

# 5 Ways to Study Less

## OFFICE OF LEARNING RESOURCES

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Students are always looking for strategies to improve their grades. This resource uncovers the best kept secret for improving your grades: Study less but more frequently. The following strategies are designed to promote frequent studying without taking too much time.

1. **First things first: make studying a habit.** Be disciplined with your time. If you choose to watch television or spend time with your friends when you should be studying, use some of your free time later in the day to study. Also, be aware of the best time for you to study. If you are a morning person, study in the morning or early afternoon. If you are a night owl, study in the late afternoon or evening. Then, you will be able to concentrate best when you are most alert. Even though you are disciplined with your time and you are studying when you are most alert, make sure to take breaks. You are more productive if you take a short breaks.

2. **Select a place/s exclusively for studying.** Your brain associates locations with activities that take place there. For example, if you watch TV in the living room, your brain will associate the living room as a place to relax. Find a place devoted to studying that works for you. If you like a little noise when you study, try the LTC or the 2nd floor commons area in Marianist Hall. If you like complete silence when you study, try the 6th floor of the library. Wherever you choose to study, get in the habit of going to that location each day.

3. **Use "free time."** Think of those times you wait in a line for 20 minutes or have a 15 minute break between classes. These are perfect opportunities to get some quick tasks done. If you are learning new vocabulary or equations, make flash cards. Keep your cards with you at all times so you can pull them out and run through them. In a day or two you will have memorized most of the information you need to know. If you are writing a paper, begin to brainstorm topics. Use a concept map or outline to organize your thoughts. Reviewing for the next class or going over information from the previous class are also good ways to use small amounts of time throughout the day.

4. **Take good notes and engage in class.** First you have to be there. Second, you have to be prepared, which means reading the assignments and doing the problems. Many students find it beneficial to take their notes on their notebook computer. Having your notes in an electronic format makes it easy to turn them into a study guide or handout.

5. **Work ahead.** If you have a night when you don't have much homework, work ahead. If you are ahead on the reading you can participate in class and follow the lecture more easily.