

Revision strategies to make Every Minute Count



DEVELOPING REVISION ROUTINES AND HABITS

Within your revision, it is vitally important to establish a strong routine. Having goals are good for setting a direction. What do you want to achieve in *this* revision session? Habits are incredibly powerful in helping you to succeed. If you have the mindset of wanting to be a better student and build the habits to become the person you want, the results will come. Getting one percent better every day counts for a lot in the long-run.

In order to support the forming of good revision habits, there are a number of areas to consider:

- **Make it obvious** – revise in one area, leave your materials out ready to support organisation and ensure routines are stuck to. Ensure your environment is clear, uncluttered and comfortable.
- **Start small and build up** – reduce distractions where and when you revise and get your family to encourage the creation of a revision timetable and placing it somewhere visual in your house. Ensure someone else is knowledgeable of this timetable to enable accountability and aid support. Start revising for a short amount of time and build up over time.
- **Make it attractive** – collaborative focused revision (with friends) is beneficial (alongside attending interventions or revision sessions) but you could also ensure there is a ‘reward’ at the end of a revision session. *If I complete this, I can do this.*
- **Make it satisfying and rewarding** – challenge yourself, track your own revision progress and ensure you stick to your revision timetable. Small steps build success and motivation. Use topic checklists to support. Focus on the process rather than the grade.

CREATING AN EFFECTIVE REVISION ENVIRONMENT

Goals are good for setting a direction but systems are best for making progress. We know that working memory can only hold a small amount of information at once. Therefore, in order to revise and learn effectively, you should use techniques which free up your working memory and stop it from being overwhelmed. One way is working in an environment which is free from distractions.

Find a quiet, tidy room with minimal distractions – your bedroom, library or classroom.

Put your revision timetable, exam timetable and other documents visible on your wall

Make sure you have a drink and snack with you, staying hydrated and full is important



Put your phone in another room, it is too much of a distraction -

Loud music is a distraction, if you must listen, it needs to be low tempo, without lyrics

Have all your revision materials and stationary on your desk ready to go - make it obvious

Whilst **phones** are a brilliant intervention, research has found that they have a negative impact on revision and learning. It can reduce concentration, impacting working memory, impact your sleep due to the bright lights and distractions, reduce your motivation to reduce and through listening to music, you are more likely to remember the lyrics to the song than the material you are revision. If you are struggling to find a quiet place at home, use the lunchtime and after school intervention clubs.

CREATING A REVISION TIMETABLE

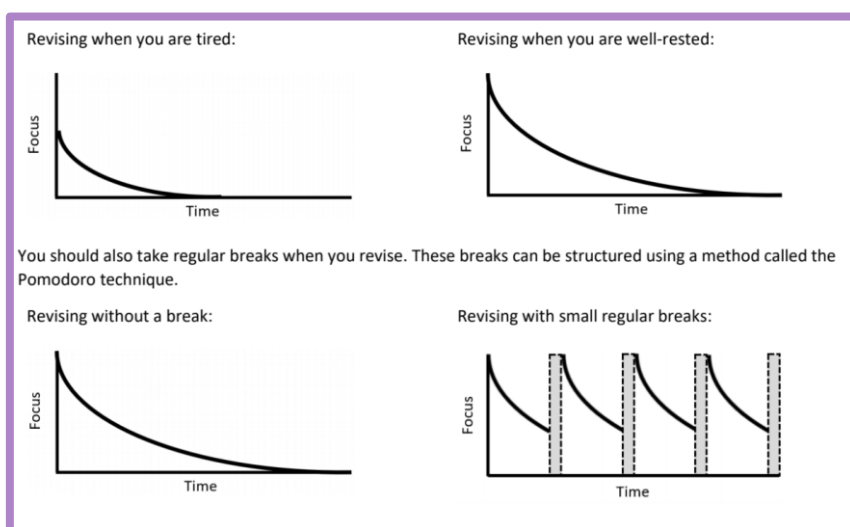
During year 10 and 11, you have a lot to think about and a lot of different things which you have to juggle. You should revise independently so that you can close the specific gaps which you have in your knowledge. However, because you have to plan your own independent revision, it's easy to forget revision or to only do it in large bursts right before an assessment.

