

## Research-based Study Tips

### Review Your Notes Before Bed

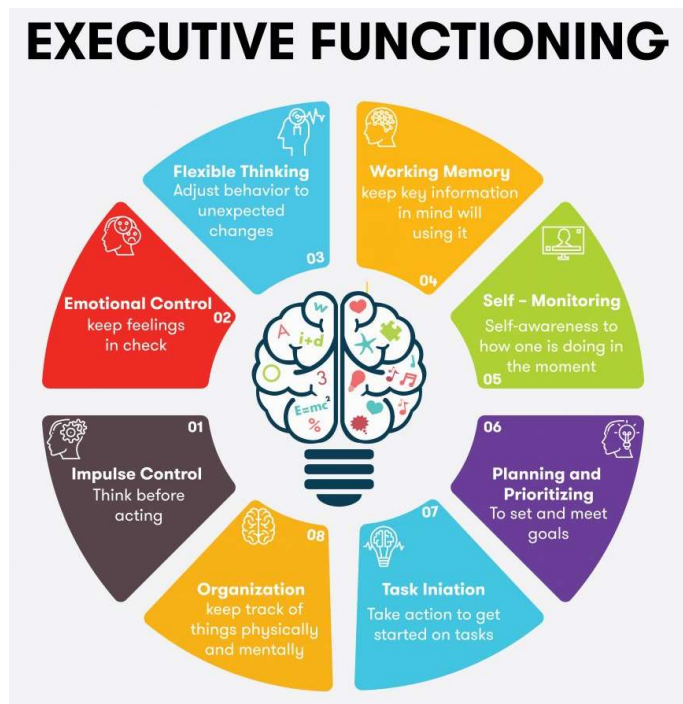
Studies show that you remember more when you take 10 to 15 minutes just before you go to sleep to review what you studied or learned earlier in the day. This doesn't mean that students should do all their studying at bedtime but reviewing what they have studied allows a student to process the information as they sleep.

### Exercise Sharpens Brain Focus

Thirty minutes of aerobic exercise a day, four to five days a week, improves focus and executive functioning skills (see executive functioning diagram to understand its importance for exam preparation). The most helpful exercises are ballet, yoga, and tai chi, all of which require students to focus on their body and their mind.

Executive functioning is crucial to improved success for students. Tips to help you if you struggle in some of these executive functioning areas include:

- Use tools like computers / alarms to help you organise your time.
- Use calendars to keep track of assignment due dates, tests and other activities.
- Make daily/weekly schedules and look at them several times a day.
- Create checklists and estimate how long each task will take.
- Break big assignments into chunks and assign time frames for completing each one.
- Organise the workspace with all the materials you require and cut the clutter.
- Schedule a daily time to clean and organise the workspace.



### Use Your Nose to Study Better

Smell is a powerful study tool. Research shows that if you are exposed to the same smell when you study and sleep, you may remember more. When you study, put a small dish of essential oil nearby; peppermint is a good choice because it relieves stress. Place a small dish of the same scent by your bed while you sleep. Studies suggest that your brain will associate the scent with the material studied earlier. This, researchers say, may help you retain more of the information you are trying to remember.

## Napping, Breaks, and Memory

Most people need to sleep eight to nine hours a night to retain memories, however teenagers need more. Thirty-minute afternoon naps can help. Be sure these siestas aren't longer than 30 minutes, since extended naps can interfere with sleep at night.

Taking a break helps all kids learn more, especially those who have attention difficulties. Studies show that students remember more when they take breaks between study sessions instead of studying straight through for an extended period. Having downtime enables a student's brain to review information and material, even when they don't know they are processing it.

At school we usually have the opportunity to take a movement break between subjects as we walk from one classroom to another, use this same model when studying at home between subjects / assessment tasks / zoom sessions and go for a short (5-10 minute) fast walk or double your age and do that many burpees!

## Sip a Sugary Drink

A drink that contains some sugar helps study performance. Sugary drinks provide glucose, which is the primary source of fuel to the brain. If you're low on glucose, you won't be able to focus or perform well.

Gatorade or apple juice delivers glucose, without overloading your system with sugar. Sodas and other drinks with high levels of sugar (up to 10 teaspoons) provide too much glucose, which results in a sugar crash later, impairing memory and clouding thinking. Sipping (not gulping) a sugary drink can bring improved focus and mood.

## Quiet workspace free from distractions

Ensure you have a desk set up ergonomically in a quiet space away from distractions to improve focus on your school work. If you have two computer screens perhaps turn one off whilst on zoom or only use Word on it to write your notes during the zoom lesson. Your desk should be free from clutter and only have the materials you need for that subject.

If there is background noise because other people are also working at your home, then put some classical music on in the background to drown out this noise. Researchers have found that listening to classical music benefits the brain (it can help your brain absorb and interpret new information more easily), improves focus, sleep patterns, the immune system and stress levels. Some music can distract you, impede working memory and reduce comprehension so avoid music with lyrics and choose slow instrumental music with the volume low.

