

Study Tips

NINTH EDITION

Hello and welcome back to our newsletter!

Most of us are approaching the end of the semester and that implies that final exams are just around the corner and additional effort is required to complete the remaining coursework and assignments.

We have been through many ups and downs during the semester, however, the most important thing is that your persistence and diligence have got you this far, and that is nothing short of commendable!

In this edition of our newsletter, MASCA hopes to share some unique and unconventional studying and examination strategies that you might choose to implement in your educational journey.

FORTUNE FAVOURS THE PREPARED

"If you know the enemy and know yourself, you need not fear the result of a hundred battles."

-Sun Tzu, The Art of War

Before each semester begins, you should **have an idea of your workload** for every unit of study you have enrolled in. It is likely that your university provides unit outlines for each subject which outlines the deadlines, important dates and weekly course content. **Search up and take note** of these deadlines and dates, and record them on a monthly calendar that is easily viewable and readable. When the semester begins, use that **monthly calendar** to keep track of your weekly tasks, this can ensure that you do not feel surprised when coursework is assigned.

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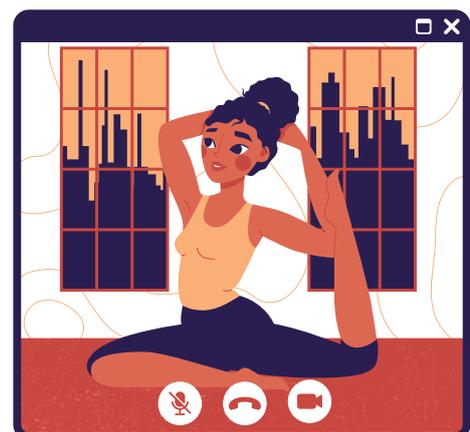
WORK HARD, PLAY HARD, BUT NEVER SIMULTANEOUSLY

Boundaries between work and play must be as clear as day.

When studying, **minimize every little distraction** that impedes your focus. This includes putting your phone away/on silent and closing Facebook/Instagram tabs. Distractions negatively impact your focus and hurt your ability to retain information. Allow yourself to concentrate solely on the task at hand. You only have to do these for about an hour before taking a short break (about ten minutes). These **short concentration bursts allow you to maximize information retention** in a short amount of time and hence saving more time in the long run.

Conversely, when engaging in leisure activities, immerse fully in the activity and refrain from thinking about work, this ensures that you have a whale of a time and that your mind can **fully refresh and reset** before the next study session.

By half-heartedly studying and playing or multitasking between them, you do not maximize your immersion in these activities and hence gain little value from the time spent doing them.



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PROCRASTINATION IS INEVITABLE BUT MANAGEABLE

It is **natural** for all of us to procrastinate, certain tasks can be boring or intimidating. The key is to learn to manage procrastination in a gradual manner.

One helpful tip is to keep a **daily work progress journal**. Every morning or the night before, note that the things that you aim to accomplish, they must not be too general or specific and realistic enough to be achieved within a day. By the end of the day, if you have yet to accomplish it, give reasons (not excuses) for why that is so. This induces guilt that prompt us to work harder to catch up with the work that we fall behind.

There will be some challenging days in university. For procrastinators, that is the day before an exam or an assignment is due, but they are forced into that challenging situation by the deadline. You must **plan for these challenging days ahead of time**. For example, if you have an exam next week, you can plan for a tough day of studying a week before and study as if the exam is to be held tomorrow. By doing so, you space out the tough days and shift them to a schedule of your choosing instead of being externally forced into a difficult situation.



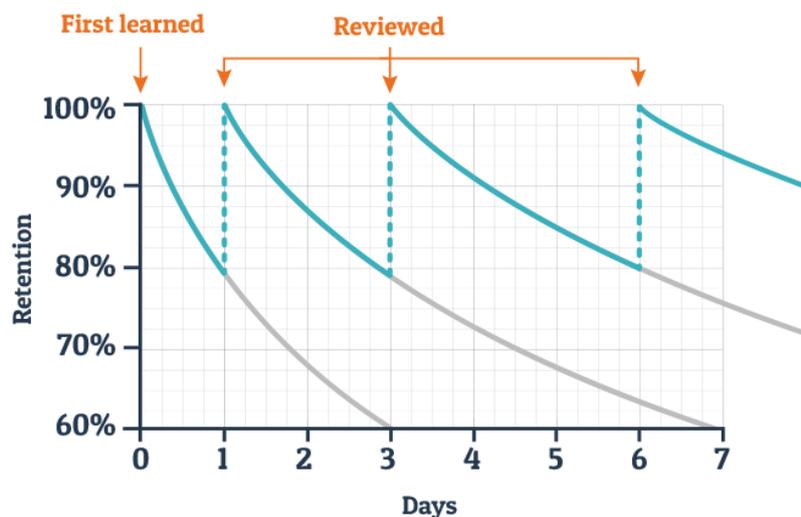
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THE FORGETTING CURVE

We should keep in mind the forgetting curve, it shows the **decline of memory retention with time**. When we learn and remember a concept for the first time, our memory of that information drops off sharply, however, as it is occasionally revisited and reinforced for multiple times, the rate of decline of the information decreases.

With that in mind, to optimise information retention, it is best to **practice spaced repetition** instead of cramming all bits of information in a single session. For example, it much better to do two math questions every two days for a period of 10 days than it is to do all 10 questions in a single day.



MASCA hopes that these points are able to assist you in performing better academically. Thank you for reading our newsletter and good luck in your exams and assignments!

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