEE ALSO

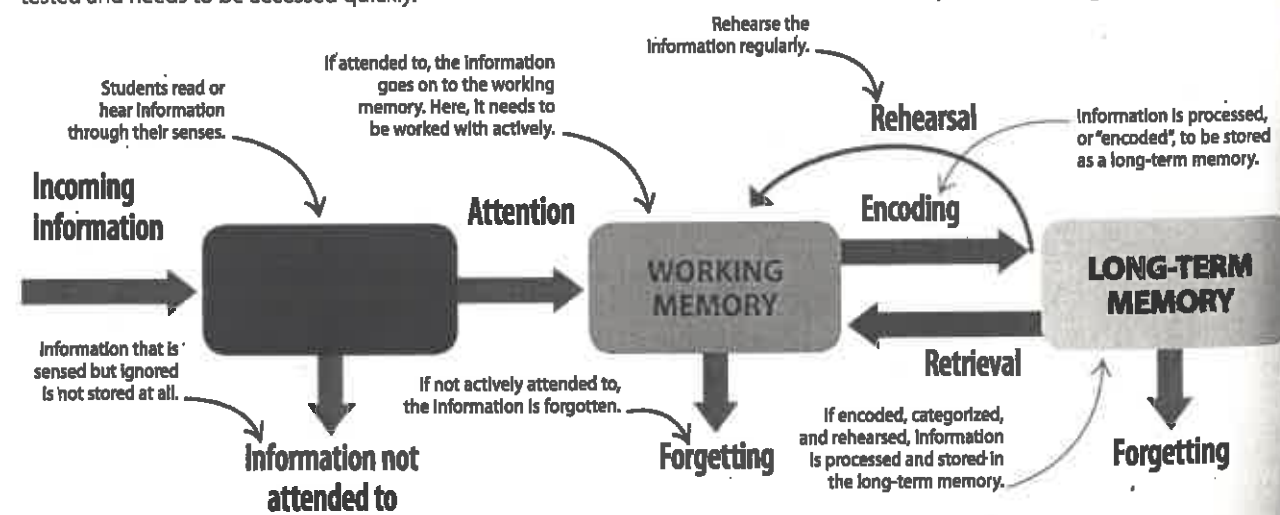
- 26-27 Active learning
- 28-29 Taking responsibility
- 58-59 Enhancing reading skills
- 68-69 Active learning skills
- 124-125 Revolution in online courses
- 188-189 Reading
- 154-155 Memory and the brain
- 204-205 Time out

## Train the brain to be active

The brain is like a muscle that can be trained through short, regular revision sessions. To activate that brain muscle, the material has to be studied thoroughly, visualized, contextualized, and actively rehearsed. Using active learning strategies is usually the most effective way to revise for exams where the learned material is tested and needs to be accessed quickly.

### How memory works

When information comes in through the senses, students have to actively engage with it, work with it, encode it, rehearse it, and practise retrieving it.



## Examples of active learning strategies

Often, students are not really forgetting things – they are just not paying enough attention when learning. Active learning strategies can be used to boost revision sessions. Such strategies help students to learn faster, remember more, and have fun while studying. Some strategies are more effective than others. Students can try different ones and use those that work best for them.

▽ Different strategies  
Shown here are some active learning strategies. Students can adapt and add to this list according to their needs.

| Active learning strategy                          | Explanation   |
|---|---|
| <b>Categorizing</b>                               | Putting information into categories is part of analyzing the information to see which subject area it belongs to. Students can come up with their own ideas for categories. Sometimes there may be overlaps. This decision-making process is active, as it requires focused thinking.   |
| <b>Colour coding / highlighting</b>               | To highlight key information in different colours, a student has to decide which information is important. It works well with the categorizing strategy, as a different colour can be allocated to each category. Colours work especially well for visual learners, while the highlighting action is memorable for physical learners. |
| <b>Summarizing</b>                                | Another active learning strategy is summarizing key points for which students need to think about the meaning of information. Summarizing material into one's own words helps with checking that the information has been understood. Students often remember things better if they are expressed in their own words.                 |
| <b>Drawing / visualizing</b>                      | Creating visuals for information requires students to actively think about how to best represent the material. This can be done only if the topic has been understood. Drawing or visualizing keeps the student actively engaged. Using colours when drawing also gives the memory process an extra boost.                            |
| <b>Creating charts</b>                            | This strategy is similar to drawing, but rather than using pictures the information is presented in charts or diagrams. To be able to do this, the student needs to be actively focused on understanding the material. Charts and diagrams also help to remember things better.   |
| <b>Applying knowledge to real-life situations</b> | Applying theoretical information to real-life, practical examples requires imagination, higher-level thinking, and a level of focus that keeps the learner actively engaged. Students often remember practical examples better than dry theories, so combining both is an excellent learning strategy.                                |

### HINTS AND TIPS

#### While learning...

Varying approaches to learning and combining different strategies wherever possible is helpful for students. With practice they will notice how much easier learning gets and how much more they can remember. Students can make a list of their favourite active learning strategies and put it in their room as a reminder to use them when studying. Here are a few additional tools that can be used while learning:

- Connecting ideas
- Analyzing/evaluating
- Writing outlines and plans
- Rewriting notes in question-and-answer format
- Learning in groups
- Testing oneself

**"Tell me and I forget, teach me and I may remember, involve me and I learn."**  
Benjamin Franklin (1706-1790), Inventor, scientist, and statesman

# Revision cards

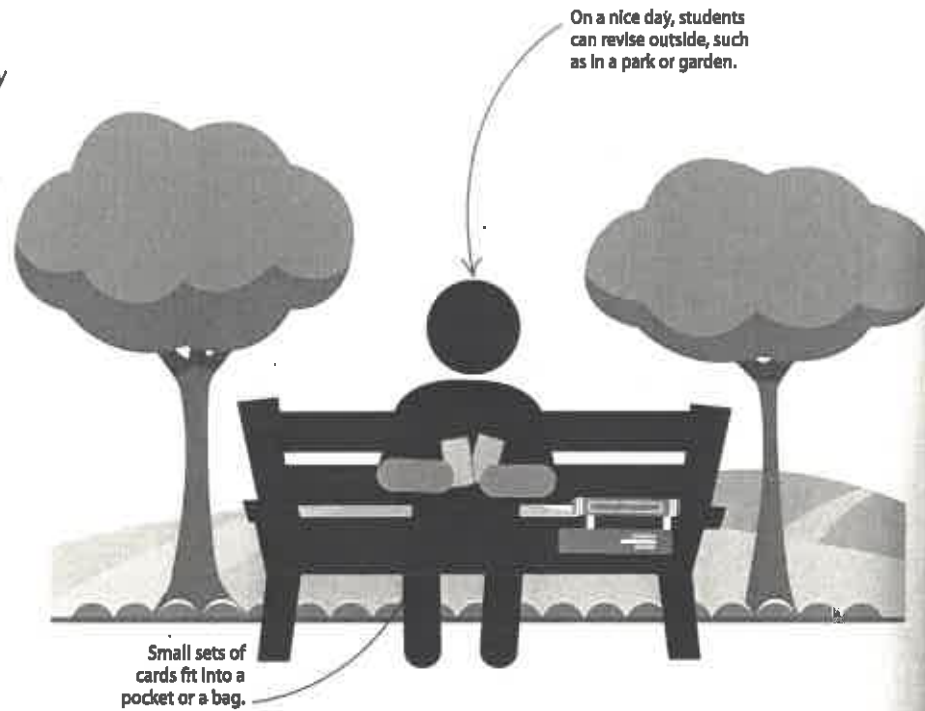
PREPARE INDEX CARDS WITH RECORDED NOTES OR IMAGES RELATING TO WHAT NEEDS TO BE LEARNED.

The information on revision cards usually includes bite-sized facts written down as bullet points, keywords, or visuals. Reading through these cards regularly will aid a student's memory.

## When are revision cards used?

Revision cards are useful, because they can be carried around and studied during free periods, in the park, or on the way to and from school. They also help in planned revision sessions when working alone, with parents, or with friends. Students often find it more interesting and motivating to work with summarized facts on cards, rather than reading and rereading long pages of notes.

► **Revise any time and anywhere**  
Carrying around small sets of revision cards makes studying more flexible, as students can revise when and where they like throughout the day.



| SEE ALSO                       |         |
|--------------------------------|---------|
| (62-63) Engaging with learning |         |
| (74-75) Making notes           |         |
| Mind maps                      | 152-153 |
| Flow charts and mind maps      | 154-157 |
| Revision journals              | 164-165 |

### REAL WORLD

#### Revision partner

Revising alone does not work for everyone, as some people get distracted easily. Revising with a friend, classmate, or relative can help a student to focus on a subject. Students can go through the study material and help each other to clarify any doubts. They can then test one another to see how much they remember, and share their best memory triggers.



### HINTS AND TIPS

#### Storing revision cards

Loose, individual cards can be easily lost or misplaced. It is best to keep them together in sets.

**Create a separate** index card box for each subject.

**Have dividers** in each box to separate topics, or use a different colour for each.

**To carry them** around, put a key ring or clip on a set and/or put them in a portable index card case or wallet.

## What to put on a revision card?

Summarize information in bullet points, avoiding full sentences, or show facts graphically. Some students find it helpful to use different colours and short reminders, or hints, in the corner of the card to trigger their memory. Others like to put mind maps, diagrams, charts, or pictures onto their cards. Remember that the aim is to understand the content, not to memorize random facts.

Make up your own images wherever possible – this helps to recall the information.

*Types of evidence to show climate change:*

- Ice melt
- Weather irregularity
- Ice core
- Analysis of pollen and trees
- Observations of ice cover in glaciers

Have concise notes in bullet points rather than in sentences.

*Global warming evidence*

Temperature increase

Rainfall patterns change

Seasons are changing (getting longer or shorter)

Use mind maps and diagrams with pictures and labels.

*Greenhouse effect*

Visually presented material is easier to understand and remember.

*Carbon footprints*

Heavy use

Reduce and recycle

### Creating revision cards

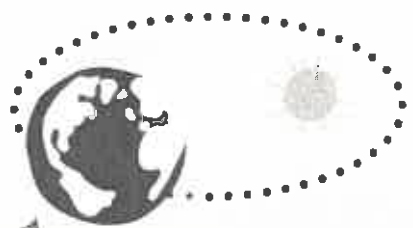
There is no right or wrong way to create revision cards. However, it is recommended that they are made appealing – wherever possible – by using colours, pictures, and diagrams to present the material more visually.



» Question-and-answer format

It is a good idea to use both sides of the revision cards. The question or keyword could be written on one side, while the answer or the definition of the keyword could be added to the back of the same card. Most exams involve answering questions, so making such cards is good preparation. It also means that parents and friends can assist with the revision, using the ready-made cards to test the student.

