

MATH 65 LAB No. 1 LEARNING STYLES AND STUDY SKILLS

MATHEMATICS STUDY TIPS

Your success in your math course depends on how you study. If you follow the good practices outlined below, your success in mathematics will improve. As the semester progresses, try to incorporate these study tips into your daily plan.

Study outside of class regularly

- Work on your math homework or study your math for at least 30 minutes every day.
- Study your math **at least** 2 hours for each hour in the classroom.
- Try to study when you are fresh and alert.
- Find a place to study where you will not be distracted

Read the textbook.

- Take notes on your reading. If there is something you do not understand, make a note of it and get help with your questions at the earliest opportunity.
- More tips on using the textbook can be found at the Mission College Math Study Skills website.

Take good notes in class.

- Try to write down everything the instructor writes on the board, especially examples and summaries.
- More tips on notetaking can be found at the Mission College Math Study Skills website.

Make summary sheets.

- For each section in the text, make a list of important
 - theorems and rules
 - properties and formulas
 - vocabulary words
 - course objectives
- Review these lists every day

Practise all problems until you have mastered the ability to solve and check them.

Be aware

- of what topics you know well
- which topics need more practice
- which topics you don't know at all.

Continually review:

- Review material from the beginning of the semester throughout the entire semester.

Do your math homework first, before your other subjects.

- You will be working when your mind is sharpest.
- You have time to get help on problems that you have no idea about.
- Don't spin your wheels. If you get stuck on a problem, make a note of it and move on. You may find that if you revisit it later, you will be able to figure it out. If not, seek help as soon as possible.

Take breaks.

- After a period of concentration, take a break for relaxation or to work on other subjects.
- Return to problems that you could not complete previously.

Utilize campus resources: There are many places to get help with study skills and math problems.

- Your instructor's office hours
- The Open Math Lab in the Integrated Learning Center, building 1200.
- The Tutorial Center, building 1000.
- Counseling (individual counseling or college study skills classes).

Managing Your Time Fitting Math Into a Busy Schedule

Reasons for Practicing Time Management

- When freshman college students are asked to give their number one reason for poor grades, they indicate that they do not have enough time to study.
- Keeping track of, and scheduling, your study time will make it more likely that you spend an adequate amount of time studying.
- Educational psychologists have found that the best time to study math is right after your math course.
- You might lose up to 50% of the information learned in a math class by the next day. For this reason, it is very important that you schedule some study time every day.
- By scheduling your time, you can make more efficient use of the time you have.
- Your brain appreciates some order. It enjoys a little routine.

- Your brain functions better when you are calm. Too much rushing around at the last minute to get your homework and studying done sends hostile chemicals to your brain and makes it more difficult for you to learn and remember.

How to Develop a Study Schedule

- **Read the syllabus for each class.** Know the teacher's policies regarding attendance, late homework and make-up tests. Keep the syllabus in your notebook.
- **Make a semester calendar.** Put test dates and major due dates for all your classes on the same calendar. That way you will see which weeks are the really busy ones. Try using a different color pen for each class. Your brain responds well to the use of color.
- **Make a weekly schedule.** After you fill in your classes and other regular responsibilities, block off some study periods during the day that you can guarantee you will use for studying.
- **Make "To do" lists.** Use them. Cross off tasks as you complete. You might want to prioritize your list.
- **Break big assignments into smaller chunks.** They won't seem so big that way. Make deadlines for each small part so you stay on schedule. Reward yourself when you finish a chunk.
- **Give yourself some breaks in your studying.** Do not try to study for hours at a time! Your brain needs rest between periods of learning.
- **Schedule time to get help.** Know when your instructor's office hours are. Look at the hours available in the tutoring center or Open Math Lab and try to schedule some of your study time at the same time these resources are available.

Using Your Study Schedule

- **If you get off schedule, just try to get back on schedule tomorrow.** We can not plan for all eventualities. Try not to let unexpected events overwhelm you. Get back on track as soon as you can.
- **Make adjustments, if needed.** After creating your schedule, keep a daily log of your activities and compare it to your ideal. If you are not following your schedule, make adjustments and try to stick to the new schedule. Do not reduce study time (try to increase it). And keep in mind, if you change your schedule every week, then it is not a schedule.