

SEVEN SUGGESTIONS FOR A GOOD STUDY ENVIRONMENT

PRACTICAL CHOICES TO ENHANCE YOUR STUDY

❶ STUDY WITHOUT DISTRACTIONS!

Try to find a time and a place where you can study with as few distractions as possible.

Give some thought to building your daily routine around when you can find such a place and a time free of distractions. Your study will be that much more effective.

❷ PRACTISE GOOD POSTURE!

Posture is incredibly important when studying. Slouching in your chair or slumping over the desk while you're studying has been shown to restrict free breathing and to decrease your alertness. And alertness is vital because it allows you to achieve better results in a shorter period of time.

Make sure that your chair gives good lower back support and that your table and your chair are at a good working height. Ideally, you should be able to put your feet flat on the floor or on some footrest, and the table should be just above elbow height.

❸ CONTROL EXPOSURE TO ELECTRONIC MEDIA!

Most top students control their use of the computer and social media.



Most young children adopt good posture naturally. Take time to observe them and learn.

Some choose to have the computer in another room so they have to change rooms to look something up. Some turn their mobile phones off while they work. Some even resort to having their friends or their family change the password to their FaceBook account each term or, in some cases, for the entire last year of school. Hardly any top students study near the television. Watching television while you study hinders how well you learn.

Some students have used FaceBook or Skype very successfully while doing their homework and discussing their work with friends. That may work for you as long as you're disciplined enough to resist the temptation to simply socialise.

If you're determined to become a top student make sure that you have control over your social media!

❹ STUDY ALONE!

Most top students do their serious study alone for the majority of the time. This will vary according to your learning style.

Some top students also spend time with a 'study buddy' or a small group of similarly minded friends on a semi-regular basis and they find that having discussions with these friends helps a lot.

❺ STUDY QUIETLY!

Most top students study in silence. A few will listen to music but almost all of them will turn the music off when they have serious study or memorising to do.

Of those relatively few students who listen to music while doing their 'lighter' work, the majority will only listen to instrumental music, that is, music for which there are no lyrics (otherwise, you'll find yourself singing along to the music and that will lower the quality of your study).

Most top students I have known would agree with me when I recommend that you DON'T listen to songs while studying mathematics and preferably study mathematics in silence.

❻ CHOOSE FRESH AIR AND GOOD LIGHT!

Most serious students like an airy (or open) and naturally lit room during the day.

At night time when most of us choose to study, be very careful of your choice of artificial light. Some students, particularly those with certain forms of dyslexia, develop significant eye strain and tiredness when working under fluorescent light in particular. Brighter lights, however, can reduce your eye strain. So, if you are able to, and can afford to, experiment with a variety of lights to find ones that will help you.

Also, try to ensure that you don't have high contrast shadows over your working area. It's good to have a desk lamp. Make sure that the lighting comes from your left if you are right-handed or from your right hand side if you are left-handed. This simple arrangement reduces the size and the intensity of the shadows in your work area and helps reduce eye strain and tiredness.



❼ TAKE REGULAR BREAKS!

Your body and your mind need regular change. Take time to rest your eyes, exercise and stretch a little, socialise a little, or simply rest and relax before you get back into your study. Get to know your own needs and adjust your rhythm to how tired or stressed you are feeling each day.

So, there they are – seven very practical and common sense things to consider when preparing to study.

If you want to be a top student, seriously consider these things. You may find some other options that suit you, but be aware that most top students have found by experience that following these principles works.

