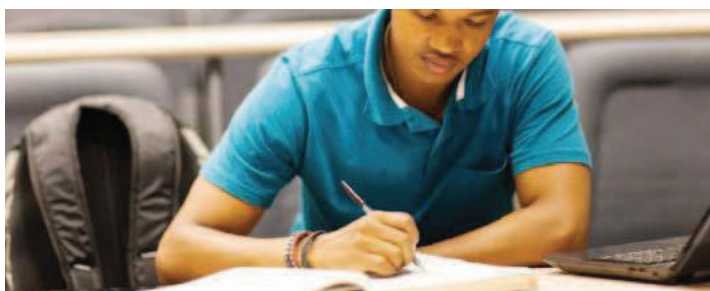


HOW TO ESTABLISH GOOD STUDY HABITS



Preparing a study timetable is only the start to establishing good, healthy study habits. Take note of the tips below to ensure you pass your academic year.

● **DON'T MISS OUT – PAY ATTENTION**

Even when you feel bored by a lecturer you still need to pay attention to what he or she says as much as possible. Lecturers may give explanations and examples that are not in the textbook. They may also give hints or advice on what is important, or how to approach certain questions. If you're chatting to your friends or drifting away you'll miss out. Try to sit close enough to the front of the lecture hall so that you are able to see and hear everything clearly.

● **DON'T BE SCARED – ASK QUESTIONS**

It can be very daunting to put up your hand and ask a lecturer a question, especially if it is in front of hundreds of other students that you don't know. If you feel shy to ask a question in class, or if there is something that you are unsure about or do not understand, you can approach lecturers after class during their office hours. Lecturers are helpful and will be supportive if you engage with them. If you are not keen to approach the lecturer ask a fellow student for help. It is often helpful to discuss the topics covered in the lecture with other students who may have a better understanding.

● **DON'T BE DISTRACTED BY STUDENT LIFE – GET ENOUGH SLEEP**

The life of a student can be filled with exciting social events and as a first-year you may be tempted to party all night long or stay up watching TV or using the Internet. When making plans to go out for social events, ensure that you have finished your most important work first. The best time for socialising is over the weekends when you don't have to get up early to attend morning lectures. It is vital that you maintain a consistent and healthy amount of sleep throughout the week, especially on Sunday nights. You want to be well rested on Monday mornings in order to tackle the week ahead of you. Weekends are for fun and social activities, but can also be used to catch up on work. By Sunday evening you should start preparing for the week ahead.

● **DON'T FALL ASLEEP AT YOUR DESK – STAY AWAKE**

When you are studying and finding it difficult to concentrate, you may feel yourself dozing off. When this happens, set your kitchen timer or alarm for shorter periods than usual, for example 10 minutes. Once it goes off, take a short 5-minute break by stretching your legs and sipping some fruit juice. This will help keep you alert for the next 10 minutes.

● **DON'T PANIC – STAY CALM**

An advantage of establishing good study habits early on in the year, is that it helps you to stay calm in the face of overwhelming work (for example, when you have multiple assignment deadlines for the same day). If you have been keeping up with your academic work by studying regularly, you will be less likely to panic, and will be able to focus on one task at a time.

● **DON'T FORGET YOUR RESPONSIBILITIES – BECOME AN ADULT**

Most first-year students are at an age where they are not quite adults yet, but they aren't teenagers either. There are certain responsibilities that come along with becoming an adult. One of these involves taking responsibility for your education. You no longer have teachers or parents constantly reminding you to do your work or finish an assignment. It is your own choice to study and you must take full responsibility for your learning experience. No one is going to remind you about deadlines for your assignments, test dates and so on. It is up to you to remind yourself when your work needs to be handed in, and when you have to write tests and exams.

● **DON'T CREATE PROBLEMS FOR YOURSELF – BE ORGANISED**

You don't have to be a perfectionist, but try to keep your work neat and easily accessible. Make sure you date all your work so that you can keep it in the correct order. Allocate a separate file for each of your subjects.

In addition to keeping your work in order, you should also order your living environment in a way that will cater for your academic needs. Keep your study materials, stationery, notes and textbooks in a clearly defined space. It is difficult to study to your best ability if your room is messy. You don't have to be obsessive about it, but try to keep your room reasonably clean and tidy. An organised and uncluttered work space encourages an organised and uncluttered mind.

Learn to organise for emergencies. For example, keep a spare light bulb for your desk lamp to avoid the unpleasant situation of a burnt-out bulb on the night before a test or exam. Also keep spare pens and paper handy.

