

Surviving and Thriving as a Student

College and university students, who not only survive but also thrive in their academic setting, seem to have “mastered” five study-skill areas:

- They listen actively
- They get involved in class discussions
- They take good notes
- They get the most out of reading
- They prepare effectively for exams

Be an Active Listener in Class

- Sit close to the front of the room
- Focus your attention on what the instructor is saying
- Evaluate what you hear and relate it to other things you already know
- Take good notes
- Ask questions about anything you don't understand



Get Involved in Class Discussions

- Be prepared for each class session
- Think about the points that might be discussed in class
- Participate, but don't dominate
- Ask questions
- Verbally summarize what you think you've heard
- Respect the opinions of others

Take Good Notes

- Use a binder and write in ink
- Date each session
- Use one side of the paper only
- Record the speaker's main points in your own words- don't try to write everything the speaker says



- Listen for key words
- Copy all information written on the board
- Use as few words as possible- devise symbols and abbreviations
- Leave a wide left margin so you can add notes and questions
- Take notes in outline form if possible
- As soon as possible after class, highlight points in your notes that seem especially important
- Go over your notes at least once a week to keep the information fresh in your mind

Get the Most out of Reading

- Before you read, preview the material so you know what to expect
- As you read, pay attention to main ideas and how they are supported by details
- After you've read, think (and talk) about what you have learned, and note any points about which you have questions
- Don't move your lips or point at the words with your fingers as this tends to slow down your reading
- Try to avoid backtracking
- Skim material when you are looking for a particular answer
- Slow down when reading technical material
- If necessary, find ways to expand your vocabulary/reading skills

Prepare Effectively for Exams

- Depending on the exam, it may be helpful to underline or highlight important ideas in notes or reading materials
- Develop an outline of major ideas that can help give structure and form to the material
- Writing a brief summary of major ideas can also be useful
- Review your notes regularly
- Ask the instructor what to expect on the exam
- Try to predict major test questions and prepare for them
- Look up copies of old exams if they are available
- For an exam that will require the memorization of specific facts, it may be helpful to:
 - use flashcards
 - develop acronyms
 - invent acrostics
 - memorize by segments

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