

HOMEWORK much of this is from:  
<http://homeworktips.about.com/>

There is no right or wrong way to study. Each child is an individual and each will find something a little different that works. Your child's study plan may differ from that of your neighbor's kids. If you're lucky, you may find that all your children can take the same approach to studying, but often that is not the case. The trick is to figure out what works best for each child and then stick with it.

Secondly, keep in mind that the object of teaching your child how to study is just that. You are not trying to make sure they get great marks, although hopefully that will follow. You want them to learn to take the responsibility for getting their homework done. Of course it won't be that simple. This is a gradual process and you can expect some hurdles along the way. Work out a homework plan with your child, and let them take more and more of the responsibility for carrying it out as time goes on.

### **Top 10 Top Study Tips**

There are as many different ways to study as there are different people. The trick is to find the study tips that work best for your child.

#### **1) Study in the Same Place**

Find a quiet place, away from distractions, with ample room to work. Once you've found it, study at the same place every time. It could be a desk in your bedroom, the kitchen table, or the local library. Laying down on your bed or sprawled across the living room rug are generally not good study places.

#### **2) Study at the Same Time**

Figure out what time of day you can concentrate best, and what works into your schedule. Use that time every day to study. Try to make sure it is not too late in the evening.

#### **3) Use a Homework Box**

Keep all your homework supplies in one place, ready to be used. Keep them organized, and you won't need to waste your time searching for supplies. (See below - Organize your homework supplies)

#### **4) Cut Out All Distractions**

You need to be able to concentrate on your homework and nothing else. The TV should be off, other people's conversations should be in another room, music should be turned down, and phone calls should be taken after you've finished studying. Any other thoughts in your mind should also be set aside for a later time.

## **5) Do the Hard Stuff First**

If you are dreading a particular assignment, or know it requires a lot of extra effort, do it first. Your brain will be fresh. Besides, you won't have to dwell on it while you are working on other homework.

## **6) Schedule Long Term Projects**

Larger projects need to be broken into smaller components to make them manageable. For example, these components could be such things as gathering notes, writing a rough draft, making corrections or additions, writing a bibliography, and completing the final copy. Set yourself a deadline for completing each component and make sure you stick to it.

## **7) Review Regularly**

Homework is not just that which is assigned every night. A regular review of your notes should be a part of your homework plan. This takes just a few minutes each day, but will pay off considerably when it comes to test time.

## **8) Write Up a Contract**

Sit down with your parents and write up a homework contract at the beginning of each term. This sets out in writing what is expected of each of you and gives all of you input into your homework plan.

## **9) Schedule Each Homework Session**

When you sit down to do your homework, make up a quick schedule as to how you are going to use your time. Break it up into blocks of time that you will spend on each task.

## **10) Avoid Doing a Marathon**

If you've followed the previous tips, this last one should never happen. However, you need to know that marathon study sessions are the least productive way to study.

## **Organize your homework supplies**

Time to do their homework. Now first they need to find a pencil. Oh, gee, that one isn't very sharp. Where is that little pencil sharpener anyway? Maybe you'll just look for another pencil. Okay, got it. So they sit down to study. Ten minutes later you realize they need a calculator. Hmm, that was sitting right there yesterday. It could be in their brother's bedroom now. Wow, what a mess. Okay, Dad has it. But, the batteries are running low. I hope there are some new batteries somewhere in the house. Is your child's typical study session like this?

They can waste a lot of time looking for homework supplies and making sure they are ready to be used. Or, they can use a homework box or supply kit of some kind to keep it all together. Then when it comes time

to do homework, it is all ready for them.

Any kind of box will do. You can use a storage tote, an old shoebox, or even an drawer. The key is to keep everything they need in there, ready to be used. Those supplies should be left in there and used just for homework - ready to use. Pencils and pencil crayons must be sharp, calculators need to have batteries in them if they are not solar powered, glue or glue sticks must not have run out, markers need to have the lids tightly on them. Here's a hint. Since parents say they would like to help with your homework but it is up to the chalked to do the work, why not get parents to take responsibility for keeping all the supplies in working order.

### **A typical list of supplies**

The homework box will contain different things depending on what grade the child is in and what courses they are taking. Here is a typical list of supplies for your homework box. Start with these, and you can add some or take some out depending on what the needs are.

