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How to study effectively *workshop*

Presentation Overview

- **Study Strategies**
  - Making the most of your learning time
  - Note-taking
  - Strategies for different subjects and learning styles
  - Revision methods to help content stick
- **Time Management**
  - Making the most of your time
  - Prioritising what matters
  - Breaking procrastination
- **Exam Preparation**
  - Tips and tricks for tackling exams

Taking notes during class

Listen	Listen for structure: Signal words like "first," "most importantly," "in conclusion."
Abbreviate	Abbreviate and use symbols (e.g., "b/c" = because, "→" = leads to).
Highlight or mark	Highlight or mark unclear points to revisit later.
Ask	Ask questions (in margins or cue column).

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You have limited time to write notes, but these notes are what you'll use to revise for exams and assessments. Ensuring you can write clear, succinct notes is super important. So remember to structure your notes, use abbreviations and short-hand where possible.

Mark things you need clarification on, or that you would like to revisit. Highlight the key ideas and main points.

Note taking

- **Lots of different methods such as:**
  - Cornell Method
  - Outlining Method
  - Structured Analysis
  - Mind Maps

This website by Chloe Burroughs covers the different methods and has text, images and video examples

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Trying out different methods can help you find what you like best, and different methods you might use in different situations. Commit to giving at least one a try, we recommend the Cornell Method at first. Check out this website for more info on these different note taking methods with examples and instructions: This website by Chloe Burroughs covers the different methods and has text, images and video examples
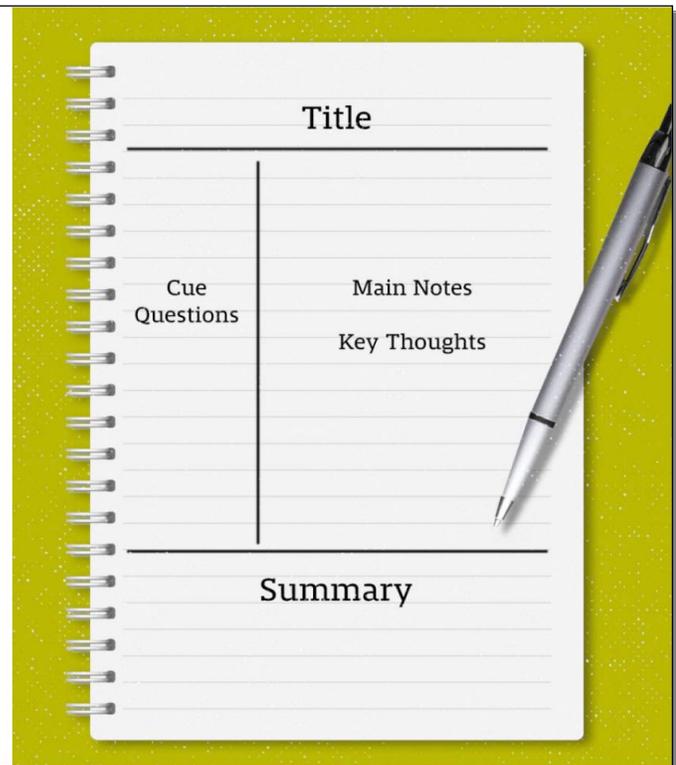
The Cornell Method: It involves splitting your page into sections to help keep your notes organized and purposeful. You can use templates for this, or you can simply rule up a page in your notebook to look just like the example pictured.
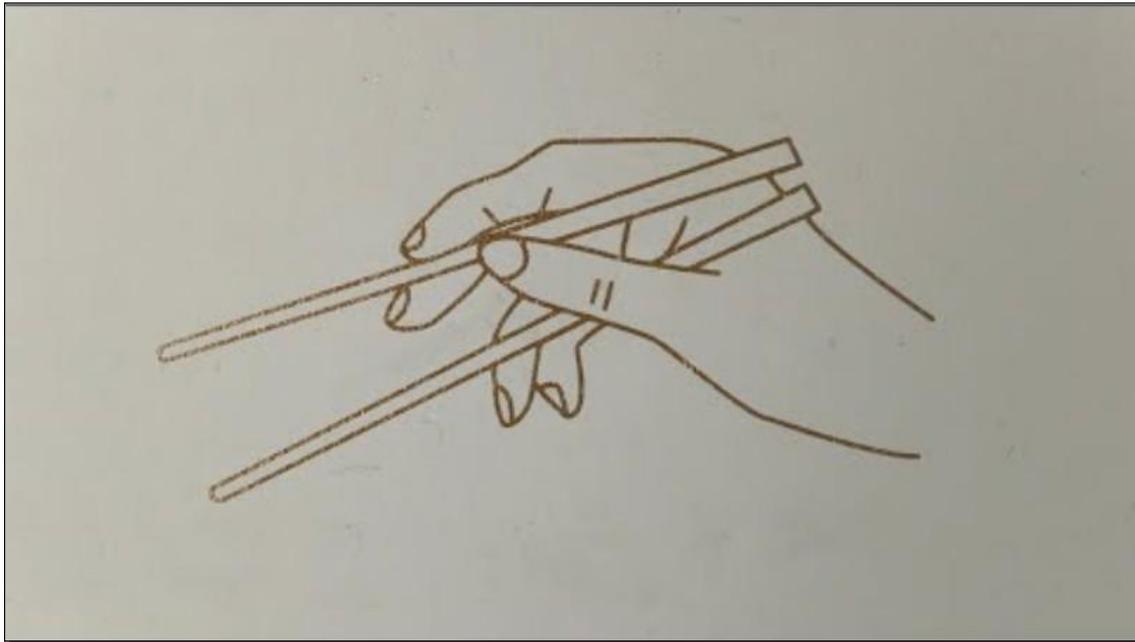
Template 1

