

# Organization

Be in control and on top  
of things



**Activities to help you organize  
your stuff and your life**

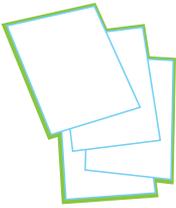
# Organization

## Why is it important to be organized?

When you're organized, you know what you need to do, and you have the things you need to do it. You're more on top of things, you have less stress, and your day runs smoother.

Being organized not only makes you a better student, it will help you succeed in your career, and in life.

As you go through this booklet, think about how you can better organize the following:



your papers



your time



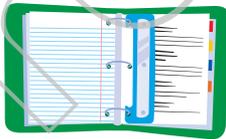
your computer files



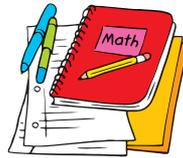
your backpack



your locker



your class notes



your stuff

	Wed
A	1 Study for French test 2 Do math assignment 3 Get Tim's birthday gift
B	1 Do outline for paper 2 Call Jenny
C	1 Do laundry 2 Work on lab report 3 Get haircut

your life

## How are your organization skills?

Take the survey on the following page and find out.

# Organization Survey

Read each question and check the boxes that best describe you.

	Almost Always	Sometimes	Hardly Ever
1. I have what I need when I go to class (book, pencils, paper).	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. I keep my papers (notes, homework, handouts) organized.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. I use a planner/agenda to keep track of my assignments.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. I create a study plan when I have a lot of homework.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5. I get everything ready for the next day before I go to bed.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6. I regularly back up and organize my computer files.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7. I make To Do lists when I have a lot to do.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
8. I keep my backpack and locker neat and organized.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

## Survey Results

Give yourself 2 points for each **Almost Always**, 1 point for each **Sometimes**, and 0 for each **Hardly Ever**.

**Your Score** \_\_\_\_\_

**13 - 16 Points** - You have good organization skills.

**9 - 12 Points** - Your skills are OK, but they could be improved.

**0 - 8 Points** - Your organization skills need a lot of improvement.

# Use a planner

A planner is your most important organization tool. A planner will help you keep track of what you need to do, and help ensure that you get your assignments completed on time.

Use your planner to record the following:

- ▶ daily assignments
- ▶ tests and quizzes
- ▶ large assignments
- ▶ weekly goals
- ▶ social activities
- ▶ appointments
- ▶ important dates
- ▶ deadlines

Here is an example of how one student successfully uses his planner to stay organized.

Week of October 12

"Whatever is worth doing at all is worth doing well." Earl of Chesterfield

Subject	Monday, October 12	Subject	Tuesday, October 13
Math	✓ Study for quiz - Tues	Sci.	✓ Read pages 75-80
Eng	✓ Read Story Due Tues	Math	★ Math Quiz
Art	✓ Do sketch Due Wed	English	✓ Read pages 5-10 Due Wed
	Early Dismissal	Hist.	✓ Study for test - Thurs
	Guitar Lesson 4:00		Soccer practice 4:00
Subject	Wednesday, October 14	Subject	Thursday, October 15
Hist.	✓ Study for test - Thurs	Health	Watch video
English	✓ Do research for paper	Hist.	★ History Test
Math	Do prob on p 26 Due Th	Math	Do prob on p 28 Due Fri
	Soccer practice 4:00	English	Do outline for paper
	John's birthday		Soccer game 7:00

What can you do to make better use of your planner?

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# Have routines

**Your Morning Routine** - Having a good morning routine gets your day off to a good start. List the things that make up your regular weekday morning routine.

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_
5. \_\_\_\_\_

**Wake up time:**

\_\_\_\_\_

**Time you leave for school:**

\_\_\_\_\_

**Your Nighttime Routine** - Having a good nighttime routine is also important. Think about your nighttime routine.

Do you get everything ready for the next day before you go to bed?  Yes  No

To help you wind down, do you stop using electronics an hour before you go to bed?  Yes  No

Do you turn off your phone at night?  Yes  No

What time do you usually go to bed? \_\_\_\_\_ Does this allow you to get 8 hours of sleep a night?  Yes  No

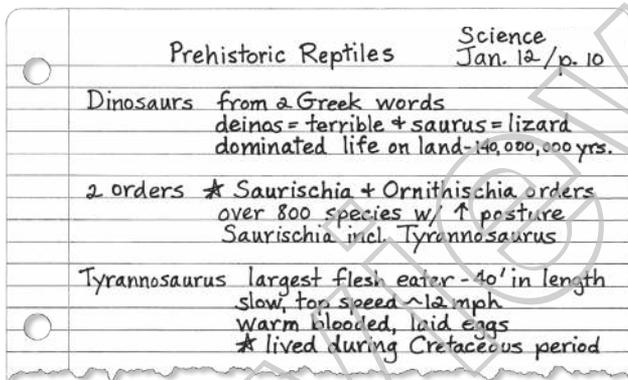
How can you improve your morning and nighttime routines?

