



Alcester  
Academy

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TO BE THE BEST THAT WE CAN BE

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# **The Super Six:**

**flash cards**

**mind-mapping**

**quizzing**

**memory palace**

**mnemonics**

**practise**

*Making Revision Count*

Revision: the basics 

Exams: coping with them! 

Read the question 

The 20 minute burst 

Flash cards 

Mind-mapping 

Quizzing 

Memory palace 

Mnemonics 

Practise 

Revision power hour 

Revision planner 

Revision resources and equipment list 

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### *What is The Super Six?*

- 1. Six tried and tested revision activities to get you remembering key information*
- 2. Each technique matches a different way of remembering things*
- 3. You may find one technique is good in English, but not in science for example, so it is important to play about with all of them*
- 4. Currently, you use **practise** more than any other in school, but think about how often you use the other techniques in lessons and at home*
- 5. Ideally, completing 3 Super Six activities a night (20 minutes each) will result in a healthy revision balance (your brain will not be able to work so well after this!)*

## Revision - The introduction

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1. Studying for your exams is more than just reading over your notes. Revision is an **ACTIVE process** which involves grouping and connecting information, answering questions, recalling facts and testing your memory.
2. Revision is important. Firstly, it helps you to remember facts, figures, topics and methodologies that you have covered some time ago. Secondly, If done correctly it will help **increase your confidence and reduce anxiety** as you will be well prepared for your exam.
3. Most students will do around an **hour of revision a day** for their GCSEs, although the number of subjects you are taking will need to be taken into account. You will probably be taking more GCSE subjects than the number of days in the week, so it is good to be **organised** and time-manage when you are going to focus on each of your subjects, by creating a **revision timetable**.
4. **Subjects and topics that make you feel anxious are best revised early in your revision plan**. This will help reduce anxiety because you will feel that you have more time to deal with them. You don't need to tackle the difficult areas first. Revising subjects you know well will **boost your confidence** – but don't put off the difficult areas until the last minute.
5. Good revision is hard work. Make sure that you get enough sleep and take time off to be with your friends and exercise a little. Rest, relaxation and making sure that you stay fit and well are all very important elements towards revising well. Don't be tempted to revise into the early hours of the morning. You might feel that you are dedicated and working hard but **'overdoing' it is counter productive**. You will perform much better after a good night's sleep.

# 9 Ways to Beat Revision Stress

by @inner\_drive | [www.innerdrive.co.uk](http://www.innerdrive.co.uk)



**Do the actual work – revise!**



**When really stressed, talk to someone about it**



**Get some fresh air each day**



**Stick to regular meal times**



**Do something to switch off an hour before bed**



**Don't dwell on worst case scenarios**



**A good sleep the night before is better than last minute cramming**



**Once you've done the exam, move on to the next one**



**Don't aim for perfection – It's a myth and doesn't exist**

## Revision planner planning

- Revision is most effective when it is in **short bursts**. 3x 20 minute revision bursts each day will ensure **good habits, high energy, and a strict, achievable routine**
- You may wish to split your 20 minute bursts and combine them with an activity you are already doing. For example washing up and tidying away, exercise in the morning, walking the dog at night.
- Your 20 minute bursts will be most effective in a **revision space** though where you have everything to hand
- You will need to consider your evening and weekend plans- do not take on too many commitments such as part time jobs!

