

## Preparing to Study: A Good Study Place

You need a good study place to be prepared to study. You should be able to answer YES to all of the following questions:

**1. Is my Study Place available to me whenever I need it?**

Your Study Place does you little good if you cannot use it when you need it. If you are using a Study Place that you must share with others for any reason, work out a schedule so that you know when you can use it.

**2. Is my Study Place free from interruptions?**

It is important to have uninterrupted study time. You may have to hang a DO NOT DISTURB sign on the door or take the phone off the hook.

**3. Is my Study Place free from distractions?**

Research shows that most students study best in a quiet environment. If you find that playing a stereo or TV improves your mood, keep the volume low.

**4. Does my Study Place contain all the study materials I need?**

Be sure your Study Place includes reference sources and supplies such as pens and pencils, paper, ruler, calculator, and whatever else you might need. If you use a computer for your schoolwork, it should be in your Study Place .

**5. Does my Study Space contain a large enough desk or table?**

While working on an assignment or studying for a test, use a desk or table that is large enough to hold everything you need. Allow enough room for writing and try to avoid clutter.

**6. Does my Study Place have enough storage space?**

You need enough room to store your study materials. Be sure you have enough storage space to allow you to keep your desktop or other work surface clear of unnecessary materials that can get in the way.

**7. Does my Study Place have a comfortable chair?**

A chair that is not comfortable can cause discomfort or pain that will interfere with your studying. A chair that is too comfortable might make you sleepy. Select a chair in which you can sit for long periods while maintaining your attention.

**8. Does my Study Place have enough light?**

The amount of light you need depends on what you are doing. The important thing is that you can clearly see what you need to see without any strain or discomfort.

**9. Does my Study Place have a comfortable temperature?**

If your Study Place is too warm, you might become sleepy. If it is too cold, your thinking may slow down and become unclear. Select a temperature at which your mind and body function best.

Having a good Study Place is important for good studying.

## Taking Notes in Class

In classes, your teachers will talk about topics that you are studying. The information they provide will be important for you to know when you take tests. You must be able to take good written notes from what your teachers say.

Taking good notes is a three-stage process in which there are certain things you should do **before** class, **during** class, and **after** class. Here are the three stages of notetaking and what you should do during each stage.

### 1. Get Ready to Take Notes (Before Class)

- Review your notes from the previous class session before you come to class. This will help you remember what was covered and get you ready to understand new information your teacher provides.
- Complete all assigned readings before you come to class. Your teacher will expect that you have done this and will use and build upon this information.
- Bring all notetaking materials with you to class. Have several pens and pencils as well as your notebook.

### 2. Take Notes (During Class)

- Keep your attention focused on what your teacher is saying. Listen for "signal statements" that tell you that what your teacher is about to say is important to write in your notes. Examples of signal statements are "The most important point..." and "Remember that..." Be sure to include in your notes information that your teacher repeats or writes on the chalkboard.
- Write quickly so that you can include all the important information in your notes. Do this by writing abbreviated words such as med for medicine, using symbols such as % for percent, and writing short sentences.
- Place a ? next to information you write in your notes, but about whose meaning you are not sure.

### 3. Rewrite Your Notes (After Class)

- Rewrite your notes to make them more complete by changing abbreviated words into whole words, symbols into words, and shortened sentences into longer sentences.
- Make your notes more accurate by answering any questions you had when writing your notes in class. Use your textbook and reference sources to obtain the information you need to answer your questions. If necessary, ask your teacher or other students for help.
- Check with other students to be sure you did not leave out important information.

Having good class notes will help you to be better prepared for tests.

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