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

# Organize your notes

Since test questions usually come from material that's been presented in class, having organized notes to study will help you do well on tests.

**When it's time to study for the test, this student will have neat, easy-to-understand notes to study from.**



Check off the things you regularly do when you take class notes.

- I write down any information the teacher writes on the board.
- I underline, star, or highlight the most important information.
- I put key words in the left hand margins.
- I use symbols and abbreviations.
- I only write on one side of the paper.

What can you do to have better, more organized notes?

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# Organize your week

To keep on top of the things you need to do (appointments, practices, social events, etc.), use a calendar that shows the week or month at a glance. Every Sunday night look over the upcoming week to get an overview of what you have going on, and to remind yourself of what you need to do that week.

Use the blocks below to write in the things you need to do this week.

**Week of:**

<b>Monday</b>	<b>Tuesday</b>	<b>Wednesday</b>	<b>Thursday</b>
<b>Friday</b>	<b>Saturday</b>	<b>Sunday</b>	<b>Next Week</b>

# Improve your organization skills

## Organize your papers.

Whether you use folders, notebooks, or binders, the important thing is that you have a system for organizing your papers—and that you have a specific place for each paper. Be sure to throw out any papers you don't need, and put those you want to keep in a home file.

What can you do to better organize your papers?

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## Keep your stuff organized.

When your stuff is neat and organized, things are easier to find, you're less frustrated, and you're less likely to lose or misplace the things you need.

What can you do to better organize your stuff at school and at home?

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## Keep on top of the things you need to do.

To keep on top of everything, regularly use a planner to record assignments, tests, etc., and use a wall calendar to record major events, project deadlines, and social events. When you have a lot to do, create To Do lists.

What can you do to keep your life more organized?

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*"Don't agonize. Organize."* Florynce Kennedy

# Time Management

Use your time wisely



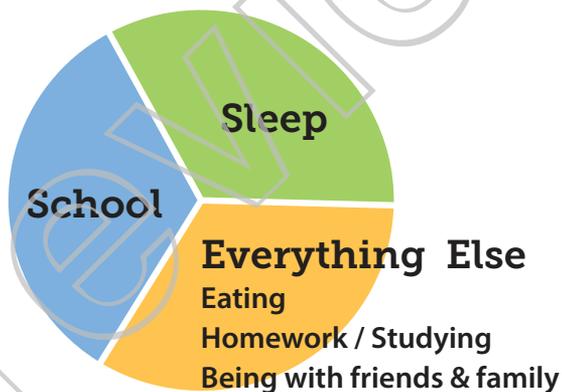
**Activities to help you make time for everything you need and want to do**

# Time Management

We all have the same amount of time—24 hours a day / 168 hours a week. How we use our time is called time management. When you use your time wisely, you have time for the things you need to do, and you still have time for the things you want to do.

During the week, most students are in school 7-8 hours a day and they sleep about 8 hours each night. This means that you probably have about 8 hours a day for everything else.

Having to fit everything else into 8 hours, means that you need to consciously think about how you want to spend your time.



Fill in the blanks with all the other things you do (hobbies, sports, chores, work, lessons, leisure activities, etc.)

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**How are your time management skills?  
Take the survey on the following page and find out.**

# Time Management Survey

Read each question and check the boxes that **best** describe you.

	Almost Always	Some-times	Hardly Ever
1. I use the free time I have in school to start on my homework.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. I have a good morning and nighttime routine.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. I have time for hobbies, relaxation, and fun.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. I make To Do lists when I have a lot to do.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5. I am on time to classes, practices, and appointments.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6. I limit time wasters (social media, TV, video games, etc.).	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7. I give myself enough time to finish my homework.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
8. I combine tasks to save time.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

## Survey Results

Give yourself 2 points for each **Almost Always**, 1 point for each **Sometimes**, and 0 for each **Hardly Ever**.