*Get Organised!*

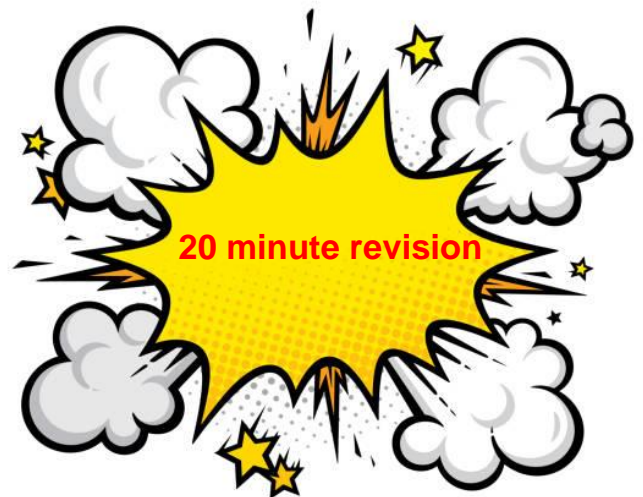
You will find blank copies of a revision planner at the end of this booklet- do use these (or as inspiration for your own planning) to manage your time.

The planner features:

- 7 days a week planning
- Split sections to plan your bursts
- Ideas for websites and revision materials
- Relaxation and other commitment boxes
- Blank clocks to **plan your time**



Day	Revision activity 1	Revision activity 2	Revision activity 3	Relaxation	Other commitments
Monday	20 minute revision burst	20 minute revision burst	20 minute revision burst		
Tuesday	20 minute revision burst	20 minute revision burst	20 minute revision burst		
Wednesday	20 minute revision burst	20 minute revision burst	20 minute revision burst		
Thursday	20 minute revision burst	20 minute revision burst	20 minute revision burst		
Friday	20 minute revision burst	20 minute revision burst	20 minute revision burst		
Saturday	20 minute revision burst	20 minute revision burst	20 minute revision burst		
Sunday	20 minute revision burst	20 minute revision burst	20 minute revision burst		



## Exam Questions

You will hear this phrase a lot in your GCSEs:

***'Read the question!'***



**This is because not all people do!**

*Highlighting clear information will ensure your answer matches the question and will leave you feeling confident that you have completed it correctly. Over for how to 'BUG' the question*



**BUG the question!**

*now...*

**BUG stands for.....**

**Box the command word**

**Underline the key words**

**Go back over the question**

This simple technique will help you to really and properly read and understand the question, and help you avoid making silly mistakes.

For example;

**'All types of renewable energy generation can create environmental challenges.'**

**To what extent do you agree with this statement? [6 marks]**

'To what extent' means the answer requires a balanced approach of for/against.





## 1. Flashcards

- *Using flashcards is a repetition strategy.*
- *They are a simple 'cue' on the front and an 'answer' on the back.*
- *Flashcards engage "active recall."*

### Why flashcards can help you learn

*They engage 'active recall' – this creates stronger connections for your memory to recall information.*

*They promote self-reflection – also known as **metacognition**, which firmly commits knowledge to your memory.*

**Metacognition** - When you make and use flashcards, you take control of your own learning. You must decide what to put on each card, how often you're going to use them, and then evaluate how well you know the information on each card.

*They can **help you memorise facts quickly.***

**Drilling**- flashcards help you to practice the same information over and over again - and as we know, practice makes perfect.

*You need to 'be smart' when making and using flashcards to make sure you are effective....*

### How you can make flashcards

1. Ensure that the flashcards have a **question or key term** on one side and the **answer or definition** on the other
  - The flashcard must work the memory.
  - If flashcards only contain notes, then no actual **remembering** will be happening.
2. Ensure the right questions and knowledge are on the cards.
3. Keep information as short as possible.
4. Write clearly. You should be able to read what you wrote at a very quick glance.
5. Use different **coloured cards or pens** to categorise your flashcards. For example, use a different colour for each subject or topic. This can help your brain to categorise information better.
6. Make your flashcards as soon as you've learnt the topic in class.