*How long does it take the Earth to orbit the Sun?*



Write the question on one side of the card.

Answer the question on the back of the same card.

*365 days*

▷ How to create questions

Think of the data to be learned as an answer. What would the question be? Include visuals or a hint as a memory trigger.

Digital revision cards on the computer

It can be fun to make revision cards on a computer. Students can be creative with the material, which enhances the learning process. Typed information is often more legible and easier to follow than handwritten words. Appropriate visuals, flowcharts, and graphs could also be easily added. In addition, students can use coloured, bold, or italic text to highlight important details.

▽ Create digital cards

Digital cards can be printed, cut out, and folded. Students should fold them so that they can see only the question. They can then check the answer on the back.

Add a dotted line to indicate where to fold the card after printing it out.

**GEOGRAPHY**

---

**Question**

List a few characteristics of a polar climate.

---

**Answer(s)**

- Far north (Arctic) and far south (Antarctica) – cold
- more extreme as **latitude increases**
- **Winter** long, with few to no hours of light, and up to -50°C in temperature
- **Summer** short, with many hours of daylight (tundra growing season)

Digital revision cards for smartphones

A variety of free revision apps are available for most electronic devices. Once downloaded, the apps can be accessed easily on a smartphone or a PC at any time, and do not take up as much space as stacks of paper index cards. Students can use such apps to create card sets and share them digitally. They can also download ready-made sets from an online source.

Choose a topic to revise or be tested on.

Use the home icon to go back and change subjects.

Some apps include multiple choice quizzes.

Revision games can be played on the go.

△ Games and quizzes

Many apps include revision games and quizzes, and provide scores for correct answers. This is a fun and stimulating way to engage in revision.

TIPS AND TIPS

Getting the most out of digital revision cards

Students can create and use digital revision cards in a variety of ways. Here are a few tips on how to get the best out of revision cards:

**Create card sets** throughout the year, so that they are ready when it is time to revise.

**Work with friends and classmates** to increase the fun factor in learning and to improve creativity.

**Share the workload** – students can work in groups, so that each member can prepare a set for a different topic. They can then print and share their cards with each other.

**Use short breaks** between study sessions for a quick revision game.

**Play on the go.** For example, students can play revision games and quizzes on their devices while travelling on a bus or standing in a queue.

**Make it fun and it will get done.**

# Reading

READING IS AN IMPORTANT PART OF REVISION. STUDENTS CAN LEARN STRATEGIES TO MAKE READING MORE EFFECTIVE.

There are a variety of reading methods to help students take in more information, make reading more interesting, effective, memorable, and also save time.

## Reading strategies

Having a purpose for reading is one of the main reading strategies. If students know what information they are looking for in a text, it is easier for them to stay focused. The purpose for reading can vary: it may include finding answers to specific questions, getting an overview, writing a summary, or refreshing one's memory of a text or book that was studied in class.

| Reading strategy           | Explanation   |
|----------------------------|---|
| <b>Predicting</b>          | Predicting means looking at the title, sub-title, visuals, and section titles of a text or chapter and guessing the content. For revision, this step can be used to check what can be remembered from the material. Later, students can read the text actively and see whether their predictions were accurate.                         |
| <b>Getting an overview</b> | Getting an overview of a complex text, before reading it in detail, helps to build up a mental outline of the main ideas covered. This is done by reading the introduction and conclusion, as well as the first and last sentences of each paragraph. This allows students to see the bigger picture – the overall content of the text. |
| <b>Skimming</b>            | Skimming means quick reading – faster than the student's normal reading speed. The aim is to take in chunks of information and make connections between sections. It is especially useful for the revision of texts that have already been read at least once.  |
| <b>Scanning</b>            | Scanning is not really reading. Instead, it involves moving very fast through a text to find a specific piece of information, such as a key phrase, name, or number. This strategy is mostly used when searching for answers to specific questions.   |
| <b>Selective reading</b>   | It is not always necessary to read a whole text or chapter. Depending on the purpose, students can select specific sections, containing answers to questions or topic-specific details, that need to be revised. This strategy is best combined with 'getting an overview' (see above) to identify the relevant sections.               |

### HINTS AND TIPS

#### Good practice

**Become aware of your current reading approach.** Students who spend too long reading should try out some of the strategies above.

**Start by consulting** the contents page, getting an overview of the chapters or texts to be studied, and select relevant sections according to the purpose.

**Adapt your reading speed.** Students should skim each section quickly for key information, and then slow down once they have found the important points.

**Reading word for word** is a slow process. To increase their reading speed, students should practise taking in larger chunks of information by scanning or skimming.

#### SEE ALSO

- ◀ 56–57 Finding information
- ◀ 58–59 Enhancing reading skills
- ◀ 74–75 Making notes
- ◀ 80–81 What is critical thinking?
- ◀ 82–83 Enhancing critical thinking
- ◀ 112–113 Bookmarking
- ◀ 114–115 Taking notes online
- Chapter introductions 234–235

#### ▼ Pick your style

There are a variety of reading strategies that help students get the most out of a text and also save time.

## Speed reading

Reading is a skill. Learners can increase their reading speed through practice. Some students read words out loud in their head, which means that they can only read as fast as they can speak. Dropping this habit and focusing more specifically on the meaning of each sentence can help to speed up their reading. Some students like to support their speed reading by moving a pen, pencil, or finger under each sentence – relatively quickly – while they work through the text.

### ► Enhance your reading speed

Practise for at least 10 minutes a day – focus on skimming and fast reading. Students can move a finger or pencil along the lines to track what they are reading.

The words are read as the finger moves quickly along the line.



## Selective highlighting

Underlining key information in a text, or using coloured markers to highlight important words and phrases, is called selective highlighting. Different colours can be used to differentiate between various opinions, roles in a play, or a variety of key points. Students can also annotate texts, adding their ideas, agreements, and disagreements, or note if they have read about the subject elsewhere. This helps them to keep active and engaged while reading.



Highlight all ideas related to carbohydrates in green.



Highlight information about proteins in red.



Highlight facts about fatty acids in yellow.

### ► Colour code the text

When highlighting, use a different colour for each main idea in the text. Choose only key words or phrases, and some examples. Do not highlight whole sentences.

## The basics of nutrition

Most of the foods we eat can be broken down into carbohydrates and proteins. Each of these fulfils different functions in the body. We need to consume all three on a daily basis to maintain a balanced diet.

Carbohydrates can be divided into two categories: simple and complex. Simple carbs, such as sugars, are quickly broken down and provide the body with fast energy. Complex carbs take longer to be broken down, which is why they keep us fuller and provide us with more steady energy, as the energy in complex carbs is released slowly. Examples include...

Proteins are another important dietary component, consisting of amino acids, which the body uses to perform important functions such as muscle growth and repair. Sources of protein include...

The third category of nutrients is fats, also called lipids, which are another important source of energy. They can be divided into saturated and unsaturated fats, and are found in...

# Note-taking styles

IT IS USEFUL TO TRY OUT DIFFERENT NOTE-TAKING STYLES TO SEE WHICH ONE WORKS BEST.

Most students remember things better when they write down ideas in their own words. The most common note-taking styles are known as "standard", "split-page", and "mind map" note-taking.

## Try something different

There are different note-taking styles. It is worth experimenting with these to find out which style is the most suitable for students or for a particular subject. Each method has several advantages over the others and could be used depending on the subject or the student's learning style. Creating personal notes for revision is an active learning strategy and aids memory.

**Split-page (question-and-answer) style**  
A split-page note splits the page in two, vertically. Questions are written on the left-hand side, with the answers facing them on the right.

14/5/2016

Sommer, S.  
"The Basics of Nutrition"

|                                      |   |
|--------------------------------------|---|
| What are the three main food groups? | Carbohydrates, Proteins, and Fats   |
| What two types of carbs are there?   | Simple and complex  |
| What's the difference?               | Simple - quick sugar release (e.g. bread, pasta, cakes) Complex - slow sugar release (e.g. veggies) |
| What are proteins?                   | Amino acids - used for cells, muscles, and immune system, (e.g. fish, eggs, meat, dairy)            |

SEE ALSO

- < 74-75 Making notes
- < 114-115 Taking notes online
- < 142-143 Using active learning for revision
- < 144-147 Revision cards
- < 148-149 Flashing
- Mind maps 152-153 >
- Post-it and card mnemonics 154-157 >
- Revision grids 164-165 >

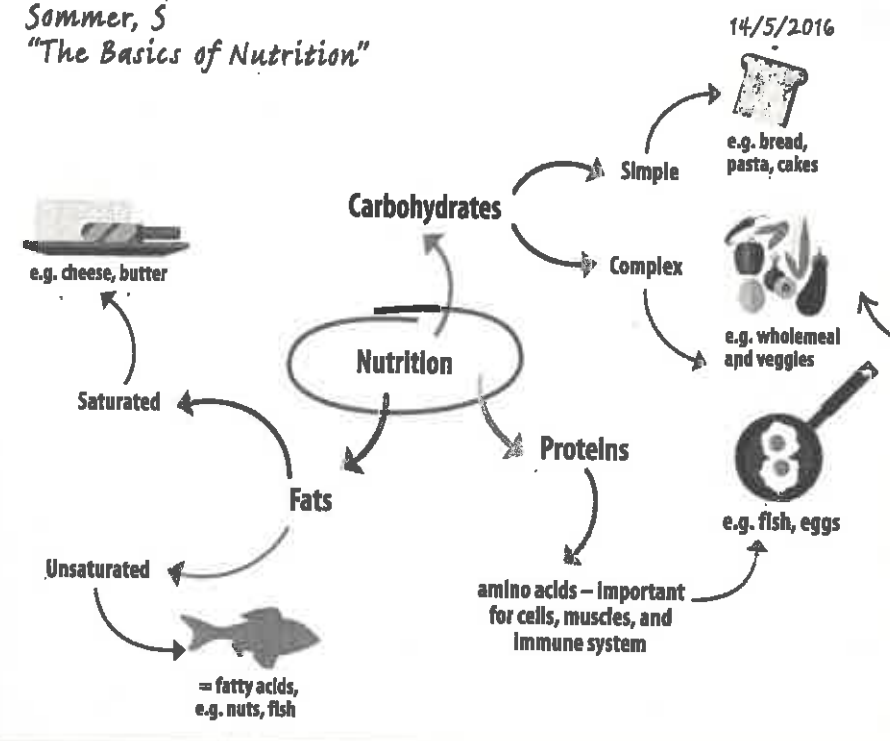
14/5/2016  
Sommer, S.  
"The Basics of Nutrition"

Three categories of foods:

1. Carbohydrates
  - simple carbs → a quick sugar release. e.g. bread, pasta, cakes
  - complex carbs → a slower sugar release. e.g. veggies and wholemeal foods
2. Proteins
  - amino acids
  - important for cells, muscles, and immune system. e.g. fish
3. Fats
  - fatty acids
  - saturated / unsaturated
  - e.g. oil, butter, nuts, fish
  - see also notes on Omega 3 and 6

**Standard style**  
Notes in standard style are organized in the correct order, with notes written in sequence, one after another. Only keywords and phrases are written - there are no sentences.

