COMMUNITY OF *CARE*

STUDY METHODS GUIDE

Study smarter by practicing how you retrieve, apply, and explain what you know.

Name	
Course	
What am I studying for?	

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Which Study Method Should I Use?

Check what you need most right now. Then try the suggested method instead of defaulting to rereading.

I NEED TO...	TRY...
Remember facts, terms, steps	**Active Recall • Spaced Repetition • Flashcards**
Prepare for an exam	**Practice Questions • Active Recall • Spaced Repetition**
Understand a difficult concept	**Feynman • Teach It to Someone • Concept Mapping**
Apply knowledge to situations	**Clinical Cases / Case Studies • Practice Questions**
Organize lecture notes	**Active Recall**
Read a dense chapter	**SQ3R • Active Recall**
Stop cramming	**Spaced Repetition • Pomodoro**
Find what I don't actually know	**Page Dump • Active Recall**
Learn frameworks or conditions	**Scripts • Clinical Cases**
Choose among problem types	**Interleaving • Practice Questions**
Get started when I feel overwhelmed	**Pomodoro • Page Dump**

Build a Study Session

1. Pick ONE specific target.

2. Choose a method that matches the target.

3. Study without your notes for part of the session.

4. Check your work and identify gaps.

5. Decide when you will retrieve the information again.

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Active Recall

Best for: remembering facts, concepts, vocabulary, processes, and course content.

How to Do It

1. Choose a small topic or section.
2. Close your notes, book, and slides.
3. Say everything you can remember.
4. Open your materials and check your answer.
5. Mark what you missed or explained incorrectly.
6. Try again later without looking.

TRY IT NOW
Try it: Pick one concept. Explain it from memory in 3-5 sentences.

Spaced Repetition

Best for: material you need to remember for more than a few days.

How to Do It

1. Study the material once.
2. Review it again after a short interval.
3. If you remember it well, wait longer before the next review.
4. If you struggle, review it sooner.
5. Keep revisiting older material while learning new material.

TRY IT NOW
Try it: Choose one topic and schedule four reviews: today, in 1-2 days, later this week, and next week.

Practice Questions

Best for: exams, application-based courses, and learning how instructors ask questions.

How to Do It

1. Use questions early - do not wait until you feel 'ready.'
2. Answer without using notes whenever possible.
3. Check your answer and identify why you were right or wrong.
4. For missed questions, write the concept you need to review.
5. Redo missed questions later.
6. Use previous tests or quizzes when your instructor permits it.

TRY IT NOW
Try it: Complete 5-10 questions, then sort your misses by topic instead of only counting your score.

Clinical Cases / Case Studies

Best for: connecting knowledge to realistic situations and practicing decision-making.

How to Do It

1. Read the case once without trying to solve everything.
2. Identify the important information and what you still need to know.
3. Ask: What would this patient/client/situation look like?
4. Ask: What information, test, resource, or action would I consider?
5. Decide what you would do next and explain why.
6. Compare your reasoning with course materials or instructor guidance.

TRY IT NOW
Try it: Take one concept and invent a short realistic case where you would need to recognize or apply it.

Scripts

Best for: topics that require you to work through the same categories of information repeatedly.

How to Do It

1. Choose a consistent set of questions for the type of concept you are studying.
2. Use the same framework every time.
3. Fill in the framework from memory first.
4. Check your notes for missing pieces.
5. Practice until the framework becomes automatic.

TRY IT NOW
Example script: What is it? -> What causes it? -> What does it look like? -> How is it identified? -> What do I do next? -> What should I watch for?

Page Dump

Best for: finding gaps in what you think you know.

How to Do It

1. Choose ONE topic.
2. Put away all notes and course materials.
3. Dump everything you know about the topic onto a blank page.
4. Do not worry about organization or making it pretty.
5. Compare your page with your notes.
6. Highlight or list what was missing, incomplete, or incorrect. Even better if you can use a different color.
7. Study those gaps, then do another page dump later.

TRY IT NOW
The goal is retrieval, not a perfect page. The more often you practice pulling information from memory, the easier retrieval can become.

Pomodoro Method

BEST FOR: Starting work, maintaining focus, and breaking a long task into manageable sessions.

How to Do It

1. Choose one specific task.

2. Set a timer for 25 minutes.

3. Work only on that task until the timer ends.

4. Take a 5-minute break.

5. Repeat for up to four rounds.

6. After four rounds, take a longer 15-30 minute break.

7. Adjust the work interval if a different length helps you focus better.

TRY IT NOW
Choose one task and complete one 25-minute focus round.

