

Top Study Skill Behaviors of Successful Students

The transition to college can be challenging not only because the content is difficult (or there is more of it), but sometimes because high school never posed enough challenge for students to develop strong study skills and habits. The below behaviors capture what successful college students do to ensure effective learning and good grades.

1. They read the assigned material before every class period, and engage actively with the text via questions and underlining.
2. They take handwritten notes during lecture (not laptop-driven) that synthesize information, concepts, and challenges being presented, rather than try to capture information comprehensively. Notes that leave one side of the page open for keywords, and thus function a bit like flashcards, are ideal.
3. They re-read, update, and re-touch lecture notes within 24 hours.
4. They quiz themselves on material from every course on every day of the week—flashcards or app equivalents like Quizlet work well, as do keywords from lecture notes. **This is perhaps THE key behavior to model.**
5. They study shortly before going to bed—it's a brain trick to make the learning stick permanently by leveraging the sleep cycle strategically.
6. They study material before tests across several days, and make sure to study even older material as well, knowing they need a cumulative understanding of the content and concepts.
7. They practice explaining concepts to themselves (and to others) as part of truly comprehending content and ideas.
8. They reflect on their own study habits, what they struggle with (and why), and whether they are following all of the above best practices.

If you're looking for assistance to strengthen your study habits, please consider also downloading this longer list of 101 study skills tips:

<http://bit.ly/studyskillstips>