Sommer, S  
"The Basics of Nutrition"



**Mind map style**  
This style is a visual representation of key headings, such as the three food groups shown here. Only keywords and examples are noted and no full sentences are used. Students can use a different colour for each group or category to make the "map" easier to read.

Examples help with understanding the topic.

**"Creativity is the power to connect the seemingly unconnected."**  
William Plomer (1903-1973), Author

**REAL WORLD**

**Share notes with classmates**

Students could share and compare notes with their classmates. They can learn from each other's note-taking styles and improve their content and organization by making sure that they have selected the same key points. To make this more interesting, they can take turns to summarize a variety of texts to each other out loud and work together as a group to improve their notes.

**HINTS AND TIPS**

**Strategies for better note-taking**

Students can use any note-taking style that works best for them. They can experiment with different formats, combine them, or improvise with them to create their own personal style. Here are a few tips that students can apply to improve or develop their note-taking habits.

- Try note-taking templates** available in shops or online.
- Make key points stand out.**
- Circle/underline** or colour-code keywords and ideas.
- Make notes more concise** by leaving out unessential words and by using abbreviations, arrows, and symbols.
- Show visually** how ideas are connected, such as by using the mind map style.
- Organize notes** using boxes, arrows, exclamation marks, and other symbols.
- Use colours, highlighters,** and visuals wherever possible.
- Keep practising** - note-taking is a skill that requires regular development.

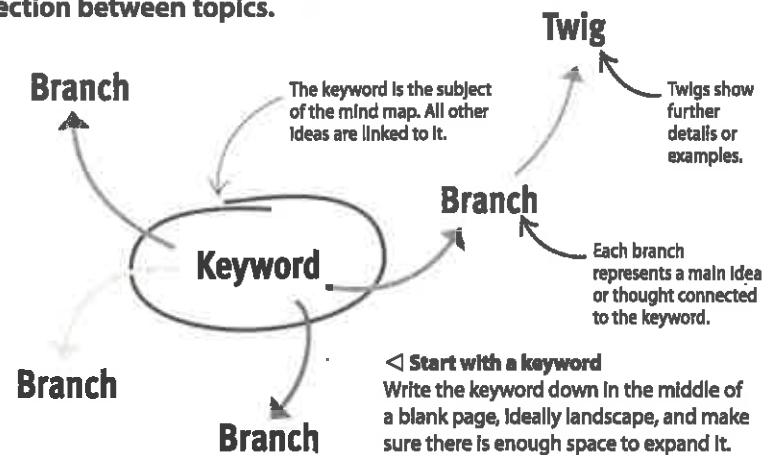
# Mind maps

MAKING A MIND MAP TO LINK IDEAS, AND TO HIGHLIGHT KEY POINTS, AIDS THE POWER OF RECALL.

Visual representation of revision materials is among the most effective ways of studying. Making mind maps boosts students' creativity and helps them to see the connection between topics.

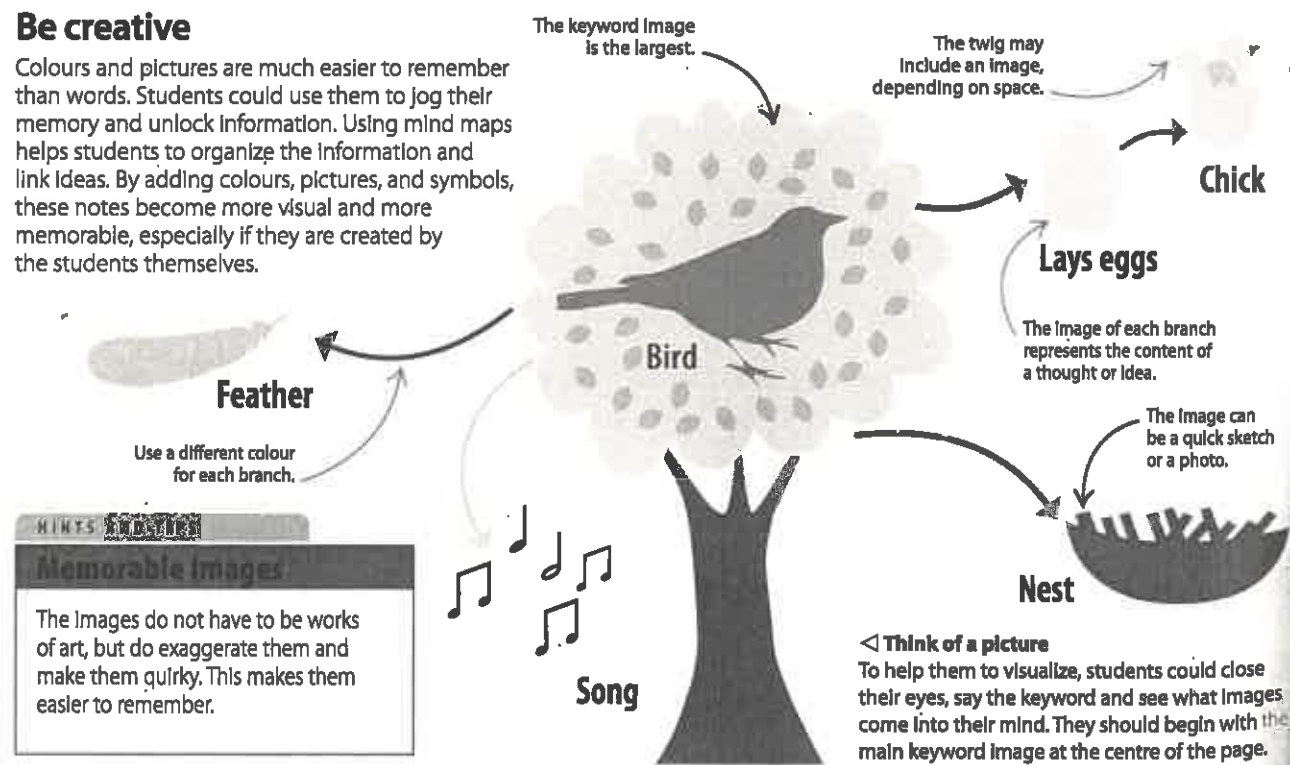
## Make a start

All mind maps begin with a central keyword. This is usually the name of a specific subject, topic, or concept. Draw a circle around the keyword and then draw a few lines, or "branches", leading from that topic. Any main idea that is related to the keyword can have its own branch. Additional lines, or "twigs", can then lead from each branch to show details or examples related to the main ideas.



## Be creative

Colours and pictures are much easier to remember than words. Students could use them to jog their memory and unlock information. Using mind maps helps students to organize the information and link ideas. By adding colours, pictures, and symbols, these notes become more visual and more memorable, especially if they are created by the students themselves.



**HINTS**

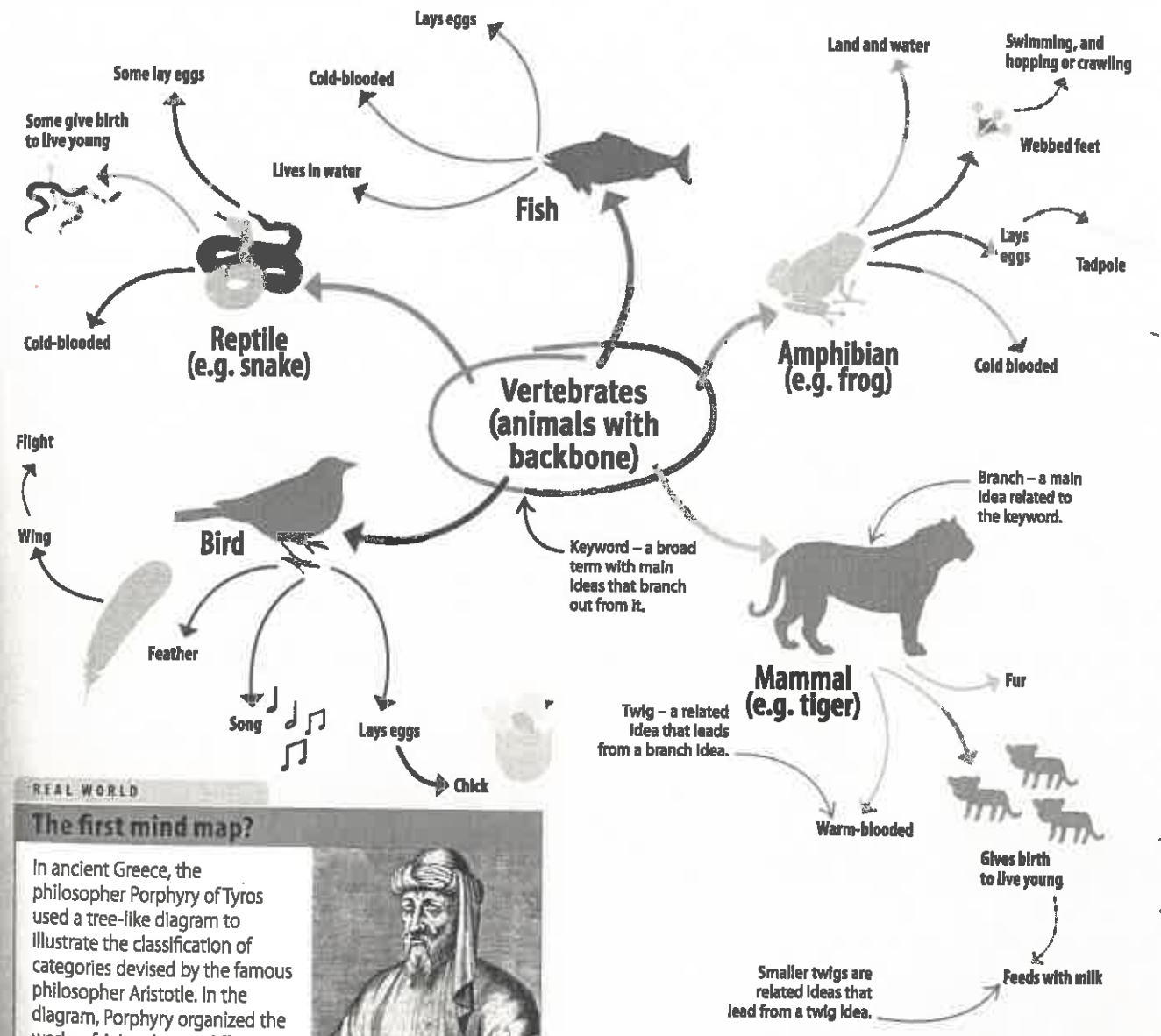
**Memorable images**

The images do not have to be works of art, but do exaggerate them and make them quirky. This makes them easier to remember.

| SEE ALSO    |                        |
|-------------|------------------------|
| < 86-87     | Creative drawing       |
| < 92-93     | Answering the question |
| < 144-145   | Revision cards         |
| < 150-151   | Flash-taking cards     |
| Other exams | 180-181                |

## Think big

Mind maps are often used for brainstorming or categorizing. The keyword is placed in the middle, with the branches representing the associated topics, and the twigs and smaller twigs showing the details and examples. Students could use A3 paper to have more space for their ideas.