*Studies have found that it's more effective to **review a whole stack** of cards in one sitting.*

## Being smart when using flashcards

1. **Use Spaced repetition** - review your cards at specific, increasing intervals: for example, on Day 1, Day 2, Day 4, Day 8 and so on. Spaced repetition works because it activates your long-term memory, while leaving small breaks in between studying uses your short-term memory.
2. Make sure you have a **'thinking pause'** after picking the card up and reading the question, then turn it over to read the information.
3. Once you get an answer right using your flashcard – **DO NOT DISCARD IT!** You need to keep **repeating the question** even if you get it right multiple times – otherwise it will fall off your memory.
4. As well as retrieving your knowledge, **try writing the answer or definition in your own words and giving examples.** This will help your learning and recall.
5. **Try 'interleaving'.** Once you have several decks of flashcards for different subjects and topics, try mixing them up. This will test your knowledge across subjects in a single session. Make sure **you are confident** enough to do this every so often.

## Using a system to revise with flashcards.

The **Leitner system** is a well-known and very effective method of using flashcards. It's a form of **spaced repetition** that helps you study the cards you don't know more often than the cards you already know well.

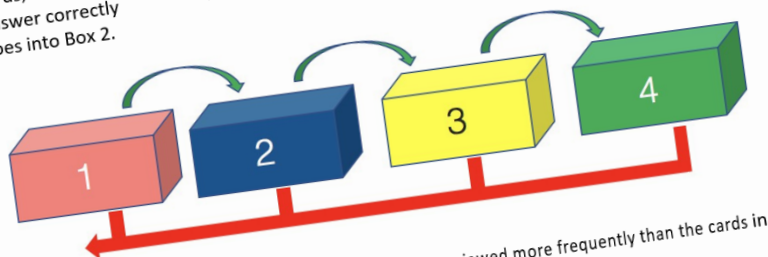
### Leitner System – The Method

All flash cards start off in Box/Stack 1. As you review the cards, each card you answer correctly goes into Box 2.

If you give the wrong answer the card stays in box 1.

When you review cards in Box 2, if you still get it right you move the card to box3 and so on until all cards are in Box 4.

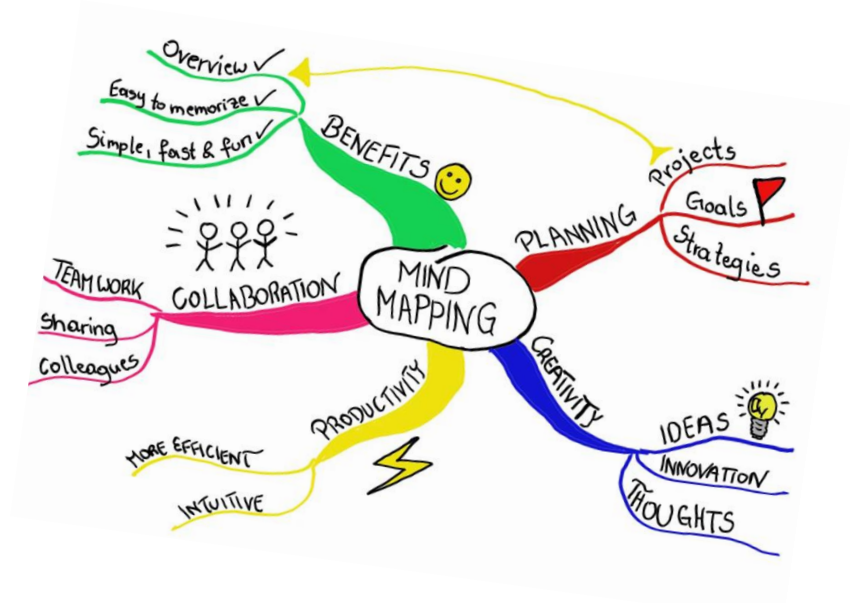
If you get a card wrong in any box, it goes back to Box 1.



- The key is that the cards you know less well are reviewed more frequently than the cards in the higher boxes.
- You now must choose the frequency at which you review each box.
- **For example** - Box 1: Every day, Box 2: Every 2 days, Box 3: Every 3 days, Box 4: Every 4 days



## 2. Mind-mapping



### Benefits of mind mapping:

Better memory and recall – scientific studies suggest a 10-15% increase in retention when using mind maps.

