

# “Study Less, Study Smart” Summary Notes from Motivation2Study

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These are our summary notes from Marty Lobdell’s hour-long lecture. The first 5 points were included in our 12-minute Motivational Video “Study LESS Study SMART” on our YouTube channel, and 6 and 7 are summarized below!

The 7 main points from the lecture are:

1. **Sit down after class and expand on everything you’ve written down**
2. **Create a study area**
3. **Study actively and get at least 8 hours of sleep**
4. **Efficient studying**
5. **SQRRR**

Not included in our Motivational Video (they would have been too difficult to summarize using his words):

6. **Summarize or Teach what you learn**
7. **Use mnemonics**

## 1. Sit down after class and expand on everything you’ve written down

- This one’s simple and yet hardly anyone seems to do it! If you wait until you get home or until exams come around, you’ll have forgotten the meaning behind a lot of your notes. Instead, summarize your notes **as soon as you can**.
- How do you know you know it? To quote Marty: “If you can look at it, go to the next one, read it, and then stop and go back to the one before, look up into the sky and say what it was about... Then you know it.”

## 2. Create a dedicated study area

- We are controlled by the environment we surround ourselves with.
- We tend to study better if it is the same place and conditions that we normally study in or that we have found to be effective for ourselves.
- The example Marty gives is to get a lamp and **ONLY** use it when you are studying.
  - When you take a break, get up from your desk and turn the lamp off. This trains you to study while seated there. It becomes automatic!
  - A study showed that students that did this had an average **GPA of 1.0 higher than the control group!** I wish I knew this before!
- Light background music (instrumentals or ambient only), especially music you’ve heard before, can help you focus.

- Turn your phone on silent and put it out of eyesight. This will GREATLY reduce the chance that you get distracted by it.



### 3. Study actively and get at least 8 hours of sleep

- The more active you are, the more effective you are. Studying is NOT reading it over and over. For the majority of us, this is not an effective study method. (See #4- 7 for more effective methods).
- Decide if what you are learning is a concept or a fact.
  - Example: understanding the name of a bone is a fact, understanding what it does in the body is a concept.
  - If you memorize without understanding the function of it, the comprehension of the **concepts**, it is a lot of **wasted learning**.
- Professors are most concerned with the inability of students to grasp concepts.
  - Concepts, once grasped will stay with you for a **lifetime**.
- Can you put the concept in your own words?
  - If you can't, you don't really understand it.
  - **Making it meaningful is the biggest struggle most students face while studying.**
- Recognition vs Recollection
  - The human brains visual recognition threshold is amazing!

- Example: when you see a person once and then not again until years later, yet you are still able to remember them.
- Most people will go through their notes or the textbook and highlight the most important stuff.
  - When you go back to study and say, 'oh I remember this,' you don't end up studying those items which means you don't actually end up studying the most important stuff.
- By not sleeping adequately, you undo good studying.
  - REM (Rapid Eye Movement Sleep) occurs for most adults about every hour and a half once asleep.
  - If you don't sleep for **8 hours**, you aren't getting enough REM.
  - This means that what you've studied doesn't become permanent.
  - Studies have shown that getting enough sleep improves the brain's ability to store information.

#### 4. Efficient studying

- Efficiency while studying is greatest for the first half hour. If you don't take breaks after that you're wasting time.
- Things that are reinforced we do more of, things that are punished or ignored we do less of.
- Take breaks every half hour - about five minutes long
  - Do something fun!
  - **Tell yourself this is your treat/reward for studying for 30 minutes effectively.**
- If you do this, your efficiency will stay at nearly **100%** for the entire length of time you study.

#### 5. SQRRR or SQ3R: A more efficient and active approach to reading a textbook

- SQRRR stands for Survey, Question, Read, Recite, and Review.
- It is a reading comprehension method from the book *Effective Study (1946)* created specifically for college students.
- **Survey:** skim through each chapter, look at the pictures and ask yourself **questions about the content of the reading** for a couple of minutes. This causes you to look for answers.
  - Skimming through should take 3-5 minutes.
  - Generating questions such as "What is this chapter about?" or "What question is this chapter trying to tell me?" should only take 3-5 minutes to complete.
  - If you intend to find something, you tend to find it.
- **Read:** Use the Survey and Questions to begin reading actively. In other words, read in order to understand the questions you came up with.

- **Recite:** You should try to retrieve from memory what you read and recite it out loud in your own words. Try recalling major points.
- **Review:** At the end of the passage, say back to yourself what the point of it was (in your own words).
- Marty notes: “If you start studying early you will only be reviewing before the test no longer have to study.”

### Not included in the video:

## 6. Summarize or teach what you learn

- Studies have shown that students learn more if they know they will have to teach the information to someone else.
- Trying to teach what you learn to someone else is an easy way to figure out what you don't know.
- Why? Teaching others helps us to organize information in our brains.
- If you don't have anyone you can teach, try summarizing the points in your own words.

## 7. Use mnemonics

- Mnemonics are learning techniques that help you remember things.
- They are better than straight memorization for remembering facts. Facts are often harder than concepts to tie meaning to.
- Some examples of mnemonics include:
  - Acronyms: Ex. ROYGBIV – Used to remember: red, orange, yellow, green, blue, indigo, and violet.
  - Coined sayings
  - Image associations (Marty's favorite): Associate what you're trying to remember with images. Ex. If you're trying to remember that there are 9 calories per gram of fat -> associate it with “fat cat” because cats have 9 lives.
  - Music: Make a jingle for any list of items. These work best for long lists.
  - Rhymes: Similar to the music example, trying making rhymes.
- The weirder you make them, the more likely you will be able to recall them!

Thanks for reading our Summary notes on Marty's Lecture! Hopefully you have learned something new! If we update or add on to these notes, we will send you the updated version.

– Joel from Motivation2Study