Focus on taking good notes as you watch the video

....what would good notes look like?

Take this video about chopsticks, it is a great way to practice the Cornell Method:

https://youtu.be/tSciinXdGhI?si=Ph2U1nrRskMn0kmM

Let's look at the other two spaces...

Cues/Questions: Two functions in this section
1. What questions do you still have/what is missing?
2. Use the content in reverse – create a question (or cue) that will lead your thinking to what you have written down

Summary
- Can you get all of the key points into one statement?
- Try answering the cues/questions you wrote

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Remember: The cue column is where you come up with questions that lead you back to the notes you have written. Instead of just re-reading notes (which is not very effective for studying) the cues you create for yourself allow you to engage further with the content. Take our choptick video for example, cues in the cue column could be "Other than China and Korea, what other countries or cultures use chopsticks?" "What are the pros and cons of bamboo vs metal chopsticks?" "Why did chopsticks gain popularity in America?" "Why were chopsticks first invented?"

In the **summary** section, come back after you have done your notes and cues and try to sum up the main ideas and takeaways of the content/lesson etc. in just a few sentences.

Useful links

Template or Download Digital Software for Note Taking

More about Cornell Notes and what to put in each section

Exemplar of how to use method

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You can click these links and try out an app for note taking or learn more about the technique. Nothing is stopping you from doing more googling about other apps etc that you might like to try!

Click the links here:

Template or Download Digital Software for Note Taking

More about Cornell Notes and what to put in each section

Exemplar of how to use method

Outlining Method

For in class or readings

Best for...

Recorded lectures & creating a hierarchy of information

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Next we will look at the outlining method, some other people call it the indenting method. If you tend to be very good at categorizing and hierarchizing information you might like this method as it is quite good for quickly taking notes from the main points and general ideas down to the specifics. It saves time so you aren't writing chunks of text and paragraphs but it may take some getting used to.

Structured Analysis

For videos or readings

Best for...

Deeper dive, reflection and analysis

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Structured Analysis is a note taking strategy where deeper analysis and critique is included alongside the recording of information. This method gives you more than surface level understanding of your notes by prompting you to go deeper and investigate the material further.
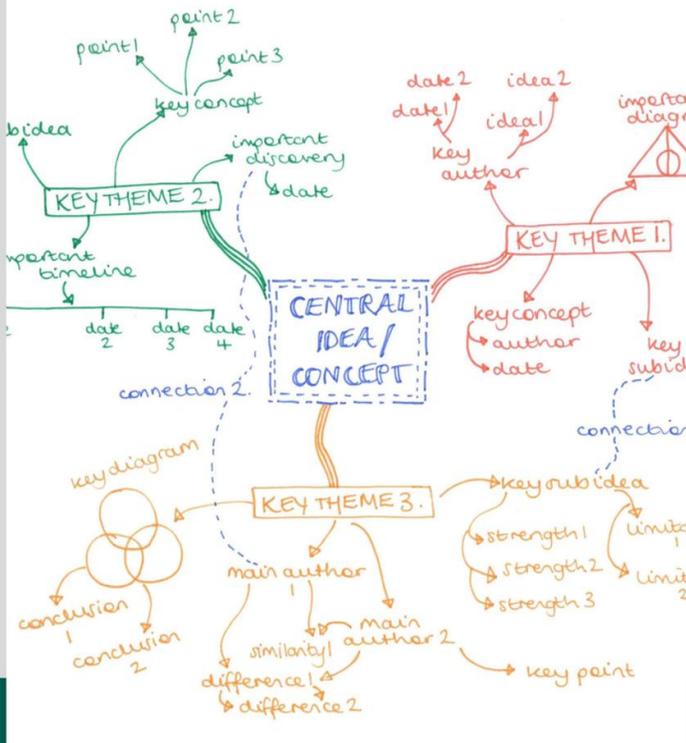
Mind Maps