Planning when and what you are going to revise reduces the number of decisions you need to make every day and will reduce the risks of you not revising or your revision being ineffective because you have left it until the last minute.

1. Collate all your topics and determine where you need to focus your time. Which subjects and topics do you need to target?
2. Create a table for a week with 30-minute revision slots and breaks built in.
3. Write the subjects in the table, leaving yourself at least two days between each.
4. Type it up so you re-use it and edit it. Ensure it is easy to check and find.
5. Put it somewhere visible and tick off completed sessions = see the success! Ensure someone at home also has ownership of it. It will support motivation.

When should I revise?

In order to revise effectively, you have to think hard. Thinking hard is tiring. Therefore, when you revise, you should choose a time when find it easiest to focus. This should be a time when you are well-rested and when you are used to working.



Managing your time when revising

Pomodoro technique is **highly effective** as it helps you effectively manage your time and work on a task without distractions. It is also beneficial as it helps you become more disciplined and think about your work. This technique is designed to combat multitasking and improve concentration. You can also attend the Pomodoro intervention after school Every Monday.



When revising:

Do:

- Get into a routine of revising at a particular point every day.
- Revise when you are well-rested or at a time when you are used to working.
- Take regular small breaks.

Don't:

- Depend on when you want to revise.
- Revise late at night or when you are tired.
- Try to force yourself to work for long periods of time without a break.

Writing your timetable

1. Write in everything you have planned prior to creating your revision timetable. (Going out for tea, going to the gym, playing sport etc)
2. Write in upcoming exams & deadlines
3. Not every space needs to be full – leave yourself time to relax too!
4. Focus on your RED subjects first, these are the ones you are least likely going to choose – but they are the highest priority.
5. Write in the subjects you are going to cover and when. Be specific around what you will cover each time you sit down and revise.

Blank Revision Timetable

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
8:00-9:00							
9:00-10:00							
10:00-11:00							
11:00-12:00							
12:00-13:00							
13:00 -14:00							
14:00-15:00							
15:00-16:00							
16:00-17:00							
17:00-18:00							
18:00-19:00							
19:00-20:00							

RETRIEVAL PRACTICE - FLASHCARDS

One particularly effective strategy is the creation and use of **flashcards**. Flashcards are generally a card containing a small amount of information on either side as an aid to learning. The use of flashcards is for low stakes testing to improve recall and to strengthen memory.

An effective flashcard may include the following (*in each subject they will be used in a different way*):

- A key term/key word with definition on the back.
- A key date with the event on the back.
- A key equation with its use in practice on the back.
- A past paper question/plan and a model answer on the back.



In order to use flashcards most effectively, the **Leitner System** is a desired strategy for spaced testing. Once you have created a set of flashcards, create three boxes/areas marked as the following.

This video will help support you in using the Leitner system:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=C20EvKtdJwQ>

BOX 1: Every day	BOX 2: Twice a week	BOX 3: Once a week
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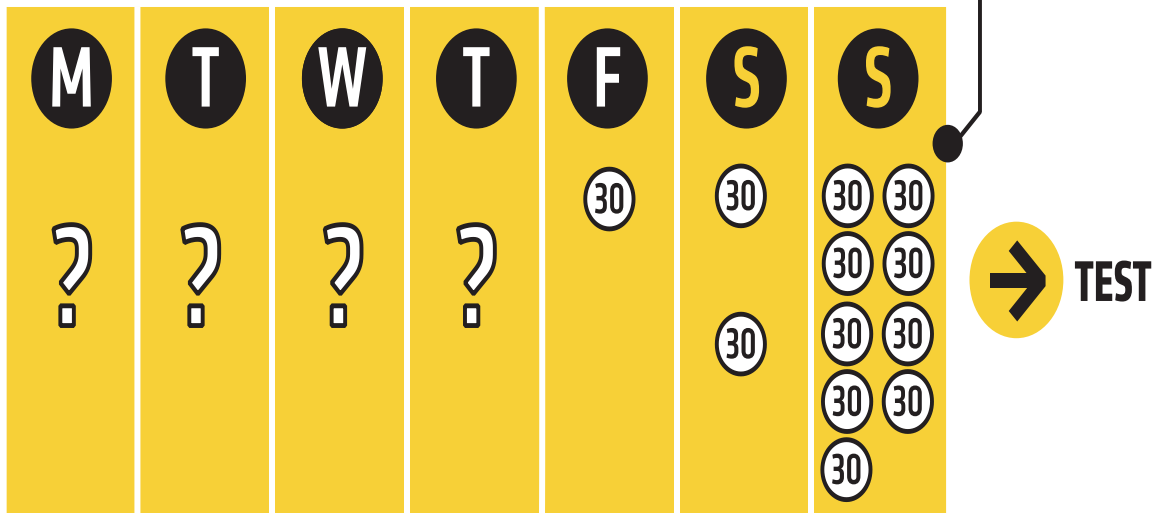
- Test yourself on the flashcards in the Box 1 pile. If you get the answer correct on the flashcard, move it to the Box 2 pile. If you get it incorrect, it stays in Box 1.
- Twice a week, test yourself on the flashcards in Box 2. If you get the answer correct on the flashcard, move it to the Box 3 pile. If you get it incorrect, it stays in Box 2. The aim is to get all of the flashcards to Box 3.