- \* Two pencils
- \* Blue or black pen
- \* Red pen
- \* Eraser
- \* Pencil sharpener
- \* Calculator
- \* Dictionary
- \* Atlas
- \* Thesaurus
- \* Pencil crayons
- \* Markers
- \* Lined paper
- \* Plain paper
- \* Glue or glue stick
- \* White-out or some other corrector fluid
- \* Scissors
- \* Stapler
- \* Staple remover
- \* Ruler

### **Slow Motion**

#### **How to spend less time doing homework**

Does you spend twice as long getting their homework done as your friends do? It doesn't mean you're not as smart, it just means you need to make some adjustments to the way you study. Try these hints and see if they speed up your progress:

Remember that everyone works at a different pace. Just because your friends say an assignment took them ten minutes to complete doesn't mean you'll finish it in the same time frame. Also, sometimes your friends' memories have them working just a little faster than they actually did!

Work on your toughest assignments first, while your mind is still fresh. If you find creative work hard, do any writing or art work first. If you find calculations hard, do the math or science first.

Clear your mind of other things before you sit down to work. Later there will be plenty of time to think about what you'll wear to the next school outing or whether or not you want to try out for the talent show. You must concentrate solely on your homework while you are doing it.

Are you permitted to type your school reports? If so, learn to type. It will go much faster than writing out a good copy. If not, make sure you are forming your letters properly. It seems like nitpicking, but proper formation in handwriting not only looks neater, it flows from one letter to the next better and increases your writing speed.

Don't spend too much time on something you just can't understand. If something doesn't make any sense to you after rereading it a few times, it won't do any good to stare at it any longer. Come back to it later, and if you're still confused, ask your teacher for help as soon as possible.

Do the homework in small blocks of time. If you have a major assignment due, work on it a little bit every day, rather than in one marathon night. The same goes for your nightly homework. If there is three hours worth of work to be done, do it in one hour segments with breaks in between.

Think of these tips next time you complain about how long it takes to do your homework. Some of them could work to help you.

## **10 Tips for Studying to Music**

Ask ten people whether or not students should listen to music while studying, and you'll probably get ten different responses. But the fact is that some of you do like to have the music on while you're doing homework. How do you keep that music from interfering? Follow these suggestions:

- \* Play something that is on the mellow side. If the music makes you want to play the drums on your binder, it's going to be too distracting.
- \* Turn down the volume. You are looking for background music, not something you need to shout to be heard over.
- \* Pick your music before you start to study, then leave it alone. The time you waste picking out new music and changing CD's could be put to better use studying.

- \* If you're studying in the same room as somebody else, be considerate and wear headphones.
- \* It can sometimes be difficult to memorize things if you are listening to a song with lyrics. Find something that is strictly instrumental.
- \* If you do have to memorize a list of some kind, some people find it helps to make up a song using the items on the list. Again, listen to an instrumental piece of music, and put your lyrics to it.
- \* Put on some music that is familiar to you so you won't want to listen so intently. Save your new CD for another time.
- \* Try not to become so dependent on studying to music that you can't study without it. Every once in a while, study in a quiet place.
- \* Only study to the radio if you can be sure that you won't be listening to a lot of talking, commercials, or news.
- \* If you find the music to be distracting at any time, turn it off. Some people can get so defensive about studying to music that they will keep it on even if it gets to be a hindrance.

### **What's Your Learning Style? Learning styles defined**

Have you ever wondered why your best friend can learn so much from group projects when you do better on your own? Or why you memorize lists by making up a song about them when that does nothing for another? The answer may be in your learning style. There are many theories as to what the different learning styles are, and how many styles there are, but a popular theory is that suggested by Dr. Howard Gardner. He initially proposed seven different styles but has recently added an eighth to his list.

A learning style is simply a way of learning. All people have all styles, but one or two styles are most dominant in their personality. These particular styles which dominate will differ from person to person, which explains why you and your best friend should sometimes take a different approach to studying. This is sometimes how kids are split up into different classes in elementary school. It is a lot easier for a teacher to teach a group who learn the same way, than to try to teach for every style.

The following are the eight learning styles defined by Dr. Gardner and the characteristics displayed by a person with each one:

**Verbal/Linguistic** - these are the people who are able to communicate well. They like to read, write, and tell stories.

**Logical/Mathematical** - structure and order make sense to these people. They are not necessarily neat and tidy, though. They like strategy games and brain teasers.

**Visual/Spatial** - these people need to see things in order to understand them. They enjoy drawing or building things.

**Bodily/Kinesthetic** - these people are the "do-ers". They enjoy sports or other activities. These people may find it hard to sit still.

**Musical** - music and rhythms come naturally to these people. They pick up on all sounds around them.

**Interpersonal** - these people work well in groups and may often be seen as leaders. They like discussing their ideas with the people around them.

**Interpersonal** - these are the people who motivate themselves easily. They are often quiet individuals.

**Naturalist** - these people understand the natural environment. They are able to easily observe, organize, and classify items into various groups or patterns, such as would be found in nature.