For organising ideas, readings or assessments

Best for…

Planning an assessment

Or visualizing how concepts are connected

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A mindmap is a visual way to represent ideas and concepts. It's a diagram displaying information and theories around a central idea. They are also ideal for those who are bit more of a visual learner or who are quite creative or lateral thinking. This method allows you to build out from a central idea, concept or argument and encourages you to deeply engage with the content more so than passively listening or just taking notes. It asks you to be thinking about how things might be categorized and how things link together or build upon eachother and works great for words, sentences, dot points, dates, quick diagrams and more.

It can be especially helpful for the planning stage of an assignment, for example you have a central topic but you need to work out what your argument and supporting points will be.

After class

1
Review or **clean up** notes if needed

2
Summarise key points in your own words.

3
Fill in summaries, cues or remarks (if relevant to your method)

4
Review within 24 hours to cement memory.

5
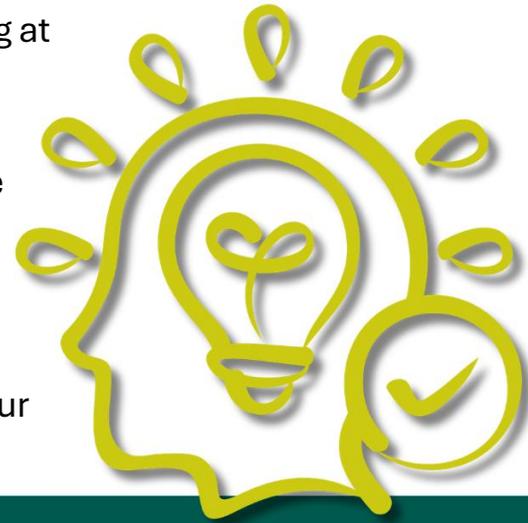**Test yourself** using flashcards or the Cornell cue column.

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Review notes as soon as possible, begin to summarise and find ways to make your notes even more concise. Review it again the next day, maybe your next lesson builds further on your previous lesson. Take the chance the next day to then see if you remember yesterday's lesson and how it relates to the lesson you had today.

And remember, active learning beats passive, so try using the cue column and testing yourself with your own questions, or try out some digital tools for making flashcards or mini quizzes.

Revision

1. **Straight after a lesson** – summarise the key points in your own words, create a study guide or make flashcards

2. **Next day** – use active recall to test yourself without looking at your notes

3. **Three days later** – test yourself again, try blurting, the Feynman technique or complete a quiz you have made for yourself

4. **One week later** – keep testing and identify what you're struggling with the most, focus on that

Takeaway: Revision must be *active* – you must be engaging your brain to make it stick. Just reading your notes won't cut it!

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AI

AI tools can help you memorise, check your understanding and unpack your assumptions. Other tools can help you plan, organise and summarise.

Here are a few tools you might use:

- AI Chatbots like Copilot

- Create Quizzes and Flashcards

- Notebook LM - An AI Powered Notebook

- Obsidian - Another Popular Digital Notebook

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Keep in mind that AI tools can hallucinate, so you should be vigilant in checking the information it feeds you.