**Your Score** \_\_\_\_\_

**13 - 16 Points** - You have good time management skills.

**9 - 12 Points** - Your skills are OK, but they could be improved.

**0 - 8 Points** - Your skills need a lot of improvement.

# Needs vs. wants

If you use your time wisely, you should have plenty of time for the things you need to do—and for the things you want to do.

Think back over the past 24 hours and estimate how much time you spent doing each of the following. (Be honest.)

1. \_\_\_ hours – watched TV, videos, or movies
2. \_\_\_ hours – spent time online (social media, etc.)
3. \_\_\_ hours – played video games
4. \_\_\_ hours – did homework, studied, or read a book
5. \_\_\_ hours – talked on the phone/texted
6. \_\_\_ hours – hung out with friends
7. \_\_\_ hours – listened to music
8. \_\_\_ hours – did chores/worked at a job
9. \_\_\_ hours – played a sport or spent time on a hobby

\_\_\_ **Total hours for #4 and #8**

\_\_\_ **Total hours for all other numbers**

How did the time you spent on #4 and #8 (things you needed to do) compare with the total time you spent on the things you wanted to do?

What activities did you spend too much time on?

## Time Management Tip - Learn to say “no”

What’s something you recently said “yes” to, even though you really didn’t have time for it?

# Make To Do lists

To Do lists are a great way to keep track of and prioritize the things you need to do.

If you have a lot to do, creating a To Do list using the following guidelines can be very helpful.

1. Each day make a list of all the things you need to do.
2. Rate each item as an A (must do today), B (should do today), or C (want to do today, but it can wait).
3. Take all of the As and rank them in order of importance (1, 2, 3...). Do the same with the Bs and Cs.
4. Rewrite your list with the As at the top (in order of importance), followed by the Bs and Cs.
5. Cross things off as they get done. At the end of each day, take the tasks that didn't get done and put them on the next day's To Do list.

	Wed
A	1 Study for French test 2 Do math assignment 3 Get TJ's birthday gift
B	1 Do outline for paper 2 Call Jenny
C	1 Do laundry 2 Work on lab report 3 Get haircut

## Make your own To Do list

Think of the things you need or want to do today, tomorrow, or this week, and make your own To Do list.


# Make a weekly schedule

Creating a weekly schedule like the one below will help you organize your time.

Think about your after school hours and use the grid below to create a weekly schedule.

- Step 1.** Write in all scheduled activities (sports practices, lessons, etc.).
- Step 2.** Write in anything that's the same every day (dinner, chores, etc.).
- Step 3.** Look at the time blocks that are "open" and write HW in the slots that would be good for doing homework.
- Step 4.** Once the above activities have been filled in, you can see when you have time for relaxation, hobbies, and socializing.

WEEKLY SCHEDULE					
Week of: _____	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thurs	Fri
3:00 pm					
4:00 pm					
5:00 pm					
6:00 pm					
7:00 pm					
8:00 pm					
9:00 pm					
10:00 pm					

# Your favorite activities

Effective time management also means making smart choices about how you spend your time. Think about the things you like to do in your free time, and list four of your favorite activities below.

	1	2	3
1.			
2.			
3.			
4.			

After you've listed four favorite activities, do the following for each:

**In column 1** – write an **A** if it's an activity that you primarily do alone. Write an **F** if it's an activity mostly done with friends or others.

**In column 2** – write an **M** if it's an activity that involves movement or action. Write an **S** if it's a sedentary activity requiring little movement.

**In column 3** – write an **I** if it's an activity that's generally done inside. Write an **O** if it's an activity mostly done outside.

## What do the results show about how you spend your time?

Do you have a good balance between doing things alone and with friends? Between activities that are sedentary and active? Between doing things inside and outside?

What changes should you make on how you spend your free time?

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# Improve your time management skills

## Use free time in school wisely.

If you use your free class time and/or study halls wisely, you'll have a lot less work to do at night.

How can you make better use of the time you have in school?

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## Create routines.

A good morning and nighttime routine will save you time and help your day run more smoothly.

What can you do to improve your morning and nighttime routines?

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## Control time wasters.

Social media, TV, and video games can all be huge time wasters. Try to schedule small chunks of time for these activities, and stick to your schedule.

What are the time wasters in your life? What can you do to control them?

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*"Time is the most precious element of human existence."*

Denis Waitley

# Class Success

Get the most out of class



**Activities to help you do your best in class and succeed in school**

# Class Success

**To succeed in your classes, you must have good attendance.**

**How is your attendance?**

About how many days of school do you usually miss a year?

0-5     6-10     11-20     More than 20

Has poor attendance affected your grades?

