

PREPARING FOR FINAL EXAMS

Workshop





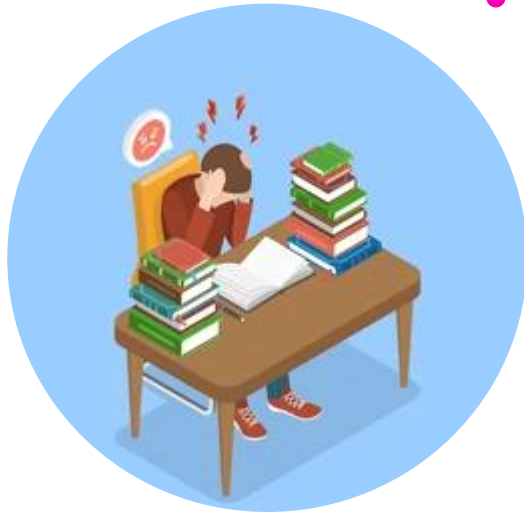
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EXAMS ARE HARD

But they must be done. This presentation is chalk-full of tips you can use to better prepare for exams.

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TIPS FOR SURVIVING FINALS

1. Avoid the urge to procrastinate
2. Get sleep
3. Find a space conducive to studying
4. Create a playlist to help you focus
5. Get rid of distracting devices
6. Mix study methods
7. Work with a study group
8. Take Breaks
9. Maintain a healthy balanced diet

From all-nighters to “panic mode,” procrastination seems to be a universal college experience. The harsh reality is that when you procrastinate, you score worse.

1. Plan for finals at the beginning of the semester

The stuff you learn in the beginning is the stuff most often forgotten when finals roll around.

2. Plan on reviewing **all materials**
 - a. Break up studying by chapters
 - b. Have a study session each week of the course
3. Use the calendar on your phone to set alerts and reminders for yourself so you stick to your plan.
4. Be realistic about how *long* it will take to, say, memorize the dates for all the Civil War battles.

AVOID PROCRASTINATION



All the studying and prep work in the world will **not** make up for lack of sleep.

1. Sleep enhances the mind's capacity to concentrate
2. It performs an active role in fortifying memories
 - a. Makes it easier to reclaim knowledge
3. The earlier you start studying the less chance you'll need to pull an all-nightery
4. Less sleep = trouble remembering = anxiety = more trouble sleeping

GET SLEEP!



Study environment is **vital**. Set up a space **exclusively** for coursework & studying.

Make sure you include

- A desk
- A comfortable seat
- Proper lighting
- Any supplies you may need

Let those around you know you will be studying so as not to disturb you.

If you are one to get bored of your study space quickly, try other locations

- Library
 - Reserve a study room if you want
- Outside
 - Preferably somewhere quiet/away from loud noises
- Your car

STUDY SPACE



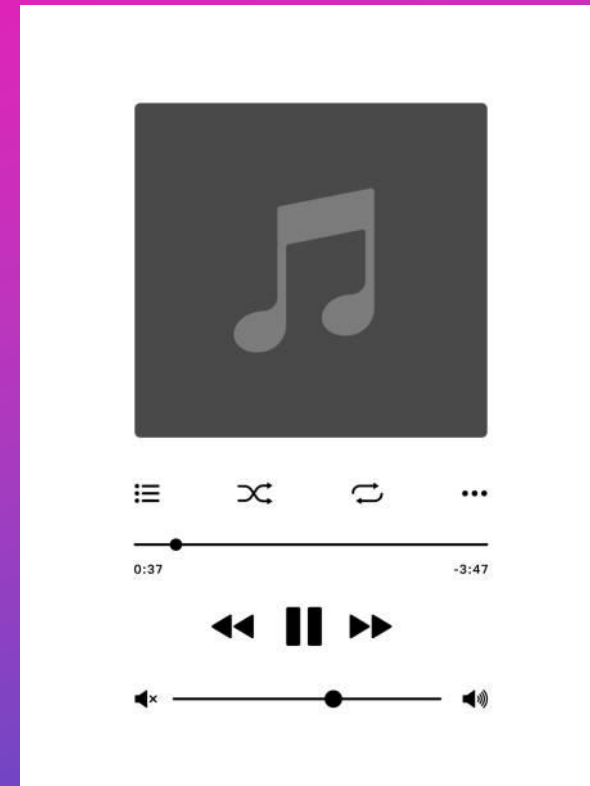
Having the right music can channel an enjoyable & highly effective study time.

Types of music to include

- Classical (can never go wrong)
- Instrumental versions of songs
- Something with a beat
- LoFi

If you are someone who gets distracted by songs with vocals make sure not to include those types of songs on your playlist.

STUDY PLAYLIST



I know I just said create a playlist to listen to while studying but maybe put your phone on the other side of the room while you do it.

In today's digitally-focused world, it can be tough to go more than a few minutes without looking at your phone.

The very *presence* of your phone being in the same room as you could cause you to stop from studying efficiently.

Ways to reduce distractions

- Use 'do not disturb'
- Shut your phone off
- Put devices you don't need in another room
- Put your devices in time locked safes
- Close the door to the room you are studying in

GOODBYE DISTRACTIONS



There's no one-size-fits-all study method. Try a variety of methods, and remember that the same study methods might not work across all classes.