**Extended mind map**  
This example could be expanded. It is shown near the beginning of its creation. When revising, it is important to add essential details to make sure all the necessary information is covered.

**REAL WORLD**

**The first mind map?**

In ancient Greece, the philosopher Porphyry of Tyros used a tree-like diagram to illustrate the classification of categories devised by the famous philosopher Aristotle. In the diagram, Porphyry organized the works of Aristotle into different branches. Scholars later called this type of illustration the Tree of Porphyry.

**The brain processes visual information 60,000 times faster than text.**

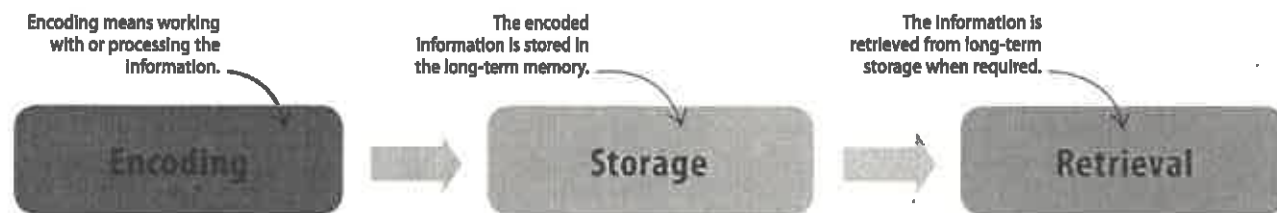
# Memory and the brain

MEMORY CAN BE IMPROVED WITH THE HELP OF TECHNOLOGY. IT IS SOMETHING THAT CAN BE LEARNED AND PRACTISED.

Having a basic understanding of memory processes can help students to get the most out of revision and learn more effectively.

## Memory processes

Incoming information is encoded, stored, and then retrieved when necessary. Students apply their senses, when learning, by reading or listening to the information. Then, they use their short-term memory to encode it – for example, by categorizing or reciting it. After that, the information is “filed” in the long-term memory, which is like a big storage centre. Here, the material is kept and can be retrieved when needed.



| SEE ALSO                                   |
|--|
| 16-17 How the brain works                  |
| 76-77 Understanding memory (MS)            |
| 78-79 Developing thinking skills           |
| 132-135 Computer problems with revision    |
| 142-143 Using active learning for revision |

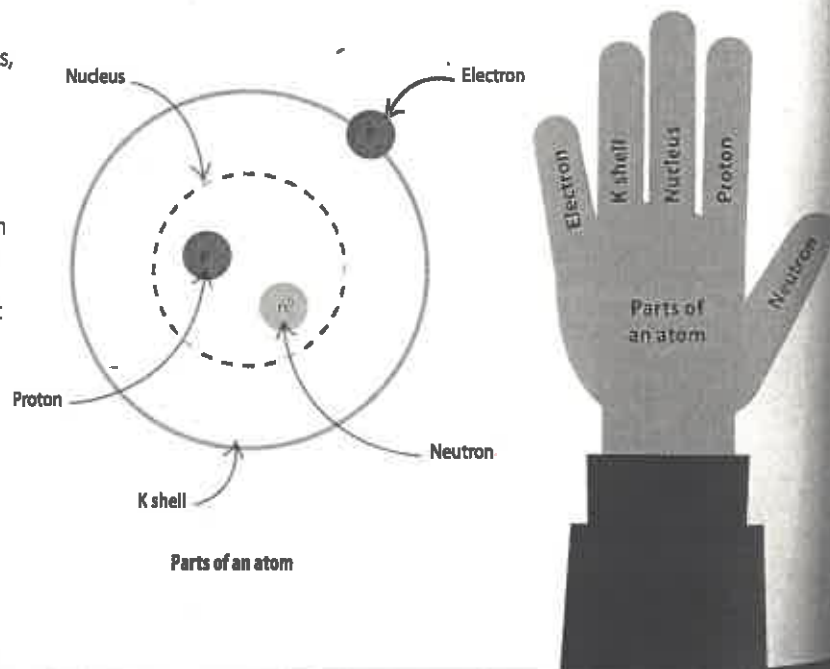
**“The true art of memory is the art of attention.”**  
 Samuel Johnson (1709–1784),  
 Writer

▽ **Three-step process**  
 A lot of the sensory information received by the brain will be stored for just a short time. By actively processing the information, using different techniques, students can enable their brain to store the data for longer.

## Multiple encoding

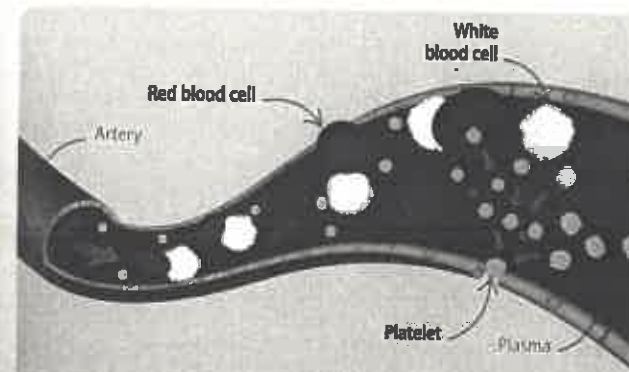
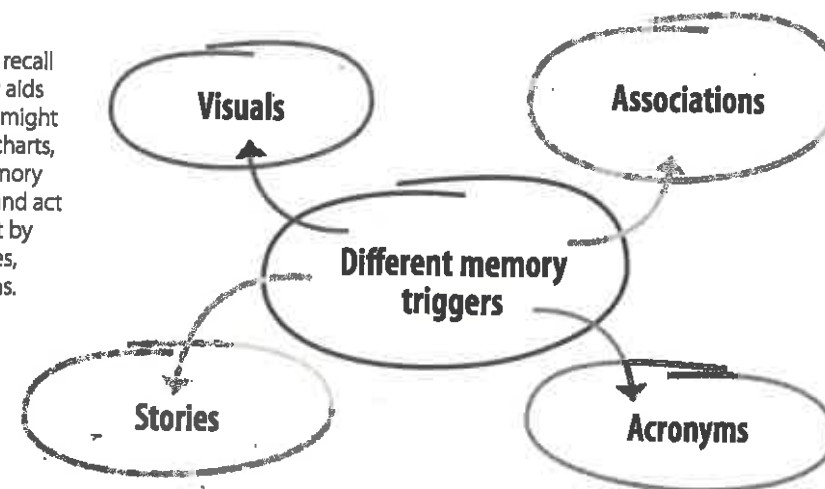
Combining several memory triggers and senses, to aid studying, is called multiple encoding. This approach enables students to engage their senses and creativity, in order to enjoy the learning process more and render the information more memorable and accessible. The information can be presented visually, then put into a song or story, and then be acted out or rehearsed. Some learners also involve their environment by associating facts with different objects in the room or parts of the body.

▷ **Body parts as memory triggers**  
 Body parts can make good memory triggers. If a student is revising some facts about the structure of atoms, for example, he or she could use their hands to represent the topic, relating a specific piece of information to each finger.

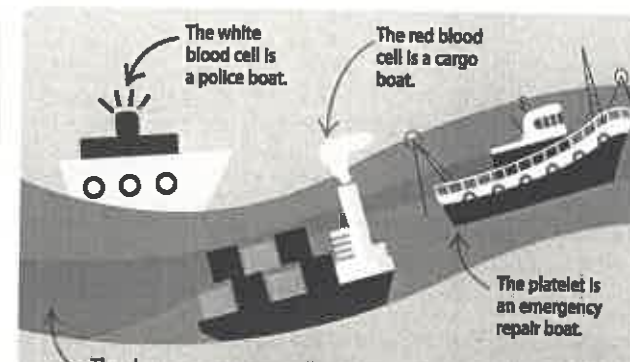


## Memory aids

Studying requires learners to understand and recall information for a test or exam. Using memory aids or triggers can make this easier. Memory aids might include multiple encoding, mind maps, flow charts, mnemonics, and many other techniques. Memory triggers are attached to the material studied and act as a “file finder” in the brain. Students can start by using simple memory triggers, such as pictures, associations, music, simple stories, or acronyms.

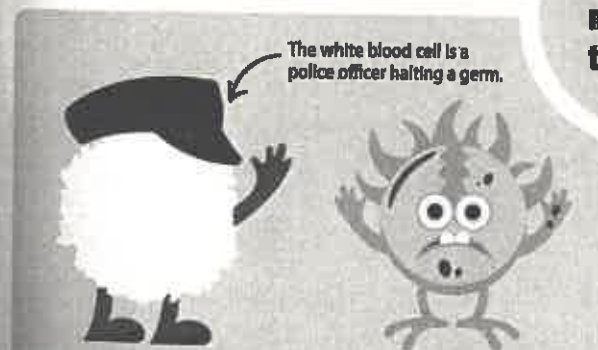


△ **Create visuals**  
 A visual representation of the circulatory system in the human body helps students to remember the details.

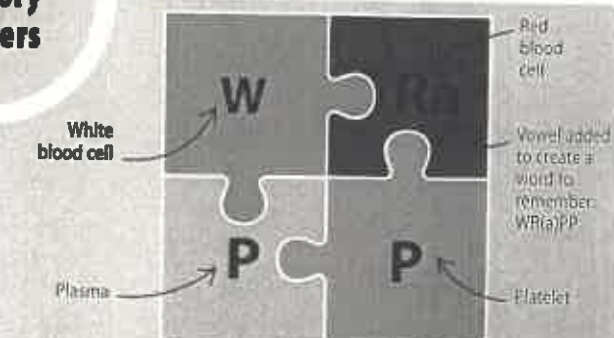


△ **Associations**  
 Using associations to remember details can help students to retain the information. The plasma is like a river, with the different blood cells as boats floating in the current.

