

In this guide you will find information on how to revise for your exams effectively.



Let's Get Organised!

- Create a 'to do' list (this can be paper / electronic)
- Tick off completed tasks
- Add on new tasks when old tasks are complete
- This will be a constantly updating document that you should regularly check – it feels good to tick off tasks as you go
- Nearly everyone has a phone, so use it to keep track of your tasks
- You probably check this more than anything else
- Use this to your advantage by using your calendar / reminders to stay on top of things

1. Revision timetable

You have been encouraged to create your own revision timetables. If this has not yet been completed, it would be useful to have a plan and stick to it.

Guidance as to how to complete this is as follows...

Week 1

School	1	2	3	4	5	6	After school 7-8pm
Mon	Maths	History	Computing	English	Science phy	History catch up	
Tues	Science Bio/chem	Spanish	English	Maths	Classics		Maths revision
Weds	Maths	History	Computing	Spanish	Science Bio/chem	Computing catch up	
Thurs	P.E.	RM	RM	Classics	Classics		Science
Fri	English	Science Bio/chem	History	Science Phy	Maths		
Sat	ME TIME						
Sun	10-12 English revision					6-8 General revision	

- Start with your school lessons. Then set yourself time after school and weekends for active revision
- Make this realistic because you need to stick to the plan!
- Spread out your revision and repeat-revise the topics you struggle with
- Work for 25 minutes at a time then take a 5 minute break ☐ You should complete between 10-15 hours/week in total.
- Aim for an average of 2-3 hours per day during the week and on Sundays
- It is important to have a life! Plan in some 'you' time into your schedule

2. Buy Revision Guides

Revision guides can be very useful, particularly for the new exam courses, and they are tailored to the requirements of the course. Check the course codes and exam board to make sure you get the right revision guide for your exam

3. Get to Know Your Exams

Read through past or specimen papers to get an idea of the number, type and marks available for the questions in the exams you are going to sit. Make sure that when you get into the exam hall, none of the paper's format will be a surprise.

4. Structure Your Revision Sessions

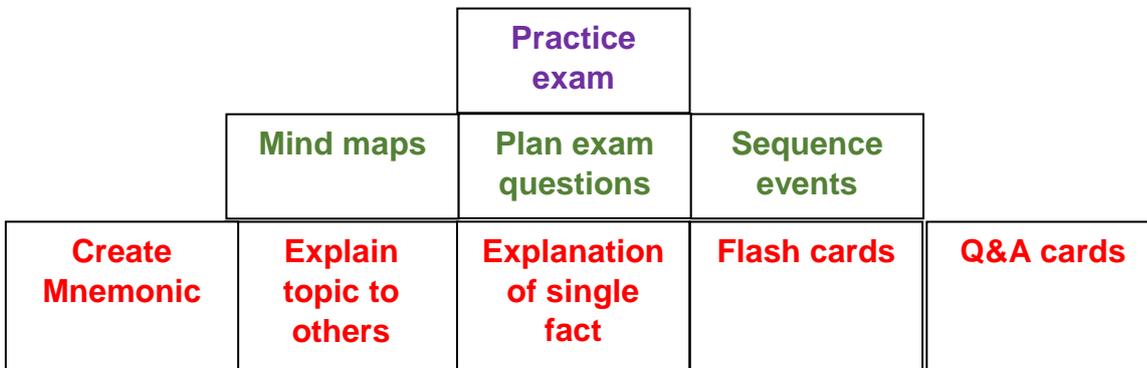
Just as you planned your revision timetable, you can treat your revision in the same way, plan it. In principle, this means making sure you know what you want to focus your revision on. So for each of your revision sessions, follow the steps below:

1. **Plan revision areas.** Maybe you feel you are weak in a particular area in the topic you are revising, or you want to focus on particular exam skill. Either way, if you want to focus on an area of your revision, plan it quickly first. Alternatively, you can use your last revision session on a topic to show you where you need to focus your next piece of revision on, hitting those areas you didn't remember properly last time.
2. **Revise.** There are a wealth of revision tips below. Choose a selection of methods, and don't be afraid to change them during your revision to prevent you getting bored or losing focus. Also, while you have planned a focus, do not bind yourself to it completely. Part of good revision is following your strengths and weaknesses as you revise, so if you find there is a topic or skill you are not sure on, adapt your focus.
3. **Review.** Perhaps the most important part of your revision is checking to see if you have retained what you have revised. This stage is really important, so answer a past exam question, create a quiz from your revision and get a friend or family member to mark it or test you.
4. **Adapt.** Use your review to decide if your revision was successful. If it was, keep using those techniques to revise in future as they seem to be working. If it was not, then change your techniques in the future. In particular, if you could remember the content, but you wrote a poor exam answer, add in more exam technique in your next session.