Yes     Maybe     No

Unless you have an extended illness or a health problem, you shouldn't miss more than a few days of school a year.

**If you miss too much school, what can you do to improve your attendance?**

**To succeed in your classes, you also need to believe in yourself and in your ability to succeed.**

Approach each class with a positive, "can do" attitude, and know that if you give your classes your best effort—and do the things discussed this booklet—you will succeed.

Do you feel confident that you can succeed in all of your classes?

Yes     Not Sure     No

*If you checked "Not Sure" or "No," talk to your teacher or counselor about your concerns.*

**How are your class success skills?**

**Take the survey on the following page and find out.**

# Class Success Survey

Read each question and check the boxes that best describe you.

	Almost Always	Some- times	Hardly Ever
1. I ask and answer questions in class.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. I get along with all of my teachers.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. I participate in class discussions.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. When I came to class, I have my homework done.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5. I take good notes.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6. I ask for help when I need it.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7. I try to keep a positive attitude in class, even when things are hard.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
8. When I do group work in class, I try to be a good group member.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

## Survey Results

Give yourself 2 points for each **Almost Always**, 1 point for each **Sometimes**, and 0 for each **Hardly Ever**.

**Your Score** \_\_\_\_\_

**13 - 16 Points** - You have good class success skills.

**9 - 12 Points** - Your skills are OK, but they could be improved.

**0 - 8 Points** - Your class success skills need a lot of improvement.

# Be involved

**The best way to stay involved in your classes is to ask and answer questions and to participate in discussions.**

Participating in class makes the class more interesting, and it helps keep your mind focused. Because many teachers give participation points, participating can also help you get better grades.

**On a scale of 1 to 10, rate your class participation.**

1 ••• 2 ••• 3 ••• 4 ••• 5 ••• 6 ••• 7 ••• 8 ••• 9 ••• 10

I never raise my hand and I don't talk unless I have to.

I always raise my hand and I'm eager to share my ideas.

If you circled 1 to 5, try to become more involved in your classes. You'll learn more and the time will go by a lot faster.

All students get distracted and daydream sometimes, even when they're trying to pay attention and stay engaged. When you catch your attention drifting, notice it, and refocus on the class.

**Here are some tips to help you stay engaged in your classes:**

- ▶ Come to class alert and well-rested.
- ▶ Take notes.
- ▶ Put away anything that's not related to what you're doing in class.
- ▶ Work to keep a positive attitude.
- ▶ Look at your teacher when he/she is talking.

What can you do to increase your class participation and be more engaged in your classes?

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# Be a good group member

Whether you're working on a class project, involved in an extra-curricular activity, or working at a job, you must be able to work and get along with the other members of the group.

Being able to work well as part of a group or team is a skill that will help you succeed in school, your career, and in life!

In successful groups, members assume positive roles that help the group complete their task. Unfortunately, people sometimes take on negative roles that make it more difficult for the group to function effectively.

Think about what kind of group member you generally are, and put a ✓ in the box(es) that best describe the role(s) you most often take on.

## Positive Roles

- Leader** – takes charge of the group
- Encourager** – supports and helps group members stay positive
- Contributor** – offers new ideas and ways to complete tasks

## Negative Roles

- Blocker** – opposes every idea, but doesn't offer suggestions
- Disrupter** – uses group time to play around or be in the spotlight
- Non-participant** – doesn't contribute or do their share of the work

Think about a time you assumed one of the above positive or negative roles. How did your actions affect the success of the group?

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What can you do to be a better group member in the future?

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# Be adaptable

Teachers are in charge of what goes on in their classroom and they make the rules. As a student, you need to figure out what's important to each of your teachers. You will then know what you need to do to succeed in each of your classes.

List the names of the teachers you have below. Then write a few words describing what each one likes, and/or what's important to each.

Mr. Bradley      Likes discussions, never be late to class

**Teacher**      **Teaching style / Things to remember**

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

## Ask for help when you need it!

We all get stuck and need help from time to time. Most teachers are happy to help you, but you need to ask.

What could you use some help with now?

_____
_____
_____
_____

# Be aware of body language

Body language (gestures, posture, and facial expressions) often communicate how we feel and what we're thinking even better than words. If you want to get good grades and do well in school, make sure your body language communicates this.

Students who slouch in their seat, are looking out the window, or working on something for another class are sending a message that they aren't interested in the class—and they don't care about the material that's being presented. *Messages like this don't win you any points with your teachers!*

## What messages are you sending?

Pretend that you are looking at yourself through your teachers' eyes. Circle the words you think your teachers might use to describe you.