### Examples of memory triggers



△ **Make up a story**  
 Students can make up stories to help them recall information. Individual blood cells have important jobs – for instance, white blood cells defend the body against germs, and all blood cells and platelets float in a liquid called plasma.



△ **Create an acronym**  
 An acronym is a made-up word, designed to aid the recall of lists, words, and information. Each letter of the acronym represents the first letter of the term or phrase to be remembered.

# Flow charts and mnemonics

LEARNERS CAN USE MORE THAN ONE REVISION TECHNIQUE TO BOOST THEIR MEMORY.

To make learning more fun and effective, students should be creative with study material. They can turn it into something more visual, such as a flow chart, or use interesting memory triggers.

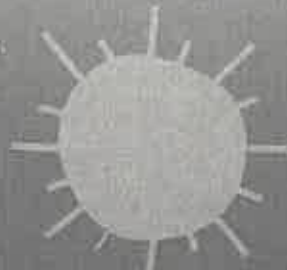





## Mnemonics

Mnemonics are specific strategies that are designed to help students to remember facts or large bits of information. Some mnemonics were developed a long time ago, in ancient Greece, and include the "Acrostic Method" and the "Method of Loci" (see p.158). Acrostics are often used to learn items in a particular order or sequence, by using the first letter of each keyword to create a memorable sentence. The first letter of each word can then be used to trigger the revised material.



It is fun to create charts with friends. Start by brainstorming ideas for a visual representation of a complex topic. Allocate a different part of the topic to each person, who should create a small visual on a piece of paper or post-it note. Then, put all the visuals together on a poster, in the right order, and draw arrows and symbols to show connections. Finally, take a picture of the jointly created flow chart, print it, and stick it on a revision card.

**✓ Sentence as a memory trigger**  
To learn the order of the planets in our Solar System, make a sentence using the first letter of each planet to form a word.

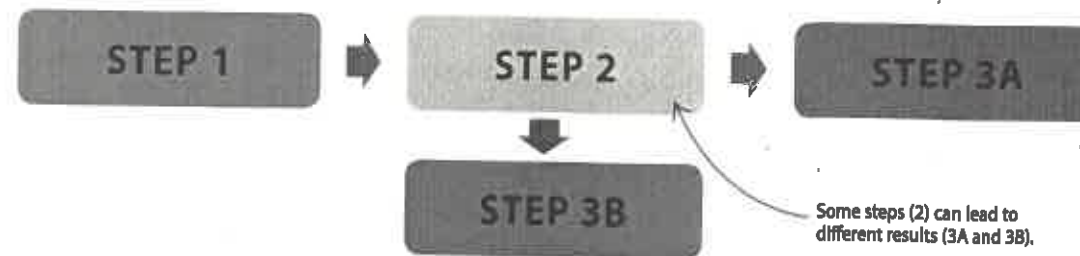
|         |   |         |
|---------|---|---------|
| MERCURY |    | My      |
| VENUS   |    | Very    |
| EARTH   |   | Elegant |
| MARS    |  | Mother  |
| JUPITER |  | Just    |
| SATURN  |  | Saved   |

| SEE ALSO |                                    |
|----------|------------------------------------|
| 142-143  | Using active learning for revision |
| 144-145  | Learning cards                     |
| 154-155  | Memory and the brain               |
| 188-189  | More memory aids                   |
| 200-203  | Healthy studying                   |

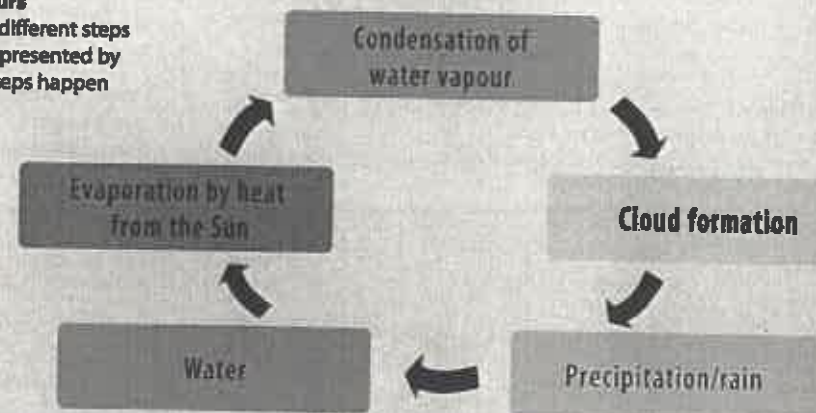
## Flow charts

Complex information that is represented in flow charts is easier to understand and revise. This is especially useful for learning about processes and methods. Use arrows and numbers to show the correct order of points, as well as how they are connected, and use colours, symbols, or pictures to visually represent the material.

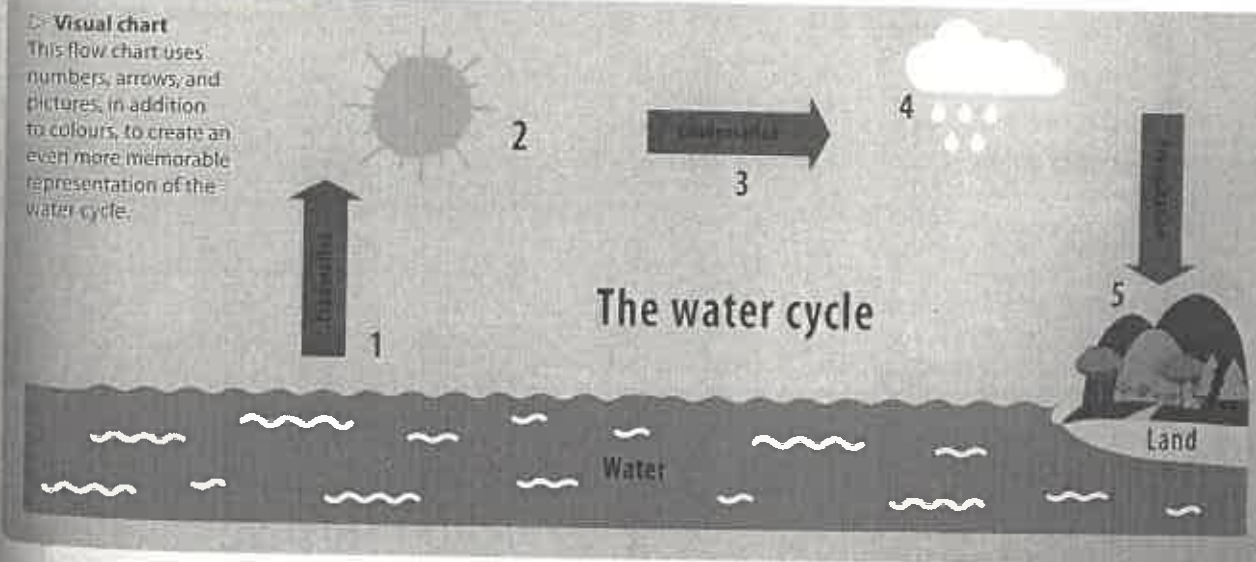
▽ **How to create a flow chart**  
Write down the steps of a process or method as keywords. Then show the connections between them by using arrows.



▷ **Flow chart using colours**  
This flow chart shows the different steps of the water cycle, each represented by a different colour. These steps happen in a particular order.



▷ **Visual chart**  
This flow chart uses numbers, arrows, and pictures, in addition to colours, to create an even more memorable representation of the water cycle.





# More memory aids

STUDENTS CAN EMPLOY CREATIVE METHODS TO VARY THEIR APPROACH TO LEARNING.

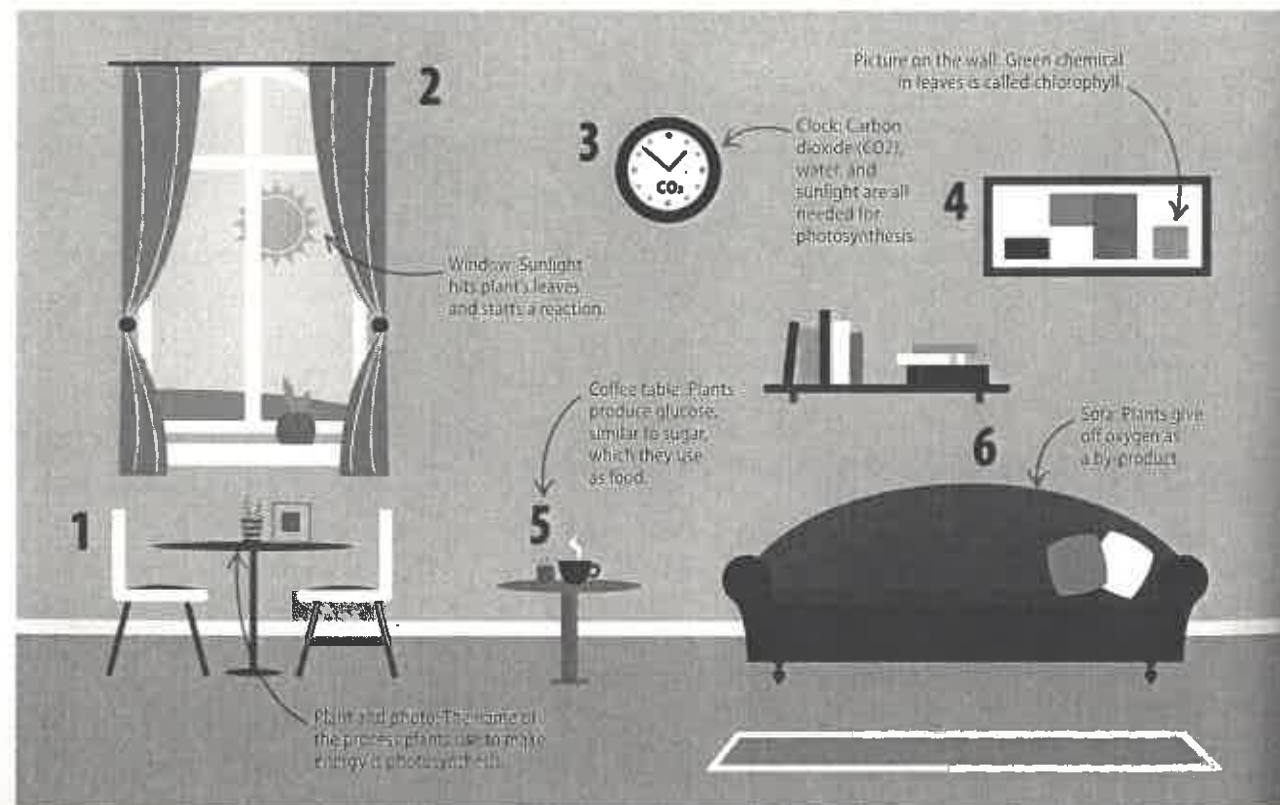
Having a repertoire of memory aids and study techniques makes learning more interesting. In addition, different methods may be required for each subject or type of learning material.