Better creativity – positive impact on your ability to be creative with your learning.

Better connections between concepts – helping to link topics within subjects together.

### How to create a **mind map**:

1. Start with a main topic word in the centre of the page – this could be a character from a book.
2. Branch out to subtopics (write all text on the lines you draw) – this could be key quotes or descriptions of the character.
3. Add additional information by adding more lines from the subtopics – this could be what the quote means or how the character relates to the book.
4. Add colour – highlight the topic word in one colour, subtopics in another, and finally highlight key words in a third colour.

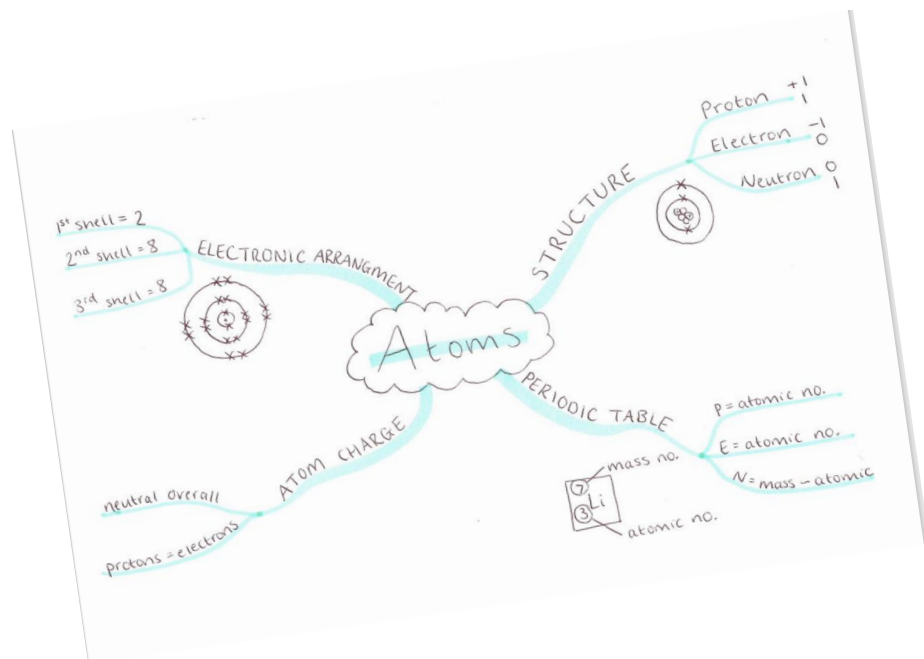
### Top tips:

- Keep it brief – do not overload the page with information. Just keywords to help you recall key topics – you can use **quizzing** and **practice** to deepen your knowledge.
- Use colour – your brain will associate different words with different colours, and also make it more interesting to look at.
- Add images – this will help you to remember more complex ideas more concisely than words will.

### How to use a **mind map**:

1. Create the **mind map** – take time and care to do this throughout year 11, at the end of topics or during revision lessons, and keep them safe in a folder.
2. Recap using the **mind map** – look over the mind map, specifically at the key words you have underlined and refresh your memory on the topic.
3. Recall the information from the **mind map** – once you have looked at the mind map, using a new piece of paper, try to recreate the mind map. Anything you didn't manage to write down is what you don't understand – use revision guides or other revision tools to refresh your knowledge before trying to recite the mind map again.

### Example of a **mind map** for science:



### 3. Quizzing

- Helps you to practice your existing knowledge
- Helps with concentration and focus
- Is a fun and engaging way to revise

Quizzing is the perfect way to help you with your 'retrieval practice', where recalling things from memory actually helps to strengthen retention of that knowledge.

### Our innate competitive nature

Quizzes are a fun way to engage in your learning and by their very nature, quizzes are competitive, they quickly share results and you can easily assess your progress and areas for further development.

