

Revise!

# Top tips for effective revision

There is no short cut to exam success but our top revision tips should help put you on the right track.

## 1. Make a plan

Being organised can reduce exam stress, and help you make the most effective use of your time. The best way to start your revision is to make a plan.



## 2. Assemble your toolkit

When exams approach, it can be easy to master the art of putting things off. Gather everything you may want now to avoid delays when your need for a stapler, paperclip or purple pen overtakes your ability to do anything else. Get all your files and books together, and make sure you're stocked up with basic supplies such as folders or notebooks.

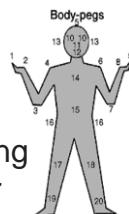
## 3. Divide your day into chunks

20 minutes, half an hour, two hours...divide your day into pockets of time that work for you. Mixing things up can also help create a sense of pace – try an hour session, followed by two shorter ones to stop you getting sluggish. In addition, it is a great way to tackle tasks you tend to put off. Set the clock ticking, even for a short while, and really get to grips with a tricky subject – the results can be surprisingly satisfying.



## 5. Plan your day around your most productive times

Are you an early bird or a night owl? You may be most alert in the morning or work better in the evenings so tackle difficult topics at the most effective point of your day. Recognise and respond to your slump times – if you find it hard to get going after lunch, plan a series of shorter blocks early afternoon to create a sense of progress.



## 6. Shake things up

Use a range of learning styles. Try making notes using headings and **mnemonic** or **mind maps** and **body pegs**. Some people find it helps to create an arch or use more visual cues such as sticking up posters or post-its.



## Revision Overview



RAINFORD HIGH



## Practice

To prepare for an exam, **you must practice doing what the exam requires you to do; giving out information, not taking it in!** This applies to regular class tests as well as the final exams:

- Past Papers – your constant companion. Fill in your 'knowledge gaps' from questions you got wrong
- Follow the marks – Mark schemes for all past papers are also available from your exam board website (AQA, OCR etc.)
- Try a dress rehearsal - Each exam paper has its own particular structure. A lot of your ongoing revision will be based on individual topics and questions, it is a very useful exercise to tackle an exam paper in its totality (at least once). It forces you to consider your strategy (timing/question order/ planning time etc.)



## 7. Know your drains

Everyone has them – those little temptations that suck you in and take up oodles of time. The secret is to build your routine around your distractions. Set fixed times to check your phone or social media accounts and stay offline when you're working. If you find yourself strangely drawn to a particular daytime TV programme (which bizarrely seems to lose its appeal once exams are over) then plan your break time to fit.

facebook



## 8. Consider where you study

Find somewhere comfortable, light and distraction-free where you can study. Some students find a change of scene boosts their concentration so try spending the morning in the local library, or working in a different room at home. Other people find it is more effective to study in a set place, so see what works for you.



## 9. Think quality not quantity

It's not the amount of time you spend studying that counts, it's how you use it. Do not waste time pretending to revise. Far better to spend three focused hours working and an hour meeting a friend, than to be glued to your desk for four hours straight with very little to show for it.

## 11. Avoid burn out

Pacing yourself is important – you can't revise effectively 24 hours a day, seven days a week so breaks and rest periods are essential to staying the course. Giving your mind a well-earned rest and spending time doing something you enjoy can make a real difference when you return to revising.



## 10. Review your progress

It's important to review your revision plan to ensure you're making the most of your time. You may find a topic trickier than you thought and need more study time or find you have finished a topic with time to spare. If you fall behind you are not going to be able to do four weeks of revision in two weeks. Ticking things off as you go or setting mini-goals and rewarding yourself when you have completed them can also help you stay motivated.

- The Examiner's View - The job of examiners is to give you marks, but they are powerless to help you if you fall into the most common traps. E.g.: not finishing the paper, ignoring the mark scheme, repetition (don't repeat points), missing out questions, not reading questions properly, silly errors from not proof reading properly
- Get a good night's sleep – avoid the temptation of 'cramming' and make sure you are refreshed and ready to go.
- Arrive in plenty of time – give yourself enough time to relax, this is difficult to achieve if you've overslept or missed the bus

- Have all equipment ready – failing to prepare is preparing to fail
- Think positively – remind yourself of all of the good things
- Maintain your focus - There can be a lot of hysteria in the air on the day - keep the balance between maintaining your focus and interacting with friends