## Method of Loci

Using the "Method of Loci" (loci means "places" in Latin), students can associate familiar places, in a specific order, with information that needs to be remembered. Each fact is first visualized in the mind and then attached to a familiar object or place. This can be done physically, by walking along a familiar road or in a room that includes the memory aids. It is important to choose items that stand out and can be easily remembered, so they act as memory triggers for the facts being revised.

### ▽ Objects as memory triggers

Decide on a logical order for each memory trigger. Then associate it with a fact to be learned. Wherever possible, create an image that links the object with the fact.



| SEE ALSO |                          |
|----------|--------------------------|
| 154-155  | Memory and the brain     |
| 184-185  | Revision goals           |
| 184-187  | Plan and self-assessment |
| 204-205  | Time out                 |

**HINTS AND TIPS**

### Combine strategies

Creativity is one of the best motivators and memory enhancers. Students who are creative when preparing their revision materials, and who combine a variety of active learning strategies and memory technique, have a much better chance of remembering the material in exams. For example, why not allocate a melody to a process, or make it into a rhyme or a poem, then turn it into an acronym or a flow chart.

## Rhymes

Another great way to improve students' memory is by using rhymes. Many adults still remember nursery or school rhymes that they learned when they were very young, which shows how powerful this tool is. Learners should create their own rhymes and use them for revision. This is a fun and creative way for students to boost their memory, and their ability to recall relevant bits of information.

**"You don't understand anything until you learn it more than one way."** Marvin Minsky (1927-2016), Scientist and author

### ▷ Create a poem

Students will enjoy creating their own rhymes and poems. If stuck, they can get some ideas online, to start them off, and then adapt the ideas to make rhymes of their own.

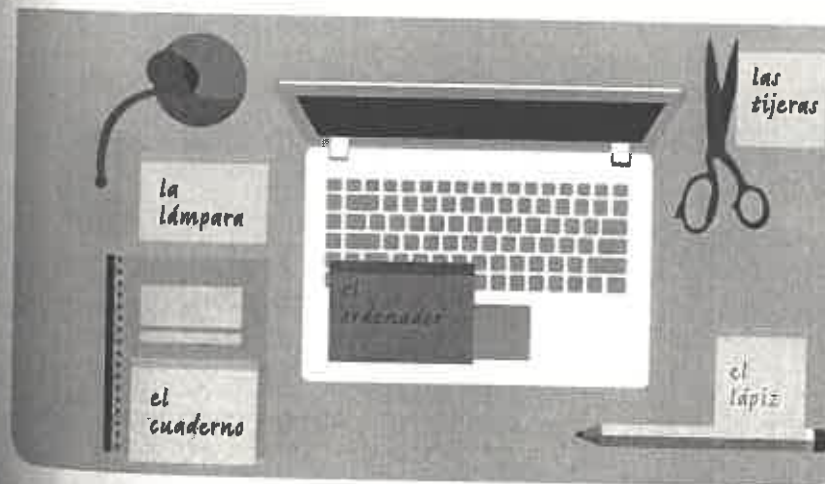
Highlight the keywords in the poem as an additional memory trigger.



## Post-it revision

Some students enjoy using post-it or sticky notes for revision. The advantage of this is that these notes can be moved around and put in different places - such as in a study room, a diary, or in books that are used frequently - and therefore serve as visual reminders. Post-it notes are especially useful when revising the vocabulary of foreign languages: familiar objects can be labelled with their foreign names.

▽ Learning Spanish  
Students can add post-it notes to objects whose name they want to learn in another language.



### REAL WORLD

#### Magazine adverts

In the world of advertising, a variety of memory triggers are used to influence people and make commercial products more memorable. Advertisers use visuals that trigger childhood memories, positive feelings, or evoke senses. Students should look at some magazine adverts to get ideas, and then use the same strategies in their own learning.



# Memory and technology

MODERN TECHNOLOGY CAN HELP TO IMPROVE ONE'S MEMORY, AND CAN BE USED TO MAKE REVISION MORE INTERESTING.

Online revision that involves audio, visual, and multimedia material can help to improve a student's memory, because it offers greater creative opportunities and appeals to more of the senses.

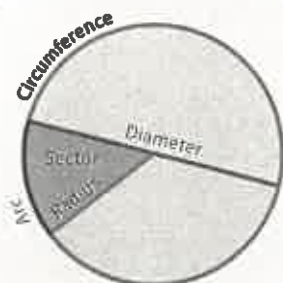
## Study with audio recordings

Listening to an audio file with closed eyes engages the imagination. Students can visualize the material and create memory triggers. Alternatively, they can take notes while listening and pause the recording as and when necessary. Some teachers record lectures and make them available to the class afterwards. This is especially useful for complex topics. Furthermore, replaying the same audio file is an easy way to reinforce the mental processing of the information, which in turn aids one's memory.



▷ **Revise anytime, anywhere**  
A great advantage of audio files is that they can be downloaded to the learners' own devices and then replayed on the go.

| SEE ALSO                                     |
|--|
| ◀ 20-21 Learning styles                      |
| ◀ 64-65 Embracing learning styles            |
| ◀ 110-111 Finding material                   |
| ◀ 122-123 Safety on the net                  |
| ◀ 128-131 Getting online                     |
| ◀ 142-143 Using social learning for revision |
| ◀ 154-155 Memory and the brain               |



### HINTS AND TIPS

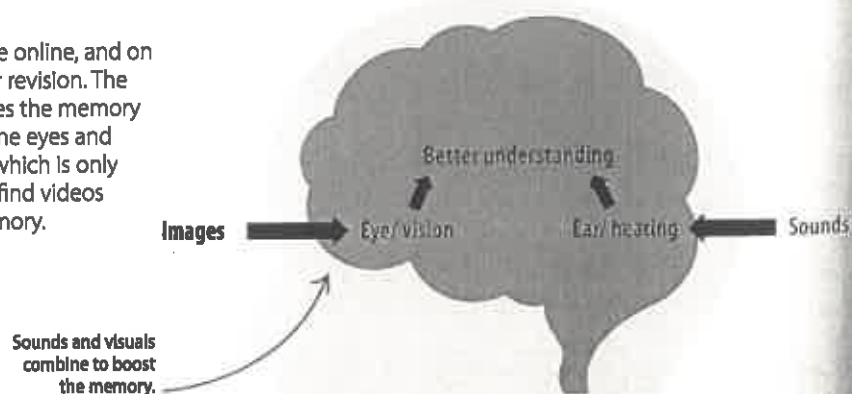
#### Create your own recordings

If no relevant audio material is available, students can create their own. They can record themselves reading out information on a topic, from a textbook or their own notes, using a voice recorder, smartphone, or online software. They should change their speed, pitch, and tone to make the topic sound more interesting – and then listen back to it again and again.

## Revision with video

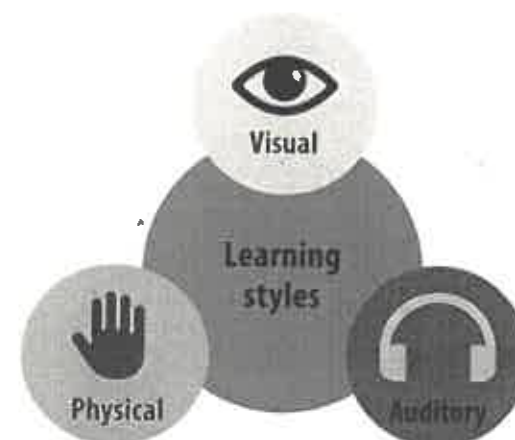
There are many short video lessons available online, and on some school platforms, that can be used for revision. The combination of visuals and sounds reinforces the memory process. Material that is gathered through the eyes and ears is often better remembered than that which is only read from a page. Moreover, many learners find videos interesting, which also empowers their memory.

▷ **Audio visual processing**  
Information is processed through several senses. The channels can be combined in the brain to get a better understanding and a clearer picture.



## Multimedia

Some schools offer additional multimedia study material or ask learners to interact and collaborate with others online. This aids memory, as it makes studying an active process. In addition, typing out comments or questions is a physical activity, a learning style that involves movement, and which is an additional memory booster – especially when combined with sounds and images.

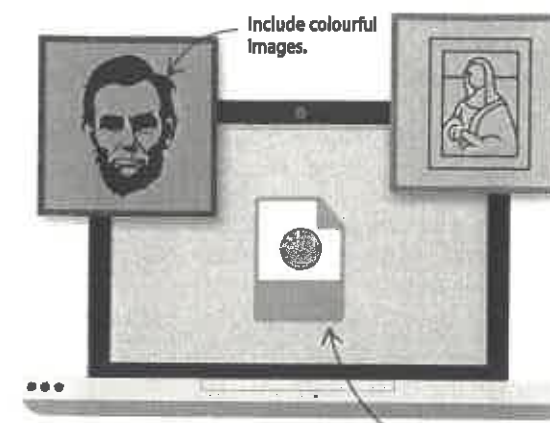


### △ Use all senses

The more senses students engage, while revising, the better. Each sense adds additional information to the material which enhances the memory.

## Creating digital revision aids

Creating digital materials not only appeals to different senses, but also engages students' creativity. They need to actively think about the topic, which enhances understanding. The simplest method is to create a PowerPoint or Prezi presentation and add a few visuals and sounds to it. More advanced students could experiment with creating a digital collage of videos, images, and their own texts.



### △ Create memorable material

Students should set a time limit when creating memorable materials. Working with classmates can make this an even better experience.

Set an alarm to limit the time spent on visual materials.

## Staying focused online

When online, it is important to stay focused on revision and be selective about the materials to be viewed. Parents, older siblings, and friends can be helpful judges of the quality of these sources. Watching online study videos, animated lectures, or participating in online revision games can help to understand and remember the more complex materials.

### ▽ Plan and limit your time

Focus on what needs to be revised. Learn to use search engines effectively, set a time limit, and adopt a critical approach. Follow these five steps to avoid being distracted online.

1. Start with a list of specific topics to be searched for, and key points to be included for each topic.

2. Skim all the material first and make a judgement as to whether or not they are useful.

4. Take a critical approach: any material that seems controversial or contradicts what was taught at school should be ignored.

3. Set a time limit when searching for online study materials to avoid the risk of distraction and getting carried away.

5. Share good-quality materials with classmates and ask them to share theirs. This saves time.

# Know what is expected

PREPARING WELL FOR AN EXAM IS A MAJOR PART OF REVISION. IT HELPS A STUDENT TO GET GOOD RESULTS.