5. Revision Pyramid

The best way to prepare for an exam is to practice exam questions and to mark them. However, there will be times when you do not think you can answer an exam question, because you cannot remember the facts you need or you cannot remember the technique for that question. In these cases, you

should go down the revision pyramid, until you think you are able to answer the exam question. Then, mark it and see how you did!



While exam question practice is the best way to prepare for your exams, if you do not know everything you have learned in your courses, you might struggle in the real thing. Check your exam wrapper and course content for each subject you are doing, and **make sure you know all the content you studied**. Then, as you practice exam questions, they might reveal areas of weakness in your knowledge that you can revise again.

5a. Practice Exam Questions

Practice Exam Questions: The best kind of revision is practice exam questions, using past papers AND mark schemes can help **you test your knowledge** and **your exam skills** at the same time. **Make sure to time yourself**. Other ways of using exam questions might be to complete one and then swap it with another student, so you mark theirs and they mark yours.

This will allow you to be honest in your feedback.

While past exam papers and mark schemes are some of the most useful ways to revise for your final exams. Some of the courses do not have many past papers or mark schemes, so check with your teachers for more choices.

Top tip: Don't just download past exam papers read the Examiners Notes – these tell you exactly what the examiners were looking for to score the best marks. Not all courses will have Examiners Notes though so if you are struggling to find any, check with your teacher to see if they exist yet.

5b. Analysis and Prep

If you are struggling with answering an exam question, then there are several ways to approach your revision. The best technique depends on the needs of the question, so check its mark scheme and/or your teachers for hints.

Mind-Maps: When focusing on a topic with a lot of factors and connections, Mind Maps can be a great way of showing the details while also connecting ideas

together or preparing factor based questions. Step them up into expanding versions so you can include good examples.

Plan Exam Question: One of the best ways of revising also lets you prepare for an exam. As you revise content, think about how you might use it in a question. For example, if you were revising a History topic on how and why Hitler became Fuhrer by 1934, plan out how you would answer it as an exam question. You can get exam questions from the Key Questions section of your Exam Wrapper, or ask your teacher for them. Try to attach each plan to a specific question type.

Sequence of Events: A good way of revising and analysing is to do it in sequence. This not only allows you to revise a set of facts, but also keep them in the right order and see the bigger picture as well. This technique can be linked to Mind Maps, so you mind map related factors, then create a sequence to show the order of the factors, in terms of time, importance, etc.

5C Factual revision

If you cannot remember the details of the topics you are revising, then you have to do some factual revision. Even if you can answer exam questions on a given topic, a little time spent revising the facts is always a good idea, just in case you are missing something.

Top Tip: A really good point to remember is to combine many revision techniques. Use **visual**, **kinaesthetic**, and **auditory** learning styles, some of which are outlined below. Don't be afraid to use colour or your imaginary to help you revise, but remember the purpose of your revision is to learn and remember the facts, not spend hours colour coding one topic and ignoring the other parts of your revision.

Create Mnemonic: Mnemonics are tricks and ways of remembering information. There are a number of different mnemonics you can use, such as songs, names, expressions, images or words. Some examples are: To remember the visible light spectrum in order - **Richard Of York Gave Battle In Vain** (red, orange, yellow, green, blue, indigo and violet) or remembering to spell believe properly - do not believe a lie. A good place to find ideas is at: <https://www.thoughtco.com/mnemonic-devices-tools7755>.

Explain Topic to Others: A good way to retain your learning is by explaining it in as much detail to someone else, preferably someone who knows little or nothing about the topic. Get them to ask you questions and explain it back to you. If they can explain, you have explained it well and you understand it! This one is best done with people who are not revising for exams, as it could distract them from their own revision. A good way to do this is to play **Just a minute:** Talk for one minute on a given topic with no pauses, no hesitations and no deviation from the topic. Any slips, repetitions or micro pauses means you lose a life. After you have lost three, you have to start again. **Record ideas on tape.**

Explanation of a Single Fact: Choose something you do not know well, read about it then and from memory, write an explanation in as much detail as possible.