Flashcards 'Do':	Flashcards 'Don't':
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Put a single piece of information on each flashcard. • Sort your flashcards according to your confidence with them (see above). • Create 'decks' for each topic. This may be a different colour card for each subject/unit. • Mix up topics so you aren't always testing yourself on the same topic. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Spend more time making the flashcards than using them. • Put lots of information onto each flashcard. • Revise the flashcards in the same order every time that you use them. • Only read the flashcards – test your memory! • Avoid tough topics!

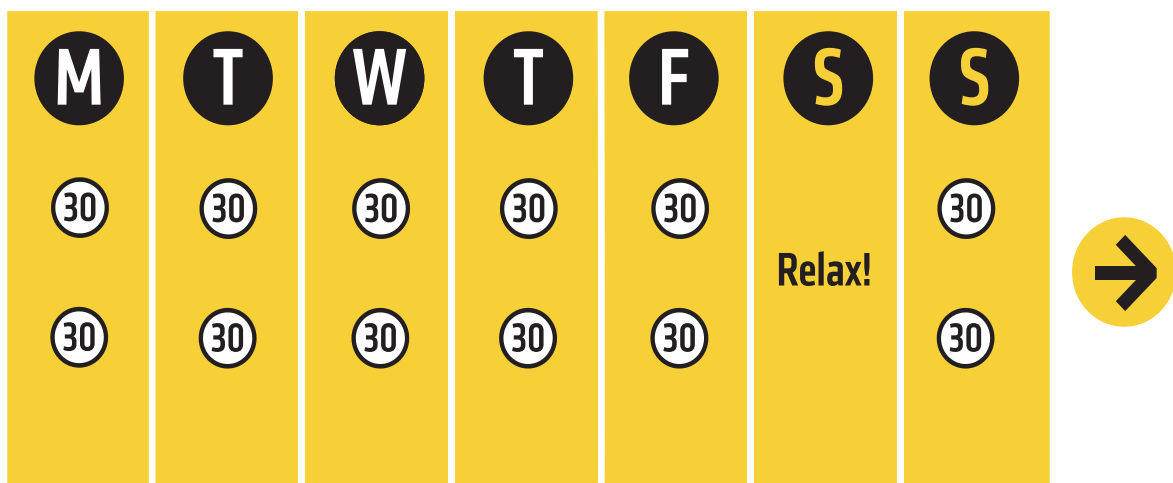
SPACING AND INTERLEAVING – PLANNING YOUR REVISION

Spacing out your revision into smaller chunks over a period of time helps you to remember the material better and ensures you are less stressed with your revision. This ensures you are not **cramming** as it will overload your memory and make you overconfident. By leaving time between revising and testing, the harder your brain works, the more chance of remembering.

Let's say you have a test one week and you have 5 hours to prepare for it broken down into 30 minute chunks. Very often that process looks like this.



Instead of mass practice, a much more effective way of revising is to space out your revision like this:



By breaking up your revision into 30 minute chunks and spacing out the time between revision, you will consolidate what you have learned and retain the material much more effectively.

