

STUDYING IN GROUPS

Strategies

It can often be difficult to find the motivation to study, and we all know how dangerous procrastination can be. Having a study group can act as a motivator that gets us into a studying mindset — you know that at a particular time each week you're meeting up with the group to go over material, and this can get you out of the rut of solitary studying. In addition, your group members will be relying on you to come to each study session prepared, and you won't want to let them down. This accountability factor is another important benefit to studying in groups. Your classmates will have different interpretations and understandings of the material that you've been learning, and seeing this new insight can often help you to understand a concept more clearly than you would if you only had your own perspective to work with.

Teaching others is one of the best ways to learn and understand new material, and your study group will allow you this opportunity. As well, you may feel more comfortable in this smaller group to ask the questions that you may not have felt comfortable asking during class—study groups are a great way to clarify your understanding. And studying with your friends and classmates can be far more enjoyable than studying on your own all the time, so these study groups will allow you to inject a social aspect to your learning.

1. Create a plan

- What are you studying? Which chapters, subjects, etc.?
- What sort of questions are you studying for? Essay? Multiple Choice? Etc. Change your study strategy accordingly.
- Where are you studying? Make sure the entire group is happy with the noise level of your location.

2. Trust the participants

- Group with students who you know will study with you. Don't get distracted by people who just want to talk all the time.

3. Stay on track/Facilitators

- Though momentary distractions can lighten the mood, remember to keep focused. If your group is having trouble staying on the task, try assigning a group facilitator to facilitate the discussion.

4. Studying Steps

- Preview/Question
 - What do you have to look at? What questions do you need answered? Look at the information you want to cover and quickly write down any questions which come to mind.
- Divide and Conquer
 - Separate the work among the group. This can mean everyone reading a different section of the textbook for 10 minutes, or each member having to discuss that topic based off their notes.
 - Present to Group
 - Take the information you learnt and present it back to the group in your own words. Not only will this help you in coming up with the words needed to answer your questions, just as you would on the test, but by teaching the subject to others it will be easier to remember.
- Ask Questions
 - Don't know the answer? Refer back to your discussion, textbook or notes.

- Summarize and recite. What did you learn?
 - This is a key step while studying. Reviewing what you covered and learnt increases memory retention and confirms that the information was processed.