

10 Steps

To Create the Perfect Revision Space

1. Get Rid of the Clutter

Having an untidy desk and room will make it harder to find things, stress you out and present an easy way to procrastinate. Your first priority when setting up a study space should be to get everything as organised as you possibly can.

2. Keep Distractions Away

What are the things that most commonly distract you from work? Write down your answers to this question and then make sure none of them are anywhere near the area where you're going to be revising. Television, computers and phones are the obvious ones to avoid.

3. Get comfy

No-one wants to be spending hours every day in a space that isn't actually comfortable. While it's not advisable to do your revision in bed, you should definitely be working somewhere that's comfy enough for you to get absorbed in your work.

4. Let There Be Light

Lighting is one of the most important things to a room's mood and you should try and find the right level for you. Make it too dark and you'll be straining to read your notes and tiring yourself out. However lights that are too bright can leave you feeling overstimulated and may contribute to headaches or stress. Try and get as much natural light as possible to minimise these negative effects.

5. Set the Noise Levels

How your revision space sounds is just as important as how it looks. Some people will find that they need background noise to get any work done while others will benefit from perfect silence. Whatever your preference, you should try and find a place where the noise will be consistent and suited to your tastes.

6. Personalise It

If you're going to be spending hours every day in one place, you should definitely add some personal touches to it. Leave some photos or items of personal significance close by to help keep you grounded and inject some colour to boost your mood. It should be your zone- do whatever will improve it for you!

7. Make it Easy to Manage Your Time

A clock should be easily visible from where you are sitting, ideally an easy-to-read digital one and not a smartphone (otherwise you may be unable to check the time without checking your Snapchat as well). It is also good to keep a revision schedule close by so you always know what you should be doing and how long you should be spending on it.

8. Get Your Supplies Ready

Your revision will be broken up constantly if you keep getting up to find the stationary and snacks you need to keep your work flowing. Ensure that you have everything you will require on a regular basis close to hand and you'll save yourself time and energy that is better spent studying or taking a proper break.

9. Maintain it

Setting up your dream study space is only half the battle. It's vital that over the days and weeks you don't allow it to become messy and disorganised.

Don't leave out books or work that you don't need urgently and dedicate five minutes every morning to cleaning up the room you'll be working in.

10. Remember: There Are More Important Things

It's easy to convince yourself that you're being really productive when you're creating a study space but it can sometimes become a form of procrastination itself. Remember that the most important thing about having an area to revise in is that you actually do some revision. If you find yourself organising your post-it notes for the fifth time in an hour, you might not be getting the best use out of your time.





How to Take a Study Break

There's more to effective revision than simply reading through textbooks for hours. It's essential that you put as much effort into your resting as you do into your working. Use these tips to make sure you have the most energising study breaks that you possibly can.

Get Active

It's pretty difficult to get away from sitting down when you're revising. Unfortunately, being hunched over a desk or laptop can be really unhealthy in both the short and long term. The best way to counteract this is to build little bits of activity into your schedule. Use your breaks to stand up, stretch and walk around. You'll be amazed at how much it can do to make you feel positive.

Get Away From Your Workspace

If you spend both your working hours and your breaks sitting at a laptop, the two can start to blur into one. The best way to avoid this is to get away from your study zone. Find a reason to go into another room or just go for a quick walk. This will give you a quick hit of exercise and will help you keep your relaxing separate from your work (and therefore more enjoyable!).

Have Something to Eat and Drink

It's crucial that you keep yourself well fed and hydrated when you're working. Your body and brain need energy to maintain your focus and forgetting this is the quickest way to find your mind wandering. Eat and drink the right things to keep yourself topped up and focused for longer periods.

Avoid Napping

It can be tempting to turn a study break into a sleeping session, especially after a long day of revision. However it's important that you try and resist this urge! A nap can leave you feeling groggy for the rest of the day or stop you sleeping properly at night, meaning you'll only need more sleep the next day. Even worse, you

might oversleep and lose hours for a break that was supposed to only take half an hour.

Get Human Contact

If you're revising by yourself it's very easy to feel cut off from everyone else. It's not good for your mental health to be isolated from the rest of the world for such long periods of time so try and get as much human contact as you can into your day. A face-to-face conversation is best but a phone call or a bit of time on your group chat can do the job as well. Even a quick trip to the shops can be a great way of making you feel part of the normal world again.

Stick to Your Schedule

Whether you prefer your time out little and often or need long pauses to refresh yourself, make sure you know how long your break will last when you start it. There's nothing more damaging to your schedule than a 10 minute pause that turns into an entire afternoon of time off. Allow yourself the time you need but resist the urge to treat yourself to "just one more minute"- you'll be able to enjoy your breaks more if you aren't feeling guilty about the work you said you'd be doing at that time.