### Repetition to support memory

Many students find repetition a really useful way to solidify their learning. In fact, this method has been shown to strengthen neurological pathways in the brain!

Each time the same content is learned, that pathway becomes stronger, and you will have less trouble retrieving this information when it comes to exam time.

By practising key facts and theories as a multiple choice answer, you will be retrieving knowledge through a more active and engaging approach to learning.

## Quizzes help you comprehend quickly

Quizzes can help you to comprehend more quickly and effectively. Reading is a common method of learning. However, reading followed by a quiz is far more beneficial. Training your mind to collect information guarantees that it is stored in your mind for future use. So, quizzes help to comprehend and recall information more quickly.

## Quizzing- Give it a go!

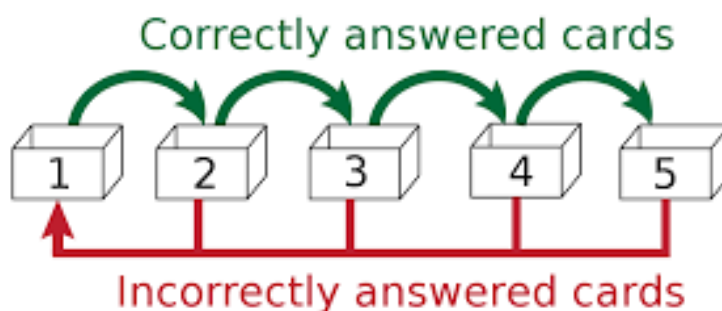
### The Leitner System (Spaced Repetition)

The Leitner System system uses a five-step process using your flashcards and a 'learning box.' The box is separated into five different compartments labelled 1-5. All your flashcards start in compartment one. When all the information is remembered from a card and you can answer questions about it, the card moves to the next compartment.

Each time a flashcard is answered correctly, you move it to the next compartment. Each time it is answered incorrectly it moves back to the beginning (i.e. compartment number one). This allows you to regularly quiz yourself on information that has not yet been embedded into your long-term memory.

There is no set time to leave between using each compartment. It can be flexible. One strategy could be to review the first compartment daily, with the second compartment being reviewed every other day, compartment three being reviewed every third day, compartment four once a week and compartment five once a fortnight.

The more you revisit material, the less likely you are to forget, and the longer you can leave it before revisiting it again.



Top tip:

Research revision quizzes online! There are plenty of revision sites on the revision planner!

## 4. Memory Palace

**WARNING-** you could look a bit odd! But... who cares?!

- **Memory Palace** is a strategy for memory enhancement, which uses visualisations of familiar spatial environments in order to enhance the recall of information.
- It is also known as the memory journey, journey method, memory spaces, or mind palace technique.
- Many memory contest champions report using this technique to recall faces, digits, and lists of words.

**Try it out:**

1. pick a familiar place (classroom, bedroom, garden, kitchen)
2. select a topic to revise (poetry, maths process, historical facts)
3. begin labelling key facts onto objects and areas of your familiar place (e.g sink=H2O)
4. walk your place and sound out aloud what you have just done
5. In another place, try to remember the **memory palace** you have created





2. **\*\*Improved Retention\*\***: By using mnemonic techniques, you can retain information for longer periods and retrieve it more easily when needed.
3. **\*\*Efficient Recall\*\***: Mnemonics allow you to recall information quickly and accurately, saving time and effort in studying or recalling facts.

### Types of Mnemonic Techniques

1. **\*\*Acronyms\*\***: Create a word or phrase by using the first letters of the information you want to remember. For example, "ROY G. BIV" represents the colors of the rainbow (Red, Orange, Yellow, Green, Blue, Indigo, Violet).
2. **\*\*Acrostics\*\***: Form a sentence or phrase where the first letter of each word represents the information. For instance, "Every Good Boy Does Fine" helps remember the musical notes on the lines of the treble clef (E, G, B, D, F).
3. **\*\*Visualization\*\***: Create vivid mental images that associate the information with a visual scene or a familiar object. For example, to remember a shopping list containing milk, bread, and eggs, you might imagine a cow jumping over a loaf of bread while juggling eggs.
4. **\*\*Chunking\*\***: Grouping information into smaller, meaningful chunks makes it easier to remember. For instance, instead of remembering a long number like 458973215, you can break it down into smaller groups like 458, 973, and 215.