Daydreamer	Bored	Disrespectful
Hard worker	Engaged	Attentive
Disorganized	Confident	Tired
Friendly	Lonely	Happy
Unhappy	Organized	Angry

What can you do to have better body language and send more positive messages in the future?

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# Improve your class success skills

## Take good class notes.

Because tests usually come from material that's been presented in class, it's important to have neat, organized class notes to study from.

What can you do to improve your notetaking skills?

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## Read to comprehend.

To succeed in your classes, you must be able to understand and remember what you read. When you have a reading assignment, find a good, quiet place to read, remove distractions, and completely focus on your reading.

What can you do to improve your reading?

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## Have good computer skills.

Teachers expect students to have basic computer skills and be able to locate information online. If you're struggling with technology, talk to your teacher or counselor. Don't let your lack of computer skills hurt your grades.

If you sometimes struggle with technology, how can you to improve your skills?

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*"We are what we repeatedly do. Excellence, then, is not an act, but a habit."*

Aristotle

# Study Smart

Use smart study strategies



Preview



**Activities to help you get the most out of your study time**

# Study Smart

The key to success is not studying a lot. It's studying smart. Students who study smart spend less time studying, and yet they get better grades.

This booklet will give you some ideas on how you can improve your study skills and get the grades you want.

## Students who study smart have goals.

Goals give you focus and direction. They also help keep you motivated. Get in the habit of regularly setting academic and personal goals for yourself.

**Set academic goals.** List the courses you're currently taking in the grid below. Then write down the highest grade you think you can earn in each course this grading period.

	Course	Grade
1		
2		
3		
4		
5		
6		
7		

*Think of these grades as your academic goals for the term.  
As you study and do your homework, keep these goals in mind.*

**Do you have good study skills? Do you study smart?  
Take the survey on the following page and find out.**

# Study Smart Survey

Read each question and check the boxes that best describe you.

	Almost Always	Sometimes	Hardly Ever
1. I have a place to study that is quiet, well lit, and comfortable.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. I plan out my studying before I begin.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. I use strategies to help me memorize information.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. I allow enough time each day for homework and studying.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5. When I study and do homework, I focus completely on what I'm doing.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6. I know how to study for tests.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7. When I'm studying, I eliminate distractions and silence my phone.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
8. I break large assignments down to make them more manageable.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

## Survey Results

Give yourself 2 points for each **Almost Always**, 1 point for each **Sometimes**, and 0 for each **Hardly Ever**.

**Your Score** \_\_\_\_\_

**13 - 16 Points** - You have good study skills.

**9 - 12 Points** - Your skills are OK, but they could be improved.

**0 - 8 Points** - Your study skills need a lot of improvement.

# Improve homework grades

In many classes, having good homework grades can greatly improve your final grade. Doing your homework well will also help you learn the material—and make you a better student.

How much time, on average, do you spend on homework each day?

\_\_\_\_\_

Where do you usually do your homework? \_\_\_\_\_

When do you usually do your homework? \_\_\_\_\_

When you're studying, what distractions do you have (phone, TV, etc.)?

\_\_\_\_\_

How would you rate your homework grades?

- Excellent    Good    OK    Should be better

## How can you improve your homework grades?

Put a check mark by the things you can do to improve your homework grades.

- Spend more time on my homework.
- Get help from a parent, classmate, or teacher.
- Find a better place to do homework.
- Turn off the TV or music.
- Start working on my homework earlier.
- Be more focused while I'm doing my homework.
- Know the assignment and have the materials I need.
- Limit the interruptions (phone, text messages, etc.).

**Try doing the things you checked for one week.  
Your homework grades are sure to improve!**

# Create a study plan

To create a study plan, organize and prioritize the things you need to do. A study plan will help ensure that your study time is as productive as possible.

## Create a daily study plan

Before you start your homework, make a list of what you need to do, in the order you want to do it.

Prioritize your work to make sure you have enough time for the things that are the most important.

Focus on one task at a time and cross things off as they are completed.

### Monday

1. Study for History quiz
2. Do Math worksheet
3. English - read pgs 55-75
4. Go over Spanish vocab

## Make large assignments easier to do

Breaking large assignments down into smaller parts makes them much more manageable. And spreading them out helps ensure that you get large assignments and projects done on time.

Suppose you have to write a four-page paper for your history class. Today is Monday and the paper is due Friday. How might you break this assignment down and spread the work out over the week?