Do Something You Enjoy

You know better than anyone else what to do to make you feel restored. While some sites may tell you to avoid Facebook or playing videogames for the duration of your day, you may find it easier in the long term to treat yourself rather than resisting the things you enjoy all the time and feeling more stressed as a result. If you can keep it in moderation, don't worry too much about how you spend your downtime.

Don't Be Too Hard On Yourself

No-one would deny that revising day after day is tough. It's natural to sometimes get distracted or take a little more time off than you intended to. The most important thing to do when this happens is to not stress about it and try not to let it affect your overall revision plan.

What to Eat and Drink When You're Revising

To maximise your potential when you're revising, you need to think about what you're eating and drinking. Some things you should consume regularly to keep yourself feeling focused while others may knock your productivity if you have them often but are perfect as an occasional treat.



Regularly

Water

Drinking water frequently will keep you hydrated and help your body function. Keep a bottle near you while you work to keep yourself topped up.

Fruit and Veg

They've got their healthy reputation for a reason. Fruit and vegetables are just full of stuff that's really good for your body. Find a few that you like and try to work them into your diet regularly.

Fish

Fish is a bit of a superfood. It is high in protein and Omega 3 with none of the negative side effects that can come with meat. This makes it the perfect choice for a post revision dinner.

Eggs

As well as being versatile and delicious, eggs are high in protein, vitamins and minerals. They're a really good choice for an energising breakfast to help you start your day.

Nuts

Looking for something to snack on that won't leave you craving more? Nuts (or nut butters) may be the solution. They're indulgent enough to make you feel like you're treating yourself but have numerous health benefits.

Occasionally

Sugary treats

Foods that are high in sugar such as chocolate and sweets can be tempting as a quick and tasty energy boost. However, the sugar rush will only be temporary and may leave you feeling tired and restless afterwards.

Fast Food

The scientific evidence against fast food is overwhelming. It won't provide any of the nutrients your body needs and will often just leave you craving more unhealthy food. Think of takeaways and burgers as an occasional reward to be worked towards rather than a regular way to get your meals.

Coffee

In small doses, coffee is a great accompaniment to studying. It can boost your concentration, wake you up in the morning, or just be a little luxury to brighten your day. However too much of it can make you restless, ruin your sleep pattern and prevent you from getting any meaningful work done.

Snacks

Even if you snack healthily, it's important not to overdo it. If you find yourself eating little and often instead of a few big meals a day, you'll find it harder to eat well and keep a regular routine.

Alcohol

Unsurprisingly, alcohol and revision do not go well together. Try and avoid it entirely for the duration of the exam period to avoid the headaches, tiredness and other side effects that it can cause.

The Best Organisations to Help Your Health During Exams

Revision is stressful for everyone and can bring on a number of health issues, both mental and physical. If you are feeling stressed, don't suffer in silence. If you're struggling with your feelings, these organisations can help. This article is an excerpt from a magazine written by young people for young people inspired by YoungMinds Vs Stress at University. You can download it at www.youngminds.org.uk/assets/0002/7042/Uni_Zine.pdf

youngminds.org.uk

YoungMinds is the UK's leading charity committed to improving the emotional wellbeing and mental health of children and young people. They run YoungMinds Vs, a mass movement of young people campaigning about bullying, access to counselling, early sexualisation and school and university stress.

Your GP

If you're struggling to cope, a good first step is to talk to your GP. It can help to write down what you've been going through before your visit.

studentminds.org.uk

Student Minds is the UK's student mental health charity, giving students the skills, knowledge and confidence to talk about their mental health and look out for their peers.

getconnected.org.uk / 0808 808 4994

The Mix (previously Get Connected) offer a free, confidential telephone and email helpline finding young people the best help whatever the problem.

samaritans.org / 116 123

Samaritans volunteers listen in confidence to anyone in any type of emotional distress, without judging or telling people what to do.

talktofrank.com / 0800 77 66 00

Confidential information and advice for anyone concerned about their own or someone else's drug or solvent misuse.

stonewall.org.uk

Use Stonewall's area database to find local lesbian, gay, and bisexual community groups, other generic services and gay friendly solicitors.

headmeds.org.uk

Straight talk on mental health medication. Look up your medication to find out about side effects and things you might not feel comfortable asking your GP about.

B-EAT youthline 0845 634 7650 / Fyp@b-eat.co.uk

Information, help and support for anyone affected by eating disorders.

thesite.org.uk

An online guide to life for 16 to 25 year-olds. It provides non-judgmental support and information on everything from sex and exam stress to debt and drugs.

youthaccess.org.uk

Youth Access is a national membership organisation for youth information, advice and counselling agencies. Provides information on youth agencies to people aged 11-25.

In an emergency

If you're about to harm yourself or have already done so, phone 999 or go to A&E and explain that you're at risk.