There are various ways in which students can prepare for an exam. This includes practising with past papers under exam conditions and checking the mark scheme to know what is expected.

## Practising under "exam conditions"

Sometimes, teachers share past exam papers with students, so that they can sit mock exams (practice exams). If not, it is worth asking whether these papers are available and accessible, as they provide the learner with information on the types of questions that may be asked and the topics that were covered in previous assessments. Use a past exam or practice paper and answer all questions in the given timeframe, without looking at any notes. Check the time regularly to ensure that all the questions can be completed.

| SEE ALSO                    |           |
|-----------------------------|-----------|
| What is an exam?            | 170-171 > |
| Written exams               | 172-175 > |
| Multiple choice             | 176-177 > |
| Oral exams                  | 178-179 > |
| Other exams                 | 180-183 > |
| Hints and tips for exam day | 184-187 > |

▽ **Time management in mock exams**  
Students can learn to manage their time during exams by practising under exam conditions. Here are some tips on how to answer all the questions within a given timeframe.

- Answer quick and easy questions first.
- Keep an eye on time throughout the test.
- Skip difficult questions and go back to them later.
- Set a time limit for each question according to the marks allocated.
- Practise fast but legible writing regularly to build up writing speed.
- Only include relevant information, leave out unnecessary details.

REAL WORLD

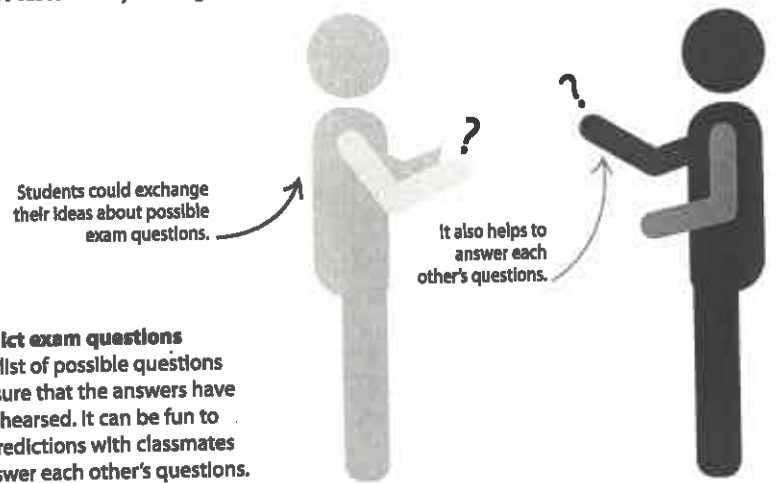
### Mock exams

Practising mock exams in class is very useful, as it gives students an opportunity to test their knowledge and check how much they have learned. Any gaps in knowledge can still be filled in time for the real exam. In addition, students get an idea if they can manage to answer all the given questions within the allotted time. If they do not manage the first time, they can still practise strategies to complete the real exam on time.



## Predicting exam questions

Past exam papers give an idea of possible future questions. Often, similar topics are tested and the questions may merely be reworded. Change the questions slightly or consider whether a different aspect of the same topic could be tested. On other occasions, any topics that were not tested last year might come up in the current year's exam.



Students could exchange their ideas about possible exam questions.

It also helps to answer each other's questions.

▷ **Predict exam questions**  
Make a list of possible questions and ensure that the answers have been rehearsed. It can be fun to swap predictions with classmates and answer each other's questions.

**HINTS AND TIPS**

**Listen out for clues**

In class, teachers sometimes give tips by saying things such as "this is important" or "you will need to know this for the exam". Listen out for these clues – make a note of the topic in question and add an exclamation mark in your notebook. Then record the information on revision cards and revise it regularly. When it is time to sit the exam, the relevant questions can be found and answered quickly, to help create extra time for tackling the trickier questions.

## Using mark schemes

Mark schemes for essays are useful sources that show what might be included in an exam and, importantly, they include the criteria that teachers use to award marks to a student's answer. Often, mark schemes are available upon request. Ask a teacher for advice on where to find them. Knowing which categories students will be tested on and the criteria for what needs to be included to earn a good grade is essential, as the expected skills can then be practised and rehearsed.

**An expert in anything was once a beginner.**

▷ **Check the criteria**  
Some exams are written in the form of an essay. When viewing a mark scheme, take note of the marking criteria for the essay.

*Criteria for students' essays*

- Accuracy of information included
- Wide range and depth of knowledge displayed
- Excellent organization and planning
- Excellent analyzing and evaluation skills
- Extensive range of subject-specific vocabulary
- Quality of written communication
- Spelling, grammar, and punctuation

Show the required skills in your writing.

# Revision groups

REVISING WITH OTHERS CAN HELP INCREASE MOTIVATION AND CAN BE USED TO CHECK UNDERSTANDING.

Many learners find it more fun to revise in groups. Students can test each other, share their favourite memory triggers and learning strategies, and reassure each other.

## Learning with friends

Studying alone all the time can lead to procrastination and boredom. Students could consider revising with friends and classmates. Explaining or summarizing topics to each other helps to reinforce understanding and is a good way to rehearse the material. It is part of being an active learner. Furthermore, sharing study tools increases students' creativity.

▽ **How to set up a revision group**  
To ensure productivity among friends, it is important to follow a few rules when setting up a revision group.

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| 1. Agree on a weekly group revision time.         | 5. Take turns to chair the revision sessions.                         |
| 2. Choose a quiet space.                          | 6. Learn from each other, work as a team, cooperate, and collaborate. |
| 3. Eliminate distractions. Switch off all phones. | 7. Agree on some rules.   |
| 4. Have a plan and set goals for each session.    | 8. Start each session with an overview of what needs to be achieved.  |

| SEE ALSO                           |
|------------------------------------|
| ◀ 66-67 Working with others        |
| ◀ 70-71 Teamwork                   |
| ◀ 86-87 Creative thinking          |
| ◀ 144-145 Revision cards           |
| ◀ 156-157 Flowcharts and mind maps |

**By learning you will teach, by teaching you will learn.**

## Revision activities

Once a revision time and some rules have been established, group learning can begin. There are a variety of useful activities that students can engage in during their revision sessions. Start by checking the accuracy of the key data to be learned, then help each other to understand and study the material.

- Share notes with each other. Check the accuracy of key data.
- Take turns to explain/summarize a topic.
- Together, create memory triggers such as stories.
- Predict exam questions on the material being revised.
- Turn the material into a quiz and play revision games.
- Divide up reading tasks to share the workload.
- As a group, find real-life example and connections to other topics.

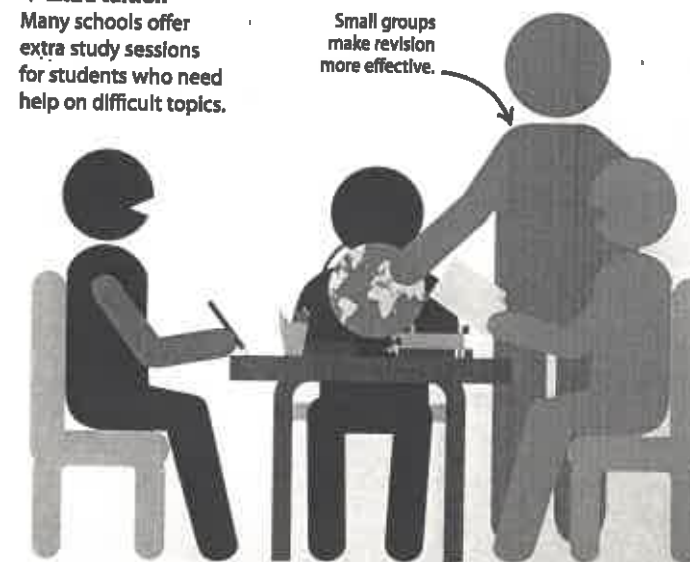
◁ **Useful tasks**  
Here are some ideas for group learning activities. Students can choose the most appealing ones together or create their own.

## Study groups

Joining an organized study group is another option. This may involve costs, as a teacher may join the group to supervise and clarify points. Study groups are usually more effective due to the small number of students in them. Teachers who run these sessions also have more flexibility and can focus on the learners' individual needs.

▽ **Extra tuition**  
Many schools offer extra study sessions for students who need help on difficult topics.

Small groups make revision more effective.



### TIPS AND TRICKS

#### Stay focused

When revising with friends, there is a risk of getting distracted through chatting up on personal life events. Set aside some time for this after the revision goal has been achieved. Stay positive and focused.

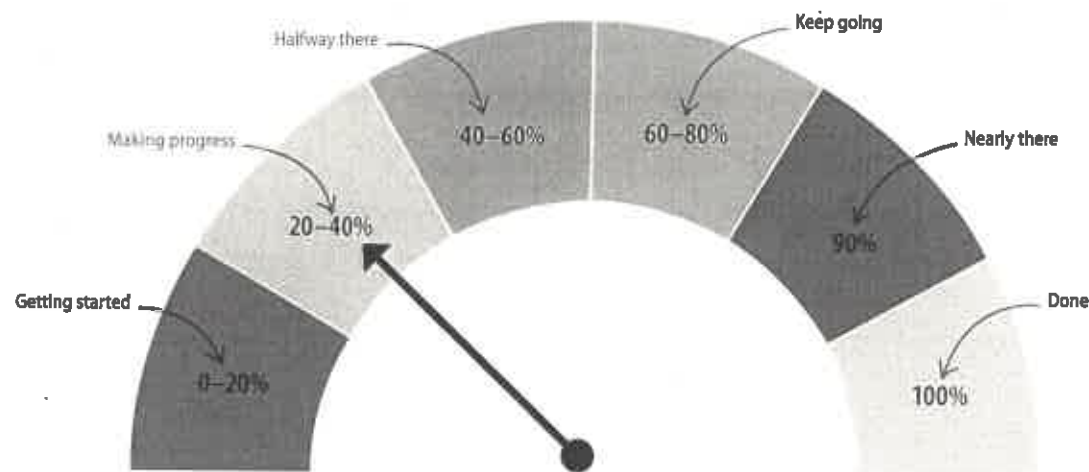
# Peer and self-assessment

BEFORE EXAMS START, ASSESS WHETHER THE STUDY MATERIAL CAN BE REMEMBERED, AND FILL ANY KNOWLEDGE GAPS.

It is important for students to go through regular assessment periods, to test their knowledge and confirm their understanding. This helps them to judge whether or not their revision sessions were successful.