Feynman Technique

BEST FOR: Checking whether you truly understand a difficult concept.

How to Do It

1. Choose one concept.

2. Explain it in simple language as if teaching someone new to the topic.

3. Notice where your explanation becomes vague, overly technical, or stops.

4. Return to your materials and relearn those gaps.

5. Explain it again using simpler, clearer language.

6. Use an example or analogy if it helps.

TRY IT NOW
Explain a concept without using course-specific jargon. Could a beginner follow you?

SQ3R

BEST FOR: Reading textbooks and dense course material actively.

How to Do It

1. Survey: scan headings, learning objectives, figures, summaries, and key terms.

2. Question: turn headings into questions you expect the section to answer.

3. Read: read actively to answer those questions.

4. Recite: close the book and explain the main ideas from memory.

5. Review: revisit your questions, notes, and difficult sections later.

TRY IT NOW
Use SQ3R on one short textbook section instead of reading it straight through.

Concept Mapping

BEST FOR: Seeing relationships among ideas instead of memorizing isolated facts.

How to Do It

1. Write the main concept in the center or at the top.

2. Add major related ideas around it.

3. Connect related ideas with lines or arrows.

4. Label the connections with words that explain the relationship.

5. Add examples, causes, effects, steps, or contrasts.

6. Check your materials and add relationships you missed.

TRY IT NOW
Map one topic using at least five concepts and label every connection.

Interleaving

BEST FOR: Learning to choose between different strategies, problem types, or concepts.

How to Do It

1. Choose 2-4 related topics or problem types.

2. Mix them within the same study session instead of completing a large block of one type.

3. Before solving or answering, identify what kind of problem/concept you are seeing.

4. Choose the strategy you think fits.

5. Check both your answer and your choice of strategy.

6. Continue rotating among the topics.

TRY IT NOW
Instead of doing 15 identical problems, mix three problem types and identify the type before solving.

Flashcards

BEST FOR: Practicing quick retrieval of facts, terms, images, formulas, or short concepts.

How to Do It

1. Put one clear question or prompt on the front.

2. Put one concise answer on the back.

3. Avoid copying entire paragraphs.

4. Try to answer before flipping the card.

5. Separate cards you know from cards that need more practice.

6. Shuffle cards and revisit difficult ones more often.

7. Periodically remove mastered cards and bring them back later.

TRY IT NOW
Rewrite three weak flashcards as questions that require you to retrieve an answer.

Teach It to Someone

BEST FOR: Testing understanding through explanation and follow-up questions.

How to Do It

1. Choose a topic you believe you understand.

2. Teach it aloud without reading your notes.

3. Use examples and explain why, not only what.

4. Have the listener ask questions - or imagine likely questions.

5. Notice where you cannot explain clearly.

6. Review those gaps and teach the topic again.

TRY IT NOW
Teach one concept aloud for two minutes. Where did you hesitate?

Active Recall / Feynman Practice

Topic or concept:

Explain it WITHOUT notes as if teaching a beginner.

Now check your materials. What was missing or unclear?

Explain it again in simpler language:

Spaced Repetition Planner

Topic:

_____

_____

_____

Dates for Reviews:

Review 1: _____ Review 2: _____ Review 3: _____ Review 4: _____

What did I remember easily?

_____

_____

_____

What needs a shorter review interval?

_____

_____

_____

Practice Question Error Log

Question / topic:

Why did I miss it? Knowledge gap / misread / strategy / calculation / other

What is the correct reasoning?

When will I retry this question?

Clinical Case / Script Builder

Topic / condition / concept:

The case:

What information would I need or what would I assess/order?

What would I do next? Why?

Pomodoro Focus Plan

Task:

_____

_____

_____

My 25-minute target:

_____

_____

_____

What could distract me, and where will I put it?

_____

_____

_____

After the round: What did I finish? What is next?

_____

_____

_____

SQ3R Reading Sheet

Chapter / section:

SURVEY: What do I notice before reading?

QUESTION: What do I expect to learn?

RECITE + REVIEW: What can I explain without looking?

