

## Ten Traps of Studying (And How to Overcome Them)

1. "I don't know where to begin"
  - ✓ Make a list of all the things you need to do.
  - ✓ Break down your workload into manageable chunks.
  - ✓ Begin studying early, with an hour or two per day, and slowly build up as the exam approaches.
2. "I've got so much to study...and so little time"
  - ✓ Survey your syllabus, reading materials and notes to identify the most important topics emphasized.
  - ✓ Go back and read the important topics.
  - ✓ Identify areas that are not understood.
3. "This stuff is dry, I can't even stay awake reading it"
  - ✓ Attack!
  - ✓ Get actively involved with the text as you read.
  - ✓ Ask yourself "What is important to remember about this section?"
  - ✓ Take notes or underline key concepts.
4. "I read it. I understand it. But I just can't get it to sink in"
  - ✓ Elaborate. Try to elaborate upon new information with your own examples. (We remember best the things that are most meaningful to us.)
  - ✓ Try to integrate what you're studying with what you already know.
  - ✓ Use memory techniques like repetition out loud, using acronyms, and word associations.
5. "I guess I understand it"
  - ✓ Test yourself by making up questions about key sections in notes or reading.
  - ✓ Think about what the professor has stressed in the course.
  - ✓ Ask a friend to test you on questions you come up with.
6. "There's too much to remember"
  - ✓ Organize! Information is recalled better if it is represented in an organized framework.
  - ✓ Write chapter outlines or summaries; emphasize relationships between sections.
  - ✓ Group information into categories or hierarchies, where possible.
7. "I knew it a minute ago"
  - ✓ After reading a section, try to recall the information contained in it.
  - ✓ Try answering the questions you made up for that section.
  - ✓ Re-read portions you have trouble remembering.
8. "But I like to study in bed/while watching TV/listening to loud music"
  - ✓ Recall is better when study context (physical location, as well as mental, emotional and physical state) are similar to text context.
  - ✓ The greater the similarity between the study setting and the test setting, the greater likelihood that material studied will be recalled during the test.
9. "Cramming before a test helps keep it fresh in my mind"
  - ✓ Recall increases as study time gets spread out over time.
  - ✓ Spend one or two hours a day leading up to the exam.
10. "I'm gonna stay up all night before the test"
  - ✓ Avoid mental exhaustion!
  - ✓ It's more important that you take care of yourself before the test day!!
  - ✓ If you follow all the tips above, you will not need to cram the night before!!!