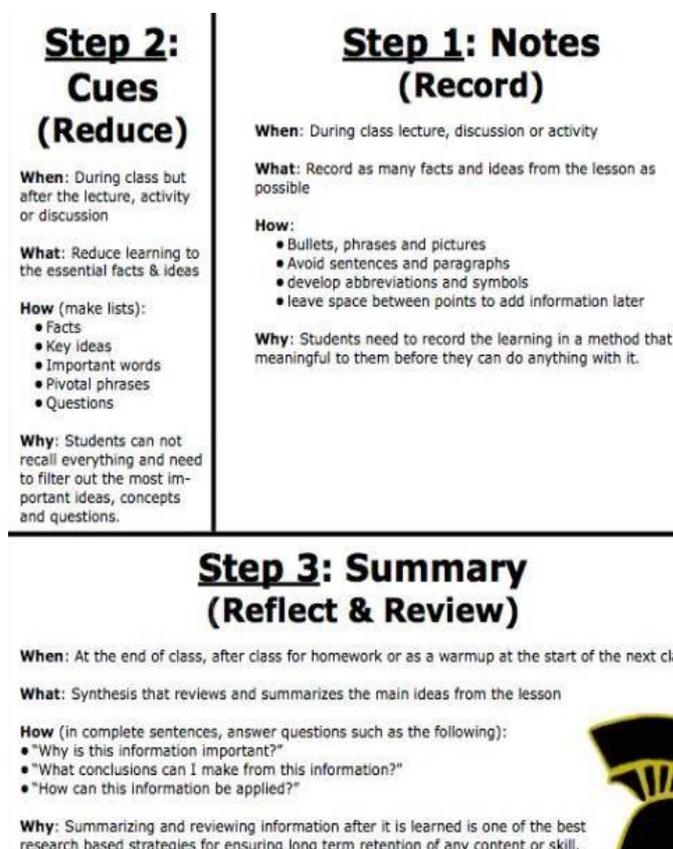
Then go back to your revision notes and check to see if you have missed anything out. If you have add it. If you haven't you have revised it enough for now. This is a good opportunity to overlearn, and revise key information twice.

Flash Cards: Write about a topic or factor on a single side of a flash card. Try to fill the card with information on that topic. The aim is to both revise and explain the topic, and keep it short (hence using only one side of a flash card). This can be a really good tool for revising exam skills, as you can define the exam skill and include some examples on a single side. Then, turn the card over and do a related topic, but make sure you do not repeat yourself.

Q&A Cards: Write out a series of questions and their related answers, then get someone else preferably a student revising that topic to test your memory, using your cards. Create three piles as you go through the testing, those you got correct, those you got wrong and those you got partly correct. Focus your revision on the pile you got wrong, then the partly correct piles. Once you have revised a bit, get someone to re-test on the Q&A you got wrong the first time round. Don't forget to get them to throw in a couple of questions from your correct pile, so you can overlearn and keep your memory working.

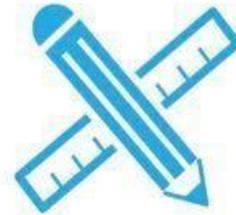
6. Cornell Note-Taking Method

Split your page into 3 sections, labelled as the diagram shows below. During the lesson, take notes on the topics you revise, particularly on any areas you do not remember well. After the session, complete the cues section, practicing reducing the notes down into their essential elements. Then write a summary, reviewing what you have learnt. You can set goals for your future work as well.





Ten Top Tips For Revision Success!



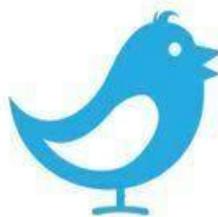
Before you start, plan

We've all done it, spent so long revising the really tough stuff leaving no time for the remaining 90% of our revision. Plan, stick to it and don't panic!



Be realistic

We'd all love to be Superman and get our revision done in 5 minutes but it isn't going to happen. Working 24 hours a day won't help either. Make sure your plan is manageable in the real world not Metropolis!



The early bird...

Catches the worm, or at least has a sensible revision plan. The earlier you start, the less you'll have to do in each block.



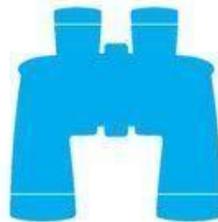
A Room of One's Own

Or corner, or desk, or sofa... Find a good place to revise, whatever works for you, be that a quiet library, your desk, or under a tree.



Mix it up a bit

There are different ways of revising like there are different ways of memorising information. Rather than just copying out, try drawing diagrams, reading aloud, sticking it on post-its on the wall. Whatever helps!



Look to the past

This doesn't involve a time machine, just checking out old exam papers. It can help you plan, revise, and calm you down!



Take regular breaks!

Don't head for information overload. We're not designed to work flat-out and work far more efficiently if we take regular breaks. Try to get up and move around, have a dance if you want. Don't just close the book; make the most of that time off!



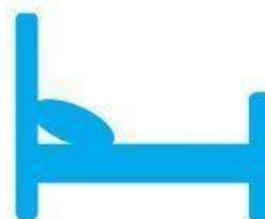
Feed & water regularly

Like a car, if you run out of petrol you're not going to get very far. A fed and watered revision brain, is a happy, efficient revision brain revving its highly tuned engine!



Testing times

Don't just input, check what you know. You can do this with friends, family, or on your own. Testing is a great way of combating those nerves by confirming what you know, and filling in the gaps!



Early to bed

It's the night before the exam. Now you've done all that work it's time to give your brain a rest, so you're in tip top condition for sitting that exam. **Good luck!**