## Examples of Mnemonics

### 1. To remember the order of the planets from the Sun: (science)

Mnemonic for the Planets

My	→	Mercury
Very	→	Venus
Educated	→	Earth
Mother	→	Mars
Just	→	Jupiter
Served	→	Saturn
Us	→	Uranus
Nine	→	Neptune
Pizzas	→	Pluto

artofmemory.com

### 2. Order of Operations (Mathematics)

Mnemonic: PEMDAS

Explanation: Helps remember the order in which mathematical operations should be performed: Parentheses, Exponents, Multiplication, Division, Addition, Subtraction.

Please	-	Parentheses - ()
Excuse	-	Exponent - a <sup>n</sup>
My	-	Multiplication - x
Dear	-	Division - ÷
Aunt	-	Addition - +
Sally	-	Subtraction - -

### 3. Remembering the colours of the rainbow: (science)

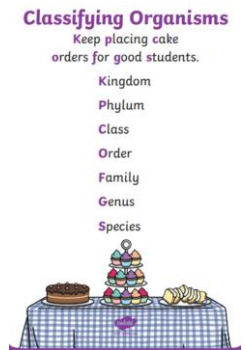
Richard		Red
Of		Orange
York		Yellow
Gave		Green
Battle		Blue

## Kingdoms in Biological Classification (Biology):

*Explanation: Helps remember the hierarchy of the biological classification system: Kingdom, Phylum, Class, Order, Family, Genus, Species.*

### **\*\*Tips for Effective Mnemonic Use\*\***

- *Make your mnemonics personal and meaningful to you.*
- *Use vivid imagery and imagination to create mental associations.*
- *Practice recalling information using mnemonics regularly to reinforce memory.*
- *Keep your mnemonics simple and easy to remember.*



***By incorporating mnemonics into your learning and daily life, you can unlock the power of your memory. Whether it's studying for exams, remembering important details, or simply impressing your friends with your knowledge, mnemonics are the key to unleashing your memory potential!***

## **6. Practise** (makes perfect)

***Exam practise and timings are not always easy in 20 minute bursts, however, there are some things that you can do to REALLY help your performance in exams***

### **1) Highlighting**

One technique is to spend 20 minutes **highlighting** a previous exam practice that you have done. You could, for example, go back through a question from one of your year 10 exams. Highlight in one colour the ideas you had that really helped to answer the question, and use another colour to highlight the bits that need improving.

### **2) Blurring**

In 20 minutes you might not have time to write a whole English Literature essay. However, what you can do is use the 'blurring' technique to practise writing essays. Find an example of a GOOD essay or exam answer (from your teacher, from a revision guide, from the internet etc). Read the first paragraph through a few times, and then, without looking at it again, try to write it out from memory

### 3) 10 markers

*In 20 minutes you **SHOULD** be able to respond to a 10 mark question in any subject area. Set a **timer** on your phone, read the question carefully and then focus for the full amount of time*

### 4) Planning

*Again, you might not be able to write a full answer in 20 minutes for the higher tariff questions on exam papers, but you **CAN plan** those responses in that amount of time. Using a mark scheme or success criteria, plan **IN DETAIL** what you would write about. Think about introductions and conclusions; key vocabulary and terminology as well as any references you need...*

*...Of course, you can then go ahead and write the full response. 😊*

# Revision ⌚ POWER HOUR



STEP

01

Choose a past  
paper question

Google your subject,  
level and exam board  
e.g. "Geography A-Level  
Past Papers AQA"

