

Five Fast Facts



Five Fast Facts about Studying

Why Study?

Fact 1

What exactly is your goal in studying? Are you studying for a major test? Do you need to understand a theory to apply it in the Lab? Do you need to achieve or maintain a high GPA? To make your study time more effective develop a goal and a plan to achieve your goal. Use the following guidelines to organize your study time.

Multitasking: A Really Bad Idea

Fact 2

Multitasking while studying is counterproductive. Studies show, trying to multitask slows us down, makes us less productive, and produces poor quality work. Find a quiet place away from distractions to study. Set aside a time when all you do is study. No phone calls, texting, childcare, or paying your bills. For some students this may be the most difficult of these guidelines to follow. Nonetheless, it is important! Do your best to devote some time to studying and only studying.

Be Kind to Your Brain

Fact 3

Taking frequent breaks when studying allows your brain to organize the information you take in and relate it to what you already know. Actively performing a task related to your studies builds stronger memories. To make studying more effective, organize your study time around 20 minute study periods and 5 - 10 minute breaks. End each study session by actively practicing what you learned. Write a paragraph, perform calculations, problem solve a scenario.

Fact 4

Sleep

Can you learn in your sleep? Not exactly. However, while you sleep, your brain looks for patterns, extracts rules, and integrates recent learning with existing memory. These processes help to move the new learning into long-term memory and relate it to what you already know. In addition, students who are sleepy or sleeping in class learn less and retain less than their well-rested classmates. Students should get between 8.5 and 9.25 hours of sleep per night. Quite simply, students who sleep less do poorly in school.

Fact 5

How to "Cram" for a Test

This is easy - **DON'T!** There is no way to make up for a semester of little or no studying in one (or even two) all-nighters. Studying is a process that takes time. Your study plan should begin at the beginning of the school term and distribute the study time all the way through the term. To prepare for an important test that you have studied for throughout the term take a practice test if available, write questions that you think may be on the test, review your flash cards or other study aid, get a good night's sleep and show up on time for the test.