Interleaving involves switching between ideas and topics during a study session and not revising in blocks of topics. This ensures that you are not studying one idea or topic for too long. Mixing up your revision and chunking it supports learning and strengthens your memory as we know you need to review information over time to reinforce learning. *If a subject involves a narrative (story), revise this in one piece.*

Blocking



Interleaving



Interleaving is for topics within one subject – not subjects themselves. You can apply this in your revision timetable. When revising science, mix up the topics that you study in that session, don't just focus on one.

Summary: Interleaving

Interleaving is a theory that revising more than one topic in each session will help you make better links between them.

A ⇒ B ⇒ C ⇒ D

B ⇒ D ⇒ A ⇒ C



1.

Switch

Switch between topics during each session.

It allows you to think about what you are doing with your time when you are revising.

2.

Review in different orders

When reviewing make sure you do it in a different order that you learnt them, or previously revised them.

By revisiting material from each topic several times, in short bursts, this **increases the amount of information you can recall in your exams.**

3.

Make links to remember more.

Try to make links between ideas and review your revision notes.

This helps you make connections between topics and forces you to think harder about which strategies need to be applied to which problems.

Applying interleaving to your revision

1. Break units down into small chunks and split these over a few days rather than revising one whole topic all at once.
2. Decide on the key topics you need to learn for each subject.
3. Create a revision timetable to organise your time and space your learning.

BRAIN DUMPS

<p>1.</p>	<p>2.</p>	<p>3.</p>	<p>4.</p>	<p>5.</p>
<p>Identify knowledge</p>	<p>Write it down</p>	<p>Organise information</p>	<p>Check understanding</p>	<p>Store and compare</p>
<p>Identify the knowledge/topic area you want to cover.</p>	<p>Take a blank piece of paper/white board and write down everything you can remember about that topic. (with no prompts) Give yourself a timed limit (e.g. 10 minutes)</p>	<p>Once complete and you cannot remember any more use different colours to highlight/underline words in groups. This categories/links information.</p>	<p>Compare your brain dump to your K/O or book and check understanding. Add any key information you have missed (key words) in a different colour.</p>	<p>Keep your brain dump safe and revisit it. Next time you attempt the same topic try and complete the same amount of information in a shorter period of time or add more information.</p>

Brain dumps are a way of getting information out of your brain.

Follow the 5-step process to complete 3 brain dumps for different topics of your choice.
You can also complete this in two colours. One colour for content you know and another colour for content you need to revise / that you added.

Topic 1

Topic 2

Topic 3

SUMMARISING AND CHUNKING INFORMATION

Chunking information into manageable chunks to revise is a powerful strategy as it aids motivation and ensures your working memory is not overwhelmed.

1. **Breaking up the information into paragraph or section chunks** – this ensures you can work through, revise and learn, one part of the text at a time. Give each section a heading to support your understanding.
2. **Only highlight the core information and do not highlight everything** - what is actually needed?
3. **Take out the information you have highlighted and bullet point it onto a revision card** – use this knowledge to explain the ‘story’ and narrative and to test yourself.