Day	
Mon.	
Tues.	
Wed.	
Thurs.	
Fri.	History paper due

# Memorization tips

There are times in school when you need to memorize information. Memory techniques such as these will help you remember information for your classes and for tests.

## Use all of your senses.

**Try it!** Suppose that you need to memorize the word “escuela” (which means school) for your Spanish class.

1. Look at the word. Close your eyes, and try to see it in your mind. Repeat this 2 or 3 times.
2. Now say the word out loud (es-quāy-la).
3. Now write the word. \_\_\_\_\_



escuela  
school

By looking at the word, saying it out loud, and writing it down, you are using your visual, auditory, and kinesthetic senses. **Using all of your senses makes memorization easier.**

## Create a ridiculous image.

Take the information you're studying and create a crazy, memorable image in your mind. For example, a ridiculous image could help you remember that Hawthorne wrote **The Scarlet Letter**. Just visualize a large red letter “A” with a big thorn sticking in it saying “Ha!”



**Try it!** To remember that Balboa discovered the Pacific Ocean, see if you can come up with a ridiculous image. Draw it below.



# Stay motivated

All students get stressed out, discouraged, or overwhelmed from time to time. *Successful students, however, find a way to keep a positive attitude and stay motivated.*

These motivational tips will help you stay engaged and ready for any academic challenge.

## Use motivating “self-notes.”

Write motivating words, ideas, and/or quotes on sticky notes. Put these notes anywhere you’re likely to see them.

Write yourself a positive, motivating message. \_\_\_\_\_

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## Turn failures into successes.

When something doesn’t go well, learn from the experience, and use that knowledge to do better the next time.

When has a negative experience taught you something? \_\_\_\_\_

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## Figure out what motivates you.

Turn what competes with your schoolwork into a motivator. For example, reward yourself with social media or video game time once your homework is done.

What can you use as a motivator? \_\_\_\_\_

## Have a growth mindset.

When you encounter a challenge of any kind, it’s helpful to have a growth mindset. With a growth mindset, you don’t complain and give up when something is hard. You get creative, ask for help, or try to do things differently. You look inside and find your most determined self.

What subject or challenge do you most need a growth mindset for?

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# Improve your study skills

## Set goals.

On page 2, you wrote down the grades you want to earn this grading period. Think about other goals you would like to set – both academic and personal (e.g., have all homework done by 8:00 every night, walk a mile every day).

Write down one academic and one personal goal below.

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## Improve your homework.

No one needs to tell you how important homework is. If you don't do your homework, or you do it poorly, you don't learn as much, and your grades won't be as good as they should be.

What can you do to improve how you do homework?

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## Think about your study skills.

To be a successful student, you need to have good study skills. You need to be a good reader, have good notetaking and technology skills, and be able to memorize and remember information. You also need to be organized.

What study skills do you need to work on?

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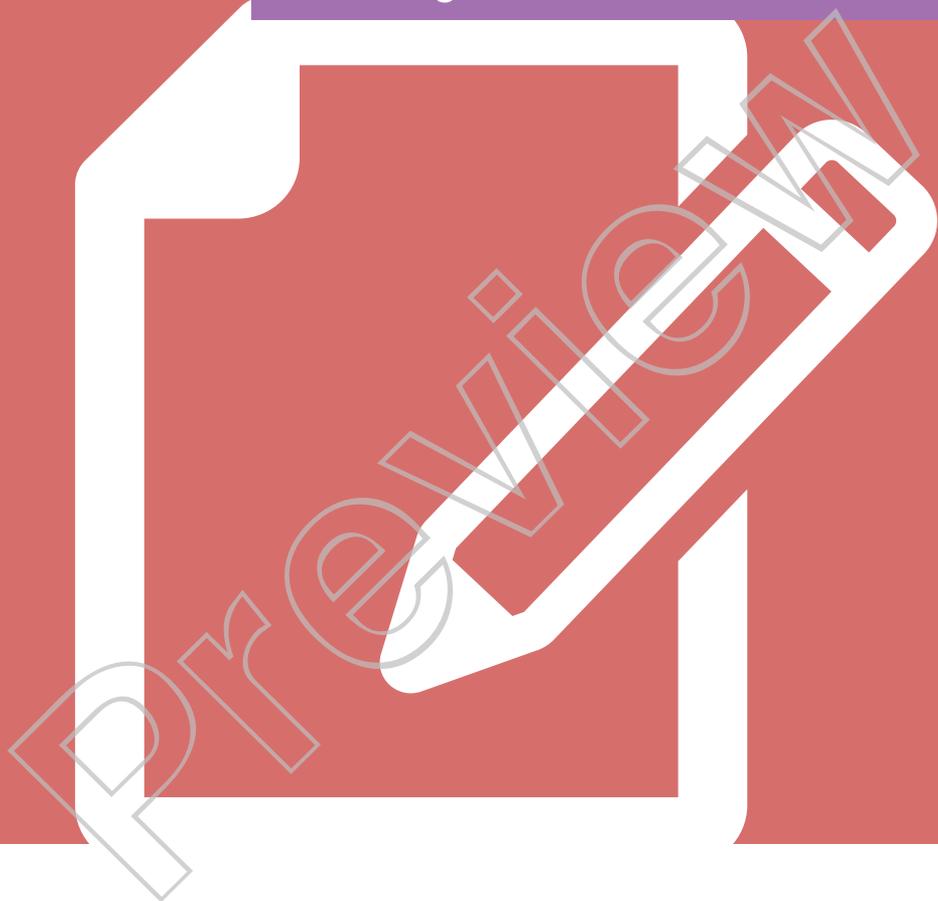
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*"Success is the sum of small efforts, repeated day in and day out."*