- Study in order
 - *Definitely* on test, *probably* on test, *might* be on test
- Study for your toughest class first
 - Or visa versa
- Quiz yourself
- Study notes
- Create study aides
- Body double
- Study on the move
- Mix up studying
- Writing & Math specific study methods

STUDY METHODS





STUDY METHODS: IN ORDER

Don't just start from the beginning of your notes & try to cram everything in.

Think about what you know *for sure* will be on the test & review that material first.
Then move on to what will *probably* be on the test, then what *might be* covered.

If you run out of time, you know you at least have the basics nailed.



STUDY METHODS: **HARD** → **EASY** **EASY** → **HARD**

If chemistry gave you trouble all semester, devote more time to that subject—even if it's your last final.

If you want to get the easier classes out of the way first then start there and work your way up in difficulty.

For either option

- Take extra time to review what you missed
- Ask your teacher questions
- Get help from tutors



STUDY METHODS: QUIZ YOURSELF

- Take an old exam and note what types of skills and techniques are tested & practice them
- Time yourself
- Use only the materials you will have at the exam
 - Don't refer to "solutions" or a study guides
 - Review your answers
 - Focus your studying on filling gaps in your skills & knowledge.

Writing practice questions/taking practice tests prepare you when it's time to take the actual exam & enables you to think like your professor.

A resource you can use it Quizlet. In order to take a practice test on Quizlet you first have to create the study guide. Double study time!



STUDY METHODS: NOTES

You can of course study notes by reading them, but you can also

- Read them out loud
- Use them to convey information to someone else
 - This shows how well you know the topic if they can relay back to you the main idea
- Copy down your notes again
- Review notes daily
- Turn them into flashcards



STUDY METHODS: STUDY AIDES

- Flash cards to help you memorize dates and equations.
- Create mnemonic devices
 - A system of memorizing facts using a phrase or acronym you'll definitely remember.
 - ROYGBV- Red, Orange, Yellow, Green, Blue, Violet
- Reading summaries that capture main points of texts & relate them to course themes
- Study guide or "cheat sheet" that organizes main concepts, includes explanation & examples, and is easy to review.



STUDY METHODS: BODY DOUBLE

If you are prone to getting distracted & locking yourself in a room to study is the worst thing for you then get someone to be your accountability partner (A.K.A. Body Double).

Body doubling is a productivity strategy to help you stay focused on what you're trying to do.

A body double is a person (or even pet) who is present with you, while you work.

- They provide a gentle form of accountability
- Serve as a reminder as to what you are supposed to be doing
- Passive form of accountability
 - Sit quietly while you work



STUDY METHODS: MOVEMENT

For a change of pace, try

- Pacing while reading
- Walking on a treadmill and studying
- Playing with a fidget toy as you study



STUDY METHODS: MIX IT UP

Bored with what you're currently studying? Mix it up!

Try switching back and forth between two different subjects.

Note: Just make sure the classes are significantly different.

✓ Algebra & British Literature

✗ Algebra & Chemistry

STUDY METHODS: WRITING & MATH

Writing

- Predict questions & outline your answers in preparation for the exam
- Identify specific examples/evidence you will use to support your main points.
- If the exam is in class, time your practice runs to get a sense of the depth/quality of essays you'll be able to produce in the time allotted.
- Evaluate your practice efforts (outlines/drafts) & consider how to refine your response; review relevant lectures and readings to fill gaps.
- Practice producing your answers or outlines, not merely reviewing material

Math

- Create charts of theorems, mechanisms, or principles rewritten in your own words
- Problem packets in which you collate similar problems from the course & their solutions to identify patterns & effective problem-solving techniques.
- Don't consult the answer key until you've tried to solve the problem yourself
 - Work under test-like conditions whenever possible.
 - Review your "cheat sheet" to solidify conceptual understanding; practice reproducing it from memory.

There's nothing like peer pressure to keep you motivated to study. This is an effective way to study for finals because together, you can:

- Review class material with friends
- Compare notes
- Work through concepts
- Help each other stay accountable
- Quiz each other
- Teach concepts to other peers

You'll benefit from the good study habits and notes of the other members in your study group.

STUDY GROUP



While studying is a key component to preparing for finals, an intentional study break (5 minutes to an hour) refreshes your brain while simultaneously increasing your energy, productivity, and focus.

Different activities you can do on your break include:

- Breathing exercises
- A quick walk
- Stretches
- A quick power nap
- Cooking a healthy meal
- Meditation
- Yoga
- Tidying up your workspace
- Watching 1 episode of a show

TAKE BREAKS



A healthy diet is important for all around health, but it is especially true during finals. This helps you stay healthy and energized during study season.

When studying for finals, incorporate brain stimulating snacks or meals.

- Berries
- Dark chocolate
- Nuts
- Protein
- Avocados
- Fish
- Red, green, & orange veggies

HEALTHY DIET



FINAL NOTES

Once you have survived finals & the semester is over, take the opportunity to assess your semester with complete honesty. Think about what you would like to do even *better* the following semester.

If you take even a fraction of these tips to heart, then you will be on the path to becoming a better student (and person) overall.



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THANK YOU & GOOD LUCK!



LSC CyFair Writing Center

