



REVISION

A HELPING HAND

The MORE
that you read,
the MORE things
you will know.
The MORE that you
Learn,
the MORE places you'll go.



On the following pages are some tips and ideas to assist you in your revision. It is not a definitive list and everyone is different but hopefully it will give you some ideas and suggestions to help you.

Revising is all about your **MEMORY**. The memory is like a muscle. If you don't exercise it, it will grow weaker and weaker, but if you do it will get stronger and stronger.

Step 1 – organising yourself

Once your exam timetable is available (early March) make sure that you know when your exams take place.

Make a revision timetable.

Find out from your teacher exactly what happens in the exam and what you need to do to revise.

Get class notes together. Use exam board websites to check specifications. Check the school website for hints and tips, download past papers (links on the back page of this booklet) and purchase or get hold of revision guides for each subject.

Make a revision pack up – pens, pencils, rubber, ruler, compass, protractor, sharpener, highlighters, small cards, post it notes etc.

Keep a bottle of water nearby when you are revising and take regular sips. Dehydration can reduce your mental performance and make sure that you have good ventilation and that the temperature is neither too hot nor too cold.

Use a cheap kitchen timer to keep track of time during revision sessions to take scheduled breaks.

Plan a treat for yourself when you finish each revision session.

Revision environment:

Try to work in good light as you may get a headache if the light is poor.

Do not revise in front of the TV.

If possible use an uncluttered table, preferably in a quiet place and keep it neat and tidy.

Some students say music helps with their concentration so if you are one of these make sure you are listening to something on low volume and choose something that doesn't distract you. If you find yourself singing along, then you are distracted!

Put your phone in another room, on silent mode, as it is vital that you do not allow yourself to be tempted by the distractions your phone offers! If your phone is nearby you will look at it so **PUT IT IN ANOTHER ROOM!!**

Keep all the materials for each subject in one place/folder to save time and tidy away after each session.



Step 2 – make a revision timetable

Without a timetable you'll revise some stuff a lot, miss out other bits and have a mad rush at the end. You can make/download, buy blank timetables to complete.

What subjects do you need to spend more time on? Perhaps some disappointing mock results have flagged areas you need to pay attention to.

Vary the subjects revised on each day and space out the revision for each subject over the week. Balance revision time between subjects. Don't just revise the easy stuff that you know and understand.

Break down each subject into topics (a sort of route map through your revision) – there is no point in saying you are going to revise Biology – you need to revise one of the topics you have learnt in Biology in each session.

When you are planning your revision for the day / week – think about exactly what you will revise so you have covered each topic before the exam and your revision session is focused on one thing.

Remember, topics need to be revised more than once – based on how the brain retains information.

Think about the following when making the timetable:

Be realistic – remember sessions should only be for 20 - 40 mins with 5 - 10 min breaks.

Write in all non-school commitments for each week such as leisure activities, seeing friends, time to relax etc.

During holidays, revision should be far more intensive.

Build in treats – time with friends, evenings out etc. Social time is vital in the overall scheme, as long as there is a balance between work and play.

Breaking it down:

If you're thinking "I'm doing Maths for 40 mins and then half an hour of French" think again! It means you haven't broken the subject down into key areas to tackle your work in an organised manner e.g. I'm doing algebra and then weather". You need to use key headings to identify those topics you feel weak in and make sure you revise them first and get help from your teachers or friends. Don't just revise the easy stuff that you know and understand already, you must tackle topics you do not understand so that you do not lose marks in an exam.

TIP: At first, the big picture may look and feel totally overwhelming. You need to prioritise your workload. You need to be aware of the fact that revision takes time and for a few months, the social life has to give a bit. It will be worth it when you get your results!

Step 3 – First understand, then learn

If you don't understand it, learning takes forever! This example will prove it to you. Read the words from the following box, cover the page and try to remember them.

My earache – my ears are bleeding because my mother keeps singing

Now try to do the same thing with this one:

Ym caheer – are singing bleeding my because ears my keeps mother

Unless you're a robot, you got more of the first one right – because it made sense to you, you understood it. It is possible to learn the second one. But it would take ages.

You can learn the sentence below without understanding it.

Some bacteria are parasitic, some are saprophytic

If you got this question in the exam you could probably answer it ok 'Name two types of bacteria'

However, if you got asked the following question, you won't have a clue and you'll lose 2 marks 'How do saprophytic bacteria help get rid of waste?'

If you'd spent 2 minutes finding out what saprophytic means, you'd have the 2 marks, so make sure that you understand stuff before you try to learn it!

Step 4 – Once you understand a topic you need to remember it.

