

Finals TO-GO

Take this sheet with you so that you'll always have helpful, practical finals tips on hand.



Academic
Support
Center

Easy Now,
Hard Later.

Hard Now,
Easy Later.

Time Flies

Things often take longer than you think they will. No matter what you are doing, in most cases, you would rather be doing something else.

Step One: What to Expect

Find out what material is covered on the exam (e.g. is it cumulative?)
What kind of test will it be (Multiple Choice, Essay, True/False)?
Find out dates and times of your exams.

Step Two: Where are you now?

What do you need to do to get caught up?
How much time will it take to review and study for each exam?
What new work will be assigned between now and the last class?
Check your notes and organize them for each class. Note dates that are missing, and get copies of those notes.
Find out your grade before taking the final for each class. Check how much each final is worth.
Note concepts you struggle with, and meet with the professor or a tutor for clarification before reviewing familiar material.

The 5-Minute Rule

You can do anything for 5 minutes. Time yourself. Once you do it for 5 minutes, do it 5 more. Pretty soon, you're into it. Limited time feels more doable.

Don't burn out

Reward yourself.
Take short planned breaks.
Do the best you can, but don't be overly anxious.

Step Three: Prioritize and Plan

Rank courses and assignments in terms of importance:
Is this course a major or an elective?
How much is the final worth?
What is your grade goal?
Find out how much of your grade each piece is worth:
If you have a paper worth 5% of the grade and an exam worth 25%, put more time into the exam.

Effective Study Methods

Cornell Notes: make questions or a quiz from each day's notes.
Teach the material to someone else or even recite it to the mirror.
Reading over or copying notes is not studying.
Find your pace: It's not likely you can study for 10 hours a day and be effective. Take breaks for about 5-10 minutes every hour or so.
Summarize chapters from your textbooks.
Read the intro/preface of each book. These often give the outline of the book or the author's point of view.
Find ways to organize the material. Make charts or diagrams to organize info.
"Study to the pain:" Push yourself to do a little more each time.
Interact with material and make it your own.
Study methods are not necessarily interchangeable.
Note cards don't work for everything.
Visualize and draw concepts, or use concept maps.
Try kinesthetic methods and involve other senses.

Step Four: Schedule your time

Make weekly schedule charts with the hours of the day. Make enough to get your from now until your last final.
Write in final exams and last assignments on their due dates.
Cross off times that are unavailable because of regular commitments such as classes, work, meetings, meals, sleep, etc.
Assign study hours to different courses. Be specific.
Plan several study sessions for each class.
Break up your studying. Study for one subject, then switch to another.
Find your pace for studying. Be realistic, and build in breaks.
Remember your priorities. Grades are important, but they are not the most important things in life!

Step Five: Commit and Maintain Perspective

Commit to studying in a place that is effective for you.
Stick to your schedule as much as possible.
Gather your materials.
A consistent study place will help you begin studying quicker.
Don't get too comfortable.
Whatever you are able to do is better than nothing.
A study group can be very helpful if everyone has the same study goals and are at least as committed as you are. Study on your own, then meet in a group to quiz each other on the material.
"Whatever you do, work at it with your whole heart, as working for the Lord, not for men, since you know that you will receive an inheritance from the Lord as a reward. It is the Lord Christ you are serving." Colossians 3:23-24

Leave Time for Sleep

Sleep enhances memory.
Sleep loss leads to learning and memory impairment, as well as impaired attention.
Lack of adequate nighttime sleep leads to disturbances in brain function and poor academic performance.
2 weeks of 6 hours/night = 48 hours sleep deprivation.
Staying up late and sleeping in once a week confuses your internal clock. Keep a consistent sleep cycle, even on weekends.
Limit naps to less than 1 hour and before 3pm.
When you sleep and when you take breaks, it leaves time for processing information. You need time without new information coming in to process what you learn.