Robert Collier

# Test Taking

Ace your tests

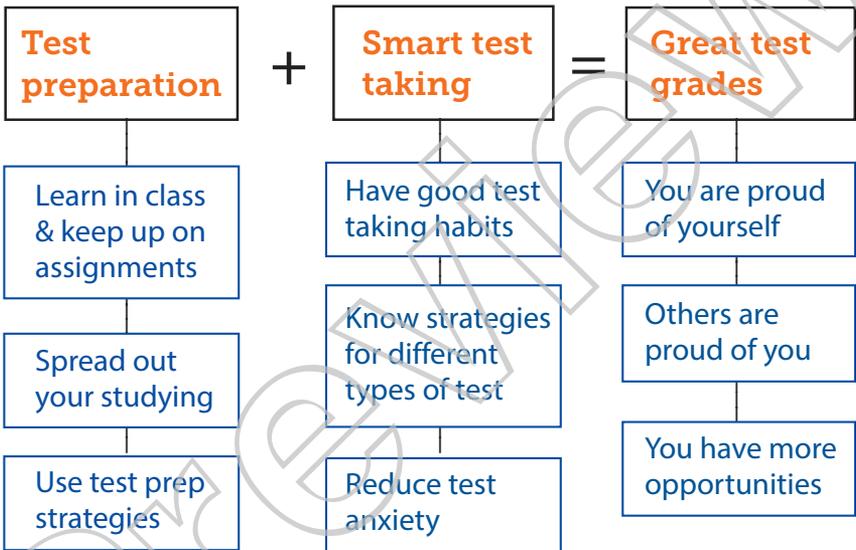


**Activities to help you prepare for and do your best on quizzes and tests**

# Test Taking

To do well on the tests you take in school, you need to know the material and be prepared. You also need to know strategies that will help you get the best grades possible. You need to be a smart test taker!

If you prepare well and use smart test taking strategies, you are certain to get great test grades.



In this booklet you'll find some helpful test prep and test taking strategies, and some tips on how to reduce test anxiety.

**How are your test taking skills?**

**Take the survey on the following page and find out.**

# Test Taking Survey

Read each question and check the boxes that best describe you.

	Almost Always	Some-times	Hardly Ever
1. I use all the time I'm given when taking a test.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. I study enough to feel prepared.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. As soon as I get my test, I write anything I want to remember at the top.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. I get a good night's sleep the night before a test.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5. Before I begin, I quickly look over the test and plan out how much time I will spend on each question/section.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6. I organize my ideas before answering an essay question.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7. I am happy with my test grades.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
8. If I have time, I check all my answers.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

## Survey Results

Give yourself 2 points for each **Almost Always**, 1 point for each **Sometimes**, and 0 for each **Hardly Ever**.

**Your Score** \_\_\_\_\_

**13 - 16 Points** - You have good test taking skills.

**9 - 12 Points** - Your skills are OK, but they could be improved.

**0 - 8 Points** - Your test taking skills need a lot of improvement.

# Prepare for tests

The way you prepare for tests has a great deal to do with how well you do on them.

Think about the last time you prepared for a test.