<p>1) Simplify How do I do this? Take your sub-topic, put it into fewer words and draw simplified diagrams. Don't just copy it out – you need to use your brain.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1) Read through each section, pick out the important bits and reduce the number of words2) Use numbered points – they're great for organising information into chunks3) Have a go at using pictures to show bits of info. They don't have to be good, just as long as you know what they are. <p>When you have simplified – test yourself. Cover everything, get a blank sheet and write out as much as possible, use your simplified notes to add things you've missed and correct things you got wrong. You won't remember everything yet – headings and a few details.</p>	<p>Why? It makes you read through the sub-topic in detail so that you can decide how to simplify it. You get more of the subject into your head than if you just read through it.</p>
<p>2) Reduce How do I do this? Reduce the simplified sub-topic into a smaller wad of info. When you've simplified and reduced all the sub-topics in a topic, go onto section 3</p>	<p>Why? Going over what you have done reinforces it in your head. By actively thinking about how to reduce it you will make strong memories much quicker.</p>
<p>3) Explode the Topic How do I do this? Show all the small wads of info for one topic on one page</p>	<p>Why? Drawing this out makes you go over every sub-topic again. It also gives you an overview of the whole topic to jog and test that gab of neurones in your skull</p>
<p>5) Explode the subject How do I do this? Like the topic explosion but this time showing the whole subject in a monster picture on one page</p>	<p>Why? This will give you everything you need to cover one subject on one piece of paper. It won't seem quite as scary or stressful when you can see what you are dealing with.</p>

As soon as you start this **you are revising**. This is not preparation, this is revision, so concentrate and don't rush through it before thinking.

- An effective revision session follows a repeating cycle of revise, test, rest and can, for example, be divided up like this: 40 mins revising, 10 mins testing, 10 mins resting / or perhaps 20 mins revising, 5 mins testing and 5 mins resting.
- Short bursts of revision following this pattern can be particularly useful when you are tired, or the topic is difficult or boring. Always try to end each revision session by summing up or testing.

Step 5 – What kind of learner are you?

Decide what sort of a learner you are as this will help you to decide HOW to revise.

A. Visual Learner

Revision suggestions

Brainstorm a topic using a spider diagram
Make a chart to fit the information
Put key words / key facts onto post it notes, stick them around the house to learn them
Put notes onto revision cards
Make your own flash cards – questions one side / answers on the back
Create a mind map
Use different colours to represent different things
Make a flow chart
Use pictures / diagrams to represent key ideas
Fill the bedroom walls with posters for key ideas
Label pictures
Watch relevant films, you tube clips and TV programmes



B. Auditory learner

Revision suggestions

Hearing a presentation
Reading aloud to yourself
Making a recording with key points to listen
Verbally summarising
Explaining your subject to someone else
Talking to yourself
Using mnemonics e.g. Richard of York gained battles in vain (colour of rainbow)
May work well with background music (no lyrics)
Use computer software



C. Kinaesthetic / Physical Learner

Revision suggestions

Use highlighters to select key words, main ideas
Make index cards
Sort cards into an order
Make models
Brainstorm a topic using a spider diagram
Put key words onto Post-It-Notes, stick them around the house to learn them
Make flash cards – questions one side / answers on the back
Use Mnemonics for difficult spellings / sequences (e.g. Richard of York Gave Battle in Vain – colours of a rainbow).



REMEMBER TO TAKE LOTS OF BREAKS

Most people can only concentrate, understand and remember for between 20 and 40 minutes at a time so **do not revise for longer without a short break.**

Once you have finished learning something, your brain actually increases its power and carries on remembering. You need to review what you have learnt:

- At the end of a week
- At the end of a month
- The week before the exams

...to make sure it stays in your memory.

Using the Internet

The internet has an overwhelming amount of resources for revision but needs to be used wisely. You need to remember that just because something is on a web page it is not necessarily reliable information.

There are many useful sites, as the snapshot list below suggests. However, it is important you do not waste time simply reading and scrolling up and down the page.

You can:

Have a pen and paper ready and do the activities which are suggested. Copy information into a programme of your choice and underline key words, delete less important sentences, cut and paste key words etc.

The emphasis must be on making that information your own in the same way you must make your textbook notes your own.

Some useful addresses:

www.bbc.co.uk/schools/gcsebitesize

A very well regarded site that contains a lot of information and activities
GCSE revision website

www.gcse.com

A revision website

www.s-cool.co.uk

For PE (log in with your username and password)

<https://theeverlearner.com/>

Maths

www.mymaths.co.uk


Religious Studies

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/religion>

Science revision site

<https://www.senecalearning.com/>

Please also check the exams page on the school website for revision information from subject departments and links to exam board specifications.

 Good luck with your revision and remember **asking for help is not a sign of weakness, it is a sign of maturity and strength.** If you are unsure or don't understand a topic **please speak to teachers** as they are best placed to help you. Do not leave it thinking 'that won't come up in the exam' as you will lose marks if it does!