Muhammad Ali, arguably the greatest boxer in the history of the sport. He was born in 1942, in Louisville, Kentucky in the United States. He was named after his father, Cassius Clay, Sr., who was named for the 19th century abolitionist and politician Cassius Clay. He changed it to Muhammad Ali in 1964. He became a boxer at the age of 12. As an amateur boxer he won many titles, culminating in the Light Heavyweight gold medal in the 1960 Olympics in Rome, Italy. When Ali returned home to the states, he was so proud that he wore the medal around his neck wherever he went. After a week, he went to a café and ordered a drink. The waiter said “I’m sorry, we don’t serve coloured people”. Ali was so incensed by this! He had represented his country, won the gold medal, and come back to this kind of treatment. Muhammad Ali ripped from his neck and threw it into a river. Ali turned professional at the age of 18. Ali's record was 100 wins, 5 losses when he ended his amateur career. Ali became the World Champ at the age of 22. Clay was famed for his unorthodox fighting style. Rather than match his opponents with brute force, Clay brought tactics and strategy into the ring. With his fast-moving style, he was equally adept at dodging a punch as at delivering one. His fancy footwork soon became known as the ‘Ali shuffle’. Ali also fought a great psychological game, often beating fighters before they stepped foot in the ring. It was in the pre-fight build up to his first world title fight with Sonny Liston that Ali famously said “I will float like a butterfly and sting like a bee”. In 1967, when Ali refused on religious grounds to be drafted into the US army to fight in Vietnam, he was stripped of his title and banned from boxing, two decisions he successfully overturned in court. This he achieved by defending himself brilliantly without a lawyer. In 1971, Ali lost the title to Joe Frazier. Ali went on to win it back and then fought in two of the most famous fights in the history of boxing; The Rumble in the Jungle, versus George Forman and The Thrilla in Manilla, again versus Joe Frazier. Ali is the only boxer to have held the World title on 3 separate occasions. Ali retired from professional boxing in 1981, at the age of 39, with a career record of 56 wins and 5 losses, and as a three-time World Heavyweight Boxing Champion. Throughout his boxing career Ali was won over 50 million \$. Muhammad Ali became a Muslim around the age of 22, and a member of a group known as the Nation of Islam (or the Black Muslims) and was inspired by the teachings of Malcolm X. Muhammad Ali has been married 4 times, and has had nine children. There have been many films made of his life, most recently with Will Smith in the title role. Ali was awarded the coveted title of ‘Sportsman of the Century’ by the BBC in 1999. Although suffering from Parkinson's disease, Ali still makes many public appearances. He refuses to allow his disability to beat him. He travels around the world doing great work for charity.

Paragraph 1: ‘Born’:

Muhammad Ali, arguably the greatest boxer in the history of the sport. He was born in **1942**, in **Louisville, Kentucky** in the United States. He was named after his father, **Cassius Clay, Sr.**, who was named for the 19th century abolitionist and politician Cassius Clay. He changed it to Muhammad Ali in 1964. **He became a boxer at the age of 12.**

<p><u>Born:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1942 Kentucky Cassius Clay 1964 12 	<p><u>Boxing:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1960 Rome Olympics Professional at 18 100 wins, 5 losses at amateur
<p><u>World Champion:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 22 ‘Float like a butterfly, sting like a bee’ Vietnam 1967 3 times World Champion \$50 million 	<p><u>Life:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> National of Islam Married 4 times 9 children BBC Sportsman of the Century 1999

MIND MAPS

Summary: How to create a mind map



1.

Identify knowledge

Select a topic you wish to revise. Have your class notes/knowledge organisers ready.



2.

Identify sub topics

Place the main topic in the centre of your page and identify sub topics that will branch off.



3.

Branch off

Branch of your sub topics with further detail.
Try not to fill the page with too much writing.



4.

Use images & colour

Use images and colour to help topics stick into your memory.



5.

Put it somewhere visible

Place completed mind maps in places where you can see them frequently.

Avoid using too much information: mind maps are designed to summarise key information and connect areas of a topic/subject. If you overcrowd the page, you lose the point of the mind map and will find it harder to visualise the information when trying to recall it

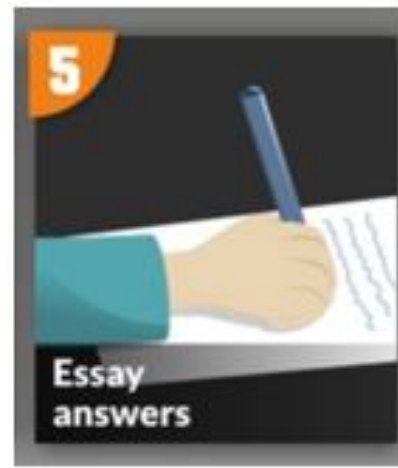
Follow the 5-step process to create a mind map for 3 different topics of your choice. You can also colour code the information you are confident with in one colour and information that you are unsure about in another colour.

Topic 1:

Topic 2:

Topic 3:

9 WAYS TO USE RETRIEVAL PRACTICE WHEN REVISING



9 Ways to Beat Revision Stress

by @inner_drive | www.innerdrive.co.uk



Do the actual work – revise!



When really stressed, talk to someone about it



Get some fresh air each day



Stick to regular meal times



Do something to switch off an hour before bed



Don't dwell on worst case scenarios



A good sleep the night before is better than last minute cramming



Once you've done the exam, move on to the next one



Don't aim for perfection – it's a myth and doesn't exist