

# The Study Cycle

Use the Study Cycle to improve your study techniques and ability to remember information.



## Preview

Before class, skim new material.  
Note big ideas.

10-15 minutes

No single step is effective on its own!  
It's the combination of these steps that results in learning.

## Attend

Go to class!  
Take notes.  
Ask questions.

Directly after class ends.

## Review

Read notes.  
Fill in gaps.  
Develop questions.

10-15 minutes

## Study

Schedule 3-5 **focused study sessions\*** per class each week.

30-50 minutes

## Check

Can I teach this material to someone?  
Are my study methods effective?

Pro-tip: Work with a tutor!

# THE STUDY CYCLE

# The Study Cycle:

*Each Step Builds on the Previous One*

## Step 1: Preview

Look over **the topics** you'll be covering during class beforehand. This helps you gain a sense of the big picture and gets you thinking about how the concepts fit together. You'll get more out of class if you already have some context for what you're about to learn.

## Step 2: Attend class

What does it mean to be attentive and engaged in class? Being physically present is not enough. Understand your instructor's expectations and areas of focus (e.g. what's going to be on the test). **Take notes** in a way that's useful to you. Paraphrase in your own words and keep track of your questions. If you don't get to ask them during class, plan to go to office hours or tutoring.

## Step 3: Review

Directly after class, go over your notes and anything your instructor distributed. You don't have to spend long doing this, but **the sooner you do it the better**. The goal is to go over the material when it's fresh so you can fill in the gaps and figure out what you might need help with. Be active when you go through your notes (don't just scan or re-read). Explain the material to yourself. Summarize key points. Understand how this material relates to what you covered in a previous class.

## Step 4: Study

Your focused study sessions don't have to be long. In fact, **multiple brief and intense** study sessions tend to be more effective than trying to study for many hours at a time. Figure out how long you can stay focused and efficient, depending on the material. **Plan your study sessions in advance** and make realistic goals for your sessions.

## Step 5: Check

Check in with yourself to make sure your methods are working and **be open** to changing your techniques if they're not! Practice self-testing and the teach-back method with a tutor or study group.