## Checking progress

A revision period often takes place over several weeks. Students need to know exactly where they stand on their learning journey, to ensure that there is enough time to cover everything before their exams start. A weekly or monthly progress check is useful to see how far they have come in terms of revision. A visual chart can be motivating, and shows that revision is an ongoing process rather than a one-off exercise.



SEE ALSO

- 52-53 Personal development planning
- 58-59 Enhancing reading skills
- 138-141 Revision timetables
- 144-147 Revision cards
- 152-153 Mind maps
- 156-157 Flow charts and mnemonics
- 164-165 Revision groups

▼ **Progress chart**  
Create a progress chart and move the pointer up every week. This helps to create a sense of achievement and reveals how much is left to be studied.

### REAL WORLD

#### Use real-life examples

One way for students to test their knowledge is by applying it to real-life examples. They can use everyday objects or processes to explain a theory or to practise an application of knowledge – for example, to calculate the angle of an aircraft taking off, or the speed of a bus. Where relevant, students should schedule extra testing time in their revision timetable for creative applications of what they have learned.



**“The best preparation for tomorrow is doing your best today.”**

H Jackson Brown, Jr (b. 1940), Author

## Testing knowledge

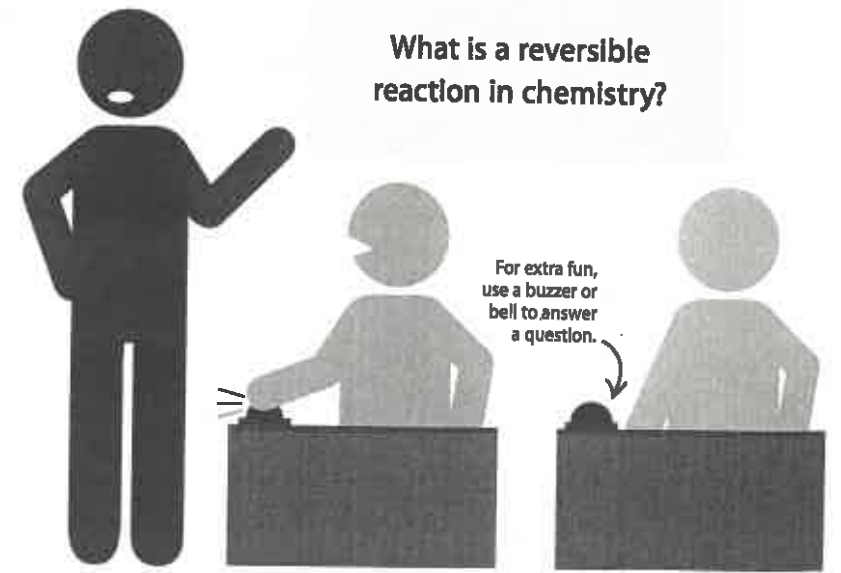
Students can monitor their own progress by testing themselves on how well they can access and apply the material studied so far. Testing their memory gives learners valuable feedback on how successful the applied revision techniques have been. In addition, topics with obvious knowledge gaps can be added to review sessions in the revision schedule to provide some additional revision time.

▼ **Ways of testing**  
There are several ways in which students can test their knowledge. They can choose from the list below or add their own ideas, but they should remember to vary their approach for optimal exam preparation.

- Use past exam papers.
- Draw pictures, mind maps, charts, or graphs, and use these to explain a point.
- Write practice essays on various topics.
- Teach the content to another or to an imaginary person.
- Recite and summarize topics from memory.
- Create quizzes and questionnaires, or tasks to practise knowledge.
- Predict exam questions and answer them.
- Use question-and-answer revision cards.

## Test each other

Revising in groups can be fun. Peer-testing provides a break from an established study routine. Students can test each other and identify any remaining knowledge gaps. They can also share tips and tricks on how to best understand and remember a topic. To make this more fun, it could be turned into a “student-teacher” role play or a “test your knowledge” quiz. Learners could also use revision apps or question-and-answer flashcards.



▷ **Quiz time**  
Turn a testing session into a quiz with several competitors. This practises quick information retrieval as well as testing accuracy.

# Chapter 5 resources

## Priority list

Prioritizing revision topics is part of planning and needs to be done before a revision timetable can be compiled. Students should start by making a list of topics to revise, with a separate list for each subject. They can go through their folders and textbooks to determine which topics have been covered. In the next column, students can add a priority number to each topic according to how well they know it. They can use the table on the right as suggestions for the numbers and their meanings, or they can create their own system.

### ▷ Priority number

The priority list is a great way to get an idea of what needs to be revised. Topics with the numbers 4 and 5 should take priority and will need extra revision time.

|                     |   |
|---------------------|---|
| 1<br>Strong         | I know the subject well.  |
| 2<br>Good           | I remember most of what we learned.   |
| 3<br>Average        | I remember some of what we learned.   |
| 4<br>Difficult      | I am struggling a bit with this subject. ★  |
| 5<br>Very difficult | I do not remember much of what we learned and find this subject very difficult. ★ |

|                     |   |
|---------------------|---|
| 1<br>Strong         | 1 × 30-min revision session                 |
| 2<br>Good           | 1 × 45-min revision session                 |
| 3<br>Average        | 2 × 45-min revision sessions                |
| 4<br>Difficult      | 2 × 60-min revision sessions ★              |
| 5<br>Very difficult | 3 × 30-min + 2 × 45-min revision sessions ★ |

## Suggestions for revision sessions

Students can use the priority numbers to determine the number of revision sessions needed for each topic. As bite-sized sessions are better for revision, it is recommended to have several shorter study periods for complex topics or those that the student is weaker in. This gives them time to go over the material again at the beginning of each session, and build up knowledge over time, rather than overloading the brain with too much information at once.

### ◁ Number of sessions

This table offers suggestions on the number of sessions required at each level. This may need to change to match the amount and complexity of the study material. Students can add more sessions, if necessary.

PHOTOCOPIABLE RESOURCE: Priority list

**Subject:**

| Main topics to revise | Priority scale | Number of revision sessions |
|-----------------------|----------------|-----------------------------|
|                       |                |                             |
|                       |                |                             |
|                       |                |                             |
|                       |                |                             |
|                       |                |                             |
|                       |                |                             |
|                       |                |                             |
|                       |                |                             |
|                       |                |                             |
|                       |                |                             |

PHOTOCOPIABLE RESOURCE: Priority list

**Subject:**

| Main topics to revise | Priority scale | Number of revision sessions |
|-----------------------|----------------|-----------------------------|
|                       |                |                             |
|                       |                |                             |
|                       |                |                             |
|                       |                |                             |
|                       |                |                             |
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|                       |                |                             |
|                       |                |                             |
|                       |                |                             |
|                       |                |                             |
|                       |                |                             |



» Weekly revision timetable

A weekly revision timetable helps learners to use their time effectively, keep calm, and stay on top of their studies. There are many ways of creating a weekly revision timetable. Many students prefer using a template, such as the one on p.237, which they can put up on their noticeboard or on a wall near their desk. Learners can divide each day into morning, afternoon, and evening sessions, or have hourly slots – for example, between 8am and 8pm. The timetable should be flexible, adaptable, and easy to follow.

PHOTOCOPIABLE RESOURCE: Weekly timetable checklist

### Checklist

- Revision sessions should be grouped by using a different colour for each subject.
- Have plenty of breaks to keep up concentration.
- Check the priority list to see how many sessions are needed per topic.
- Include free time slots for swaps that may be necessary, or for catch-up time if a topic has not been finished in the time slot allocated.
- Add review sessions. Revise the topics already studied and check that the materials can be remembered well before moving on.
- Plan enough time for hobbies, social life, and seeing friends to avoid stress and burnout.
- Build in rewards to stay motivated and to have something to look forward to.



▽ **What to include**  
 This checklist is a guide to what should be included in a revision timetable. At the end of each week, students should reflect on how well the timetable has worked before creating a new one. They can then make any necessary changes.

PHOTOCOPIABLE RESOURCE: Weekly timetable

| Day       | Morning | Afternoon | Evening |
|-----------|---------|-----------|---------|
| Monday    |         |           |         |
|           |         |           |         |
|           |         |           |         |
|           |         |           |         |
| Tuesday   |         |           |         |
|           |         |           |         |
|           |         |           |         |
|           |         |           |         |
| Wednesday |         |           |         |
|           |         |           |         |
|           |         |           |         |
|           |         |           |         |
| Thursday  |         |           |         |
|           |         |           |         |
|           |         |           |         |
|           |         |           |         |
| Friday    |         |           |         |
|           |         |           |         |
|           |         |           |         |
|           |         |           |         |



» **Monthly revision timetable**

A monthly revision timetable is a great planning tool because it gives an overview of deadlines, projects, and exam dates. A monthly timetable includes students' goals, assignment deadlines, exam dates, school trips, planned holidays, birthdays, and other important events that should be remembered. This helps students to keep on track and access important dates at a glance. Learners can use the template on p.239 and put it up somewhere visible, or simply add notes and dates to an existing wall calendar. The monthly timetable feeds into the weekly one (see p.237).

**PHOTOCOPIABLE RESOURCE: Monthly timetable checklist**

**Checklist**

- Include goals, assignment deadlines, exam dates, school trips, birthdays, and other important events.*
- Different colours or symbols could be used to indicate the type of event.*
- Count backwards from deadlines and determine when to start work. The start date could be shown as a separate calendar entry.*
- Transfer important dates to the weekly diary or timetable.*
- Update the timetable regularly. For example, at the end of each week, check to see if there are new assignments or projects to be added, or whether deadlines have been changed.*
- Include holidays, day excursions, and other things to look forward to, as these can increase your motivation.*

**"A goal without a plan is just a wish."**  
 Antoine de Saint-Exupéry  
 (1900–44), Aviator and writer

**◀ What to Include**  
 This checklist will help students to decide what to include in a monthly timetable. Different colours could be used to indicate the level of importance or type of event.



PHOTOCOPIABLE RESOURCE: Monthly timetable

|           |        |        |  |  |  |  |        |  |  |  |  |        |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|-----------|--------|--------|--|--|--|--|--------|--|--|--|--|--------|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|
| Sunday    |        |        |  |  |  |  |        |  |  |  |  |        |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Saturday  |        |        |  |  |  |  |        |  |  |  |  |        |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Friday    |        |        |  |  |  |  |        |  |  |  |  |        |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Thursday  |        |        |  |  |  |  |        |  |  |  |  |        |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Wednesday |        |        |  |  |  |  |        |  |  |  |  |        |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Tuesday   |        |        |  |  |  |  |        |  |  |  |  |        |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Monday    |        |        |  |  |  |  |        |  |  |  |  |        |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|           | Week 1 | Week 2 |  |  |  |  | Week 3 |  |  |  |  | Week 4 |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |





