

Independent Learning Newsletter Tips

Last Minute Study

What do you do if you have left your study to the last minute? In an ideal world it would be great if all students paid attention, focused and participated in all classes, completed all homework and assessments thoroughly, asked for help throughout the year on anything they didn't understand, made regular summaries of the work covered in class (preferably at the end of each topic or section) and did their best to learn as they go throughout the year.

But in reality, this doesn't always happen for every student and every subject. So what can you do if you have left your study for tests and exams to the last minute?

5 TIPS FOR LAST MINUTE STUDY

1. **Find Out Fast:** Be very clear what you need to learn and what will be tested. It is impossible to start your study until you are sure what you have to know. Find out as much as you can too about the exam format and the style of questions. Don't be afraid to ask your teacher. For each subject write a list of exactly what topics and areas you need to review.
2. **Gather Materials:** Do you have notes, materials, textbooks on everything you need to learn? If not, is there a friend who will let you photocopy the work you have misplaced? Is there an online portal where material from classes is stored? Can you borrow from the library additional books or textbooks on the topics you need to learn? Are past examination papers available?
3. **Make a Plan:** You only have limited time left so you need to make the most of it. Draw up a grid that shows how much time you have left before your exams to study. Decide if you will spend equal time on each subject or if certain subjects need more time. Allocate subjects to the timeslots you have then decide exactly what you will do to prepare for each subject. For each subject make a list of what sort of study you should do to prepare for that subject. Brainstorm your ideas on how to prepare, ask your parents and teachers for feedback and share ideas with your friends.
4. **Create Study Notes:** Target your notes to what will be tested. It is best for learning and memory to make your study notes yourself, but if you have run out of time there are options. See if any of your class materials or textbooks have summarised the sections you need, see if there are study guides available in the library on the topics to learn or make targeted notes yourself on the key areas you have to memorise. You could also see if there is a friend where you could split the topics between yourself and share the notes you make. Don't spend too long on this stage, it needs to be completed as quickly as possible.
5. **Study!** What does study actually mean? It means memorising the material you need to know so you can recall it in the exams, and practising the skills of the subject so you know how to

do the types of questions you will have in the exam. To memorise your notes you need to test yourself over and over on them. You could read a section, see what you can write down without looking then check. Then review the things you didn't know again. Or, you could do the same approach reading things out loud then seeing what you can repeat out loud. Doing questions, practise essays, past exam questions will also help you understand what you know, and what you need to spend more time on.

The key is to get started. No more procrastination, no more excuses. Start today!