STEP

02

Revise

Spend 20 minutes  
revising what you need  
to know to answer your  
chosen question



STEP

03

Do the question

Set a timer for 20  
minutes and answer the  
past paper question you  
chose



STEP

04

Mark your answer

Using the mark scheme  
for the past paper mark  
your answer. This will  
help you to think like an  
examiner






STEP




05

Get feedback

Show your teacher your  
work. Ask them whether  
your marking is accurate  
and how you could  
improve your answers



Day	Revision activity 1 	Revision activity 2 	Revision activity 3 	Relaxation activity	Other commitments
Monday	GC/ SUPER & OTHER/ 20 MINUTE BURST	GC/ SUPER & OTHER/ 20 MINUTE BURST	GC/ SUPER & OTHER/ 20 MINUTE BURST		
Tuesday	GC/ SUPER & OTHER/ 20 MINUTE BURST	GC/ SUPER & OTHER/ 20 MINUTE BURST	GC/ SUPER & OTHER/ 20 MINUTE BURST		
Wednesday	GC/ SUPER & OTHER/ 20 MINUTE BURST	GC/ SUPER & OTHER/ 20 MINUTE BURST	GC/ SUPER & OTHER/ 20 MINUTE BURST		
Thursday	GC/ SUPER & OTHER/ 20 MINUTE BURST	GC/ SUPER & OTHER/ 20 MINUTE BURST	GC/ SUPER & OTHER/ 20 MINUTE BURST		
Friday	GC/ SUPER & OTHER/ 20 MINUTE BURST	GC/ SUPER & OTHER/ 20 MINUTE BURST	GC/ SUPER & OTHER/ 20 MINUTE BURST		
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## **Resources and Equipment**

Being prepared starts weeks or months before your exam. Leaving it till the last minute can cause heightened anxiety and panic. It is YOUR own responsibility to get prepared for YOUR exams. Being prepared is about giving yourself the best chance to do YOUR best



***Do you know what your exam covers? How many papers? Topics in the paper?  
How long is your exam? How many marks? When and where will it be?***

**Do you have the resources you need? Revision guides? Workbooks? Do you know which websites to use? Do you know logins you might need? Do you have your folder or exercise book? Flashcards? Paper for mind maps?**

***Do you know what equipment you need for the exam? Black Pen? Pencil? Ruler? Calculator? Coloured pens? Maths set? Is it all together in a pencil case or bag? Water bottle? Tissues?***

## **Effective study spaces**

### **Find a room with a door**

Sometimes this won't be possible, but having somewhere you can shut out the world is much better than being on the end of the kitchen table. **And while we're at it – turn off your phone!**

### **Only use it for studying**

If you study in bed, you'll end up obsessing about your assignment when you're trying to sleep – or maybe falling asleep in the middle of a study session! Keeping a bit of separation between your study and the rest of your life is essential for a good work-life balance.

### **Start with a tidy desk or table**

Sitting upright helps to keep you alert. Plus, you'll find it easier to see your screen, take notes and browse through any notes you've already taken.

## Get comfy

But not too comfy! Before you start, always make sure it's set up correctly by checking your posture online.

Try to get dressed before you start studying, to mark out that it's study time not chill time – but there's no need to put a suit on – unless it helps get your brain revving up.



## Check your lighting

Natural light is best – but not if it's glaring directly onto your computer screen! If you can't get natural light, make sure you get a decent lamp in your room – working somewhere too dark is more likely to give you a headache.

## Keep pens and paper handy

Even if you prefer to take notes on a computer, keep a notepad and some pens nearby in case you need to jot something down in a hurry.

## Think about the acoustics

Some people work best with music playing, but if that affect your concentration too much, why not try ambient sounds. Have a search online – there are tons of different options including rain, nature sounds and white noise. Experiment to see what works best for you.