Now that you can probably figure out which one or two learning styles describes you, how do you put that knowledge to use? How can you use your learning style to make your homework and study time more productive? If you are:

**Verbal/Linguistic** - you can learn by reading textbooks or notes taken in class. You can also learn by writing reports and poems, or by conducting interviews.

**Logical/Mathematical** - you can learn by performing experiments or by doing calculations. Anything that involves sequences and patterns works well for you.

**Visual/Spatial** - you can learn by drawing or creating. You like to see things for themselves, so you can use pictures, diagrams, and charts to learn.

**Bodily/Kinesthetic** - you can learn by acting out plays or by building models. You learn best when parts of your body are moving, even if it just your hands.

**Musical** - you can learn by putting things to music. Making up songs to help you with memorization, or using rhythm and music in your projects will help you.

**Interpersonal** - you can learn best with other people. Consider working with a partner or in a study group when that is feasible.

**Interpersonal** - you can learn best independently. Set your own goals, do your own research, and work at your own pace whenever possible.

**Naturalist** - you can learn best by relating what you are learning to your natural surroundings. Classify things where applicable, and even work outdoors if you can.

### How Much Is Too Much?

Do you sometimes feel overwhelmed with homework? Or do you wonder if you're really doing enough? How much homework is too much?

Usually the amount of homework given out is left up to the teacher, and we all know that different teachers can have very different ideas on how much homework to assign. Some schools have actual homework policies. These are guidelines which set out the amount of homework reasonable to expect at each grade level.

These guidelines do vary, but most are similar to what follows:

**Kindergarten and Grade One:** 5 to 10 minutes per night  
**Grade Two and Grade Three:** 15 to 20 minutes per night  
**Grade Four and Grade Five:** 20 to 30 minutes per night  
**Grade Six and Grade Seven:** 40 to 50 minutes per night  
**Grade Eight and Grade Nine:** 1 hour to 1-1/2 hours per night  
**Grade Ten to Grade Twelve:** Up to 2 hours per night

In addition, some reading for pleasure should be done every night when possible at all levels.

### Managing The Study Time

- \* Use your [agenda book](#) or notes from their classes, make a list of all assignments due and all exams you'll be writing.
- \* Put this list in chronological order, with the assignments and exams that come first at the top.
- \* If you know what portion of your overall mark each assignment or exam is worth, write it down as well. There's no sense studying for hours for an exam that is only worth 10% of their grade and not having enough time left over to write a report worth 40% of your grade.
- \* Now you need to add the rest of your life to your list. Write down when that year end party is, and any other events you will attend or commitments you've made. You may be active in sports or play in a band, or maybe your best friend's birthday is next week and you want to treat her to a movie. Maybe you have a part-time job. The point is, you need to make sure you still have time to live a little.
- \* Now that you have all that written down, it's time for some serious scheduling. You need to work out how much time you need to study for

each exam, and how much time you need to spend researching and writing each report. Remember that you won't want to do it all in one night. You may decide that you need to spend a total of three hours on your report on [Emu Farming](#), but one hour a night for three nights is much easier to handle than doing it all at once. You must be realistic. You won't want to study for five hours every night until school's out, but you also can't write a 2000 word essay in half an hour.

\* Get out a calendar and write down what you expect to do each day (or evening). Try to include enough *goof off* time.

\* Now, get down to work! But if you've planned to study [Greek Gods](#) for an hour and then go on to [Square Roots](#), you must stick to the schedule as much as possible. You don't want to find your evening is over and Square Roots are still untouched.

### **Studying Together The Wrong Way - A Student's View**

"Let's get together and study for that big French exam next week," says your best friend, Tracy. A good idea? Maybe, maybe not. But follow the rules below and you'll be sure to be totally lost when you look at your exam!

\* Tell her to come to your house whenever she can. Maybe you'll be babysitting your cousin's terror child, but that'll be okay. Maybe your dog will have an upset stomach, but that will give you something else to talk about.

\* When she does come, start out by telling her you'll get started in just a minute, but first you just *have* to tell her the rumor you heard about the football team's quarterback. Maybe she'll have some rumors to share, too.

\* Skip your last meal beforehand. That way you'll be able to have a continuous snack attack during your study time.

\* Turn on your favorite TV program. You can still study while you watch the show, right?

\* Ask your other friend Cindy to call you while Tracy is there so you can both talk to her. Ditto for Sherry, Amanda, Jenny, and whoever else you can think of.

\* Forget your French book at school that day.

Of course, you still have the rest of the week to study so you might still be able to get something done. Just remember, when Cindy comes up to you and says, "Want to come over and study for that French exam?", you might want to lay down some ground rules ahead of time.