Concept Map Builder (Type 1)

Main concept:

_____

_____

_____

Related idea 1: _____ Relationship: _____

_____

_____

_____

Related idea 2: _____ Relationship: _____

_____

_____

_____

Related idea 3: _____ Relationship: _____

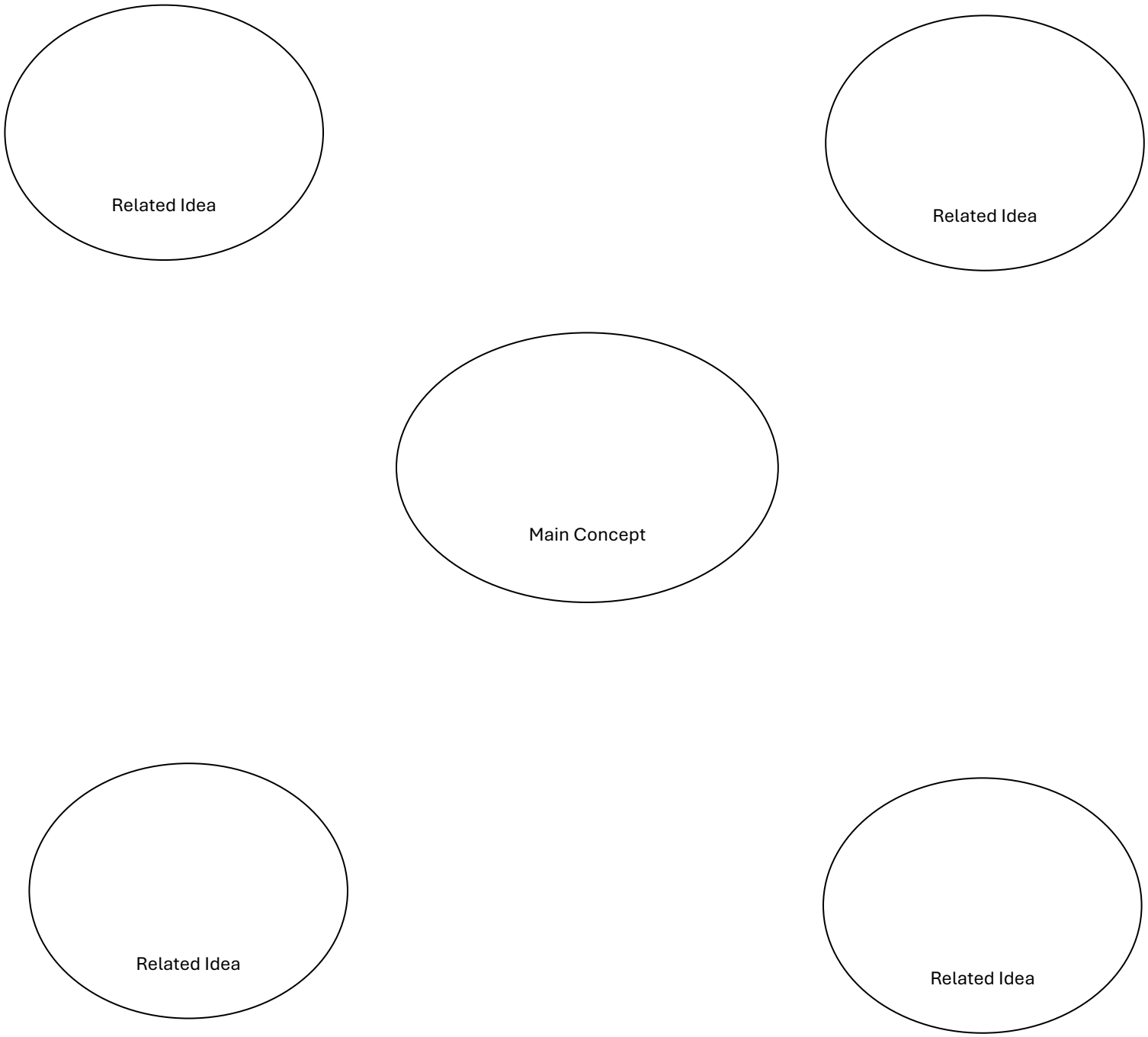
_____

_____

_____

Concept Map Builder (Type 2)

Draw lines and explain connections.



Interleaving Planner

Topics / problem types to mix:

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

How will I identify which strategy to use?

_____

_____

_____

What types do I confuse?

_____

_____

_____

Flashcard Quality Check

Topic:

Front: Does it ask ONE clear question?

Back: Is the answer concise and accurate?

Which cards need more frequent review?

Teach It to Someone

Topic:

My two-minute explanation:

Questions someone might ask me:

Where did I hesitate or need notes?

Page Dump Practice Sheet

Topic: _____

Compare With Your Notes

I KNEW THIS	I MISSED THIS	I NEED TO REVIEW THIS

My Study Plan

Use more than one method when it helps. The goal is to build a plan you can actually repeat.

Topic	Method	When	How Often?	How Long?

After I Study

What can I explain without notes? _____

What still feels fuzzy? _____

What will I practice again? _____

When is my next review? _____

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