Here are the links to some tools you might find useful, also note the Copilot often come installed on Microsoft laptops so check if you have it already:

- AI Chatbots like Copilot

- Create Quizzes and Flashcards

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- Notebook LM - An AI Powered Notebook

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- Obsidian - Another Popular Digital Notebook

Time management

- **Use calendars/planners** to map out the semester – weeks, breaks, assessment dates

- **Time blocking**
  - Include down time and activities you do for enjoyment in your schedule
  - Think about when the most productive time would be for each activity (morning person vs night owl)

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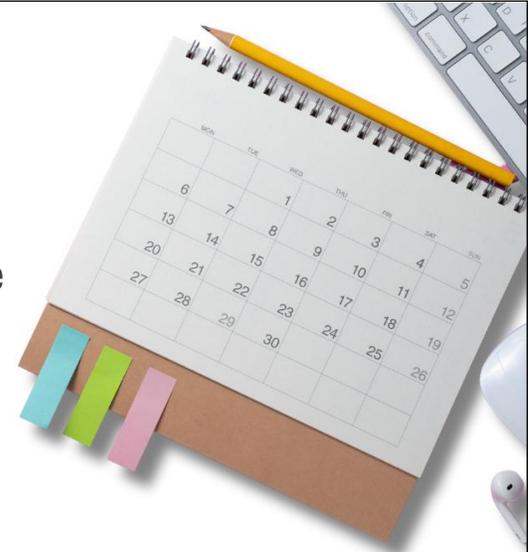
Having a clear sense of when things are due, when you have free time and when you will be under the pump helps us avoid procrastination because we can see the road ahead, and how difficult it might be if we continually put off studying or working on assessments.

Let's Practice

Template 2

Start with the 'need to haves'
- School has been done
- Sleep (how many hours *should* you get per night???)
- Meal times

Now move to the 'nice to haves'
- Work (some of you will have this as a 'need')
- Sport
- Social

Where does study fit? Where is the best place to fit it for you?

What might have to move or be reduced?

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Many templates exist online for scheduling (find templates in Canva or Google Images, even Excel has templates for scheduling); you might also like to by a diary to keep track of your available hours and tasks, or a calendar to go with your assessment calendar that you can fill in and hang up. At the very least, **printing your assessment calendar** and keeping it handy (above your desk, on your cupboard or on the fridge, for example) help you be more aware of the time ticking until your next assessment is due!

Time management

- **Do not multitask** - The human brain is incapable of multitasking!
- Use the **pomodoro technique**
- **Break free from distractions**

  e.g. Freedom and screen time limits

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How to use the **pomodoro technique** :

Grab your to-do list and a timer (extra points if it is a tomato-shaped kitchen timer).
Set the timer for 25 minutes and focus on a single task until it goes off.
When the timer rings, mark off one Pomodoro (task) and note what you've achieved.
Take a well-deserved 5-minute break to recharge (that's some solid scroll time).
After four Pomodoros, treat yourself to a longer 15-30-minute restorative break (coffee, tea or snack perhaps?)

More on pomodoro and procrastination:

Sometimes getting started is the hardest part and you'll just keep procrastinating and putting off studying. We get it, it is so much easier (and more enjoyable) to doomscroll or play games or go have fun doing something else). But the time you put into studying now is an investment in yourself. Try limiting screen time with apps/programs such as [Freedom](#).

The pomodoro technique is great because you set the timer and tell yourself to just try to do SOMETHING for that long. It doesn't matter if you don't whizz through a bunch of work, it is about building the habit of at least trying when you say you are going to start something. One of the tips for overcoming procrastination is to break a large task into smaller more approachable tasks and the pomodoro method helps you work away at these more manageable chunks of a larger task. Pomodoro's with your friends can also help you feel motivated, stay in the zone and help you each be accountable to each other. But don't get distracted and chat until after the study is over!

Exam Techniques & Preparation

Preparing:

• No point last minute cramming

• Take care of yourself

• Exercise, mindfulness, eating and sleeping well

People think cramming is useful, but the truth is, it is the information stored in your long-term memory from consistent studying that will get you through an exam. It also takes a load of tress off of your shoulders. Last minute is too late to learn anything new, so just focus on feeling prepared mentally and emotionally for the exam, and get a good night's sleep beforehand!

Exam Techniques & Preparation

Reading time:

- Strategy time – it's not about thinking up the answer and remembering it
- Scan whole exam
- Make mental note of easy vs hard questions and plan time, flag tricky questions
- Prioritise which questions you will start with

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Exam Techniques & Preparation

In an exam:

- Read questions carefully
- Take note of how questions are weighted
- Answer every question
- Pause briefly if feeling overwhelmed

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