

Upgrade Program- San Antonio Education Partnership

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Name of Key Area	College Transition
Title	Getting Started with Studying
Goal	The goal is for individuals to learn some general basic study skills that can help them get started as a college student again.
Advisor & Date	Micaela Rios, Spring 2019

Welcome back to college!

If it has been a few years since you have last been in school, you will find that getting back into the rhythm of studying can be a challenging, yet rewarding experience. As an adult student, you are investing time, energy, and money into your coursework. Here are some general tips study tips you should note.

1. Know your learning style

Have you ever noticed your learning style? Maybe you learn best with YouTube videos, written instructions, or by being more hands on. Knowing your learning style is important to your academic success, and the methods you choose to consume new knowledge. Also, note that you may have differences in learning styles depending on the content of what you are studying.

- **Visual Learners:** Visual learners understand and learn best when information is presented to them visually. Seeing information helps these students visualize concepts taught.
- **Auditory Learners:** Auditory learners learn best by listening to information. Hearing information helps these students internalize concepts taught.
- **Kinesthetic Learners:** Students that understand and learn best when information is presented to them kinesthetically. Using their hands or bodies helps these students experience the concepts taught.

How do you best learn material? Take this quiz here to evaluate your learning style:

<http://www.educationplanner.org/students/self-assessments/learning-styles.shtml>

2. Schedule sufficient time for studying

The general rule of thumb is that for every 3 credit hour course you are enrolled in, you want to estimate about 6-9 hours of time studying, beyond the classroom. If you are taking a math or science course, you want to estimate 9-12 hours of time to studying. If you are enrolled in two courses, that's about 12-18 hours per week of studying in addition to class time. Another aspect to consider is scheduling time to study when you feel most alert. If you are an early riser or a night owl, try to schedule your study time at a time that is convenient and best for you.

3. Find the right study space

Studies show that the place where you study affects how you will remember information. "Context-dependent" means that you'll remember something more in the place where you first learned it.

This is why it is important to pick a regular place that works for you. Pay attention to noise levels, traffic, clutter, lighting, comfort levels, etc.

4. Keep up with your readings

Depending on your coursework, you will likely have a lot of reading. College is different in that there are less assignments than say, high school. However, grades are heavily based on exams and participation. Make sure that you are keeping up with reading to avoid falling behind.

5. Talk to your instructors

Get to know your instructors early on! Go to office hours or email your instructor at the very beginning of your semester. Sometimes, courses can be large and it is important to build rapport with your instructor so that they know who you are, and so that they can provide any early support that you may need. You want to avoid going to your instructor at the end of the semester, asking for extra credit. Be proactive and seek the support you need. Instructors are often willing to help and provide suggestions!

6. Utilize resources on campus

As a student, you pay both tuition and fees, so make sure to utilize the resources on campus like the tutoring centers, writing centers, computer labs, workshops, library, etc. Don't forget to also utilize study groups that your class may offer. Each college will offer an array of resources on campus, and if you are not quite sure where to get started, talk to your academic advisor as well as your instructor.

7. Study with a partner or group

Some individuals learn better in group settings, while others learn better studying on their own. One thing is for certain, explaining material in your own words, like a teacher or tutor, can help test your comprehension of a subject.

8. Take study breaks

Take time for self-care and study breaks. Since study breaks ideally should be brief, create a list of 3-5 minute activities you can do. This is not a time to get other stuff done, rather it is time for you to take a mental break from studying. If you have been staring at a computer screen, try to avoid activities that are strenuous to the eyes. You want to try taking a brief break about every 30 minutes.

Adapted from:

- The Learning Center, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill: <https://learningcenter.unc.edu/tips-and-tools/studying-101-study-smarter-not-harder/>
- University of Lynchburg: <https://www.lynchburg.edu/academics/tutoring-academic-support/top-10-study-skills>