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

## 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. See How to make a revision plan in five simple steps.

## 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.

## 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. And it's 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.

## 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.

## 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.

## Shake things up

Use a range of learning styles. Try making notes using headings and bullet points or draw diagrams and charts. Some people find it helps to create revision cards or use more visual cues such as sticking up posters or post-its. Reading your notes out loud or making an audio recording which you can play back while you're doing something else can also improve your memory power.

## 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 your college or local library, or working in a different room at home. Other people find it's more effective to study in a set place, so see what works for you.

## Think quality not quantity

It's not the amount of time you spend studying that counts, it's how you use it. Don't 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. You still need to put the hours in, but spend-

ing them wisely and planning some proper breaks makes for more effective revision.

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 more tricky than you thought and need more study time or find you have finished a topic with time to spare. If you fall behind you're not going to be able to do four weeks of revision in two weeks, so prioritise whatever time you have. Ticking things off as you go or setting mini-goals and rewarding yourself when you have completed them can also help you stay motivated.

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 stayingthe 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.

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