1. When did you study for the test? (Check all that apply.)

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Over several weeks  | <input type="checkbox"/> Right before the test |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Over several nights | <input type="checkbox"/> All of the above      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> The night before    | <input type="checkbox"/> None of the above     |

2. What study techniques did you use? (Check all that apply.)

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Reviewed class notes   | <input type="checkbox"/> Studied with a group        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Went over the textbook | <input type="checkbox"/> Got quizzed by someone else |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Made flashcards        | <input type="checkbox"/> I didn't study              |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Something else: _____  |  |

3. How did you do on the test?

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4. How can you better prepare for future tests?

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## Test preparation tip - Engage your senses

For many students, simply rereading material isn't enough to remember it. Try making flash cards or colorful PowerPoints with your class notes—or record yourself reading notes and textbook passages and listen to the recording. How might you engage your senses to study in the future?

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# Types of tests

Different types of test questions require different strategies. See if you can answer the following questions on test-taking strategies correctly.

## Multiple Choice

1. When answering multiple choice questions, it's best to
  - a. try to come up with the answer in your head before you look at the answer choices.
  - b. choose c if you don't know the answer.
  - c. if you're not sure of the answer, cross out the choices you know are wrong and make an educated guess.
  - d. both a and c.
2. If you get stuck on a question or problem
  - a. keep working until you figure it out.
  - b. skip it.
  - c. mark it and come back to it.
  - d. choose c.
3. When answering essay questions, it's best to start with
  - a. the easiest question.
  - b. the hardest question.
  - c. the first one.
  - d. any question. It doesn't matter which one you start with.
4. When answering a math problem, you should
  - a. not worry about showing your work.
  - b. spend as much time as you need on each problem.
  - c. estimate the answer before beginning the problem.
  - d. all of the above.

# Types of tests

## True/False

1. True/false questions with absolute words like *all*, *always*, *never*, *every*, and *none* are usually true. TRUE FALSE
2. True/false questions with words like *usually*, *often*, and *sometimes* are typically true. TRUE FALSE
3. If any part of a true/false question is false, the whole statement is false. TRUE FALSE
4. If you don't watch out for statements with double negatives, you won't get the right answers. TRUE FALSE

## Open Book

### For open book tests

- a. write down all the information you know you'll need on one sheet.
- b. put self-stick notes in your textbook to help you locate information
- c. highlight your notes.
- d. all of the above.

## Test-Taking Tips

- ▶ As soon as you get your test, write memory clues and anything else you want to remember at the top.
- ▶ Look over the test and make a plan. This will ensure that you don't run out of time.
- ▶ Don't spend too much time on any question or problem. Mark it and come back to it later.
- ▶ Check your answers and use all of the time you're given.

# Test anxiety

A little anxiety before a test improves your concentration. Too much worry, or test anxiety, can lower your test scores. Having test anxiety is like not having the password to your computer. The information is there – you just can't get to it.

**On a scale of 1–10, rate your test anxiety.**

1 ··· 2 ··· 3 ··· 4 ··· 5 ··· 6 ··· 7 ··· 8 ··· 9 ··· 10

I get so nervous before a test I feel sick.

I feel calm and confident before tests.

If you circled 1 – 7, the following tips may help you reduce test anxiety.

- ▶ Start studying early. Cramming only increases test anxiety.
- ▶ Replace negative thinking with thoughts that are positive.
- ▶ Mentally practice going through the test and receiving the grade you want.
- ▶ Walk into the test with your head up and your shoulders back. Tell yourself that you're ready, and that you're going to do fine.
- ▶ Try these relaxation techniques:
  1. Take a deep breath. Then slowly release your breath, along with any tension. Do this until you feel your body relax.
  2. Start at the top of your head, flexing, and then relaxing each part of your body.
  3. Think of a place where you feel relaxed and calm. Close your eyes and visualize being there.

What can you do to reduce test anxiety and feel more confident?

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# Improve your test taking skills

## Prepare as you go.

If you pay attention in class, take good notes, and do all of your homework, studying for tests will take less time and effort—and your test grades will be higher.

What can you do to better prepare for tests?

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## Have good class notes.

Since most test questions come from material that's been presented in class, your class notes are your most valuable test prep resource. Class notes that are complete, neat, and organized make preparing for tests much easier.

What can you do to improve your class notes?

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## Prep your mind and body.

Get enough sleep the night before a test so that you're well rested, and get up early enough to eat a good breakfast. Also, visualize success. Imagine yourself confidently taking the test and answering the questions correctly.

How can you better prepare your mind and body for tests?

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***"If we did all the things we are capable of doing, we would literally astonish ourselves."*** Thomas Edison