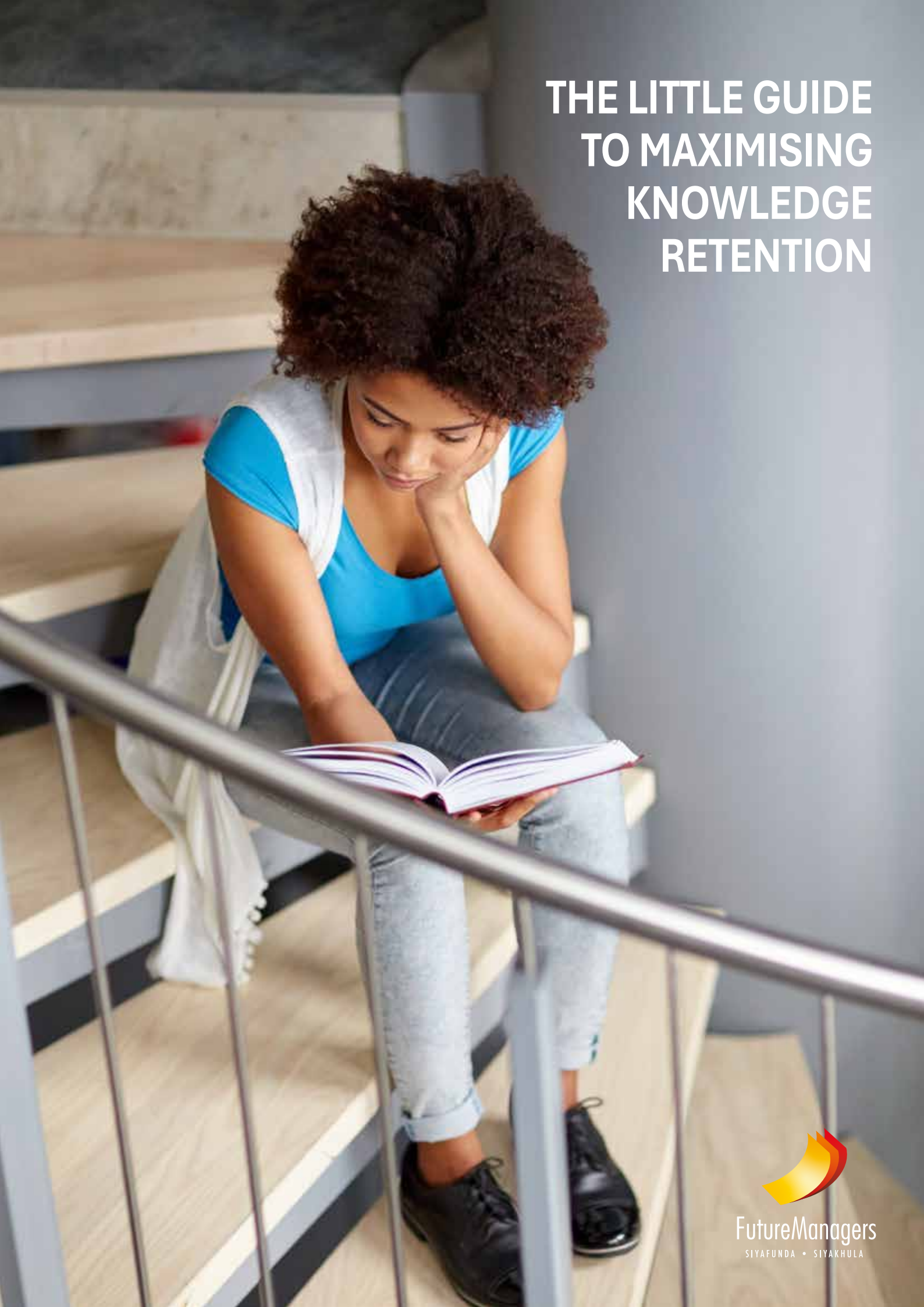


THE LITTLE GUIDE TO MAXIMISING KNOWLEDGE RETENTION



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Introduction

In this booklet, we provide some handy information, tips and hints on how to remember what you learn. Everyone has different ways of learning, and not all methods suit every person. We recommend that you try each method during tests and revision sessions, so that by the time your exams come around, you have already found the best methods to retain knowledge and achieve the best marks.

By incorporating these study techniques into your study routine, you can enhance knowledge retention, improve understanding and perform better academically. Remember to adapt these techniques to suit your individual learning style and preferences.

The techniques are interspersed with comments and advice from other students who have since successfully passed matric and/or college.

Perhaps you can relate to some of their stories, which may trigger techniques of your own. These methods are not exhaustive – you may even design a technique of your own that works brilliantly. If you do, let us know!

Best of luck! You are maximising your brain's potential for retaining information – this is your chance to recall everything you've learnt and prove that you are qualified in your chosen subjects.

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1 Active learning techniques

SUMMARISING

After reading a section or completing a chapter or topic, summarise the key points in your own words. This helps reinforce understanding and retention.



Follow these steps to summarise properly:

- 1 Read the passage closely.
- 2 Find the main ideas and supporting ideas. If you are allowed to mark your books, use a highlighter, pen or pencil to mark keywords.
- 3 Briefly write those ideas in a few sentences or a paragraph.

Some textbooks provide a key takeaway list or summary at the end of a module. Use this as a starting point to create your own summary.

REMEMBER

A summary and a paraphrase are different. When you paraphrase, you rewrite a passage in your own words – that is not a summary.

TEACHING OTHERS

Teach the material to a friend, family member, classmate or even to yourself. When you explain concepts to others, it solidifies your own understanding and highlights areas that need further clarification.

You can use notes, a whiteboard, a presentation or visuals when you teach. Use these as your own study notes when you prepare for the exam.

Encourage questions from your 'audience'. If you don't know the answer, look it up immediately and provide feedback.



2 Spaced repetition

FLASHCARDS

You can carry around flashcards and use them to reinforce your memory at any time.


Write questions or words on the one side with the answers on the back. It also works with memorising formulae (Mathematics, Science, Accounting), understanding language concepts (grammar, e.g. plurals, abbreviations, genders, collective nouns), learning symbols on the periodic table, identifying graphs, etc. In fact, this works on any short-answer question.

If you have access to a printer, create a template in Word that you can cut out, fold and paste to create a card. Otherwise, cut out flashcards on cardboard.

Create these per subject. Share them with classmates and use one another's cards occasionally to revise new ideas. You can use this to expand on your own flashcard packs.

How to study with flashcards

- 1 Work through the set of flashcards completely. Place the ones you get correct on one side, and the ones you get wrong on the other side.
- 2 Once you are done, take only the ones you got wrong and work through them again, following the same process.
- 3 Keep going until you have answered all the flashcards correctly.
- 4 Use the flashcards once a week and alternate them with other subjects. That way, you will recall the content, and not the flashcard.






Mitosis	Process of nuclear division that results in identical daughter cells
Prophase	Chromosomes visible, nuclear membrane dissolves, spindle forms
Metaphase	Chromosomes line up along the equator
Anaphase	Chromatids separate and move to poles



SPACED REPETITION APPS

If you prefer to use technology to study, there are several great apps available in Google Play or the Apple Store that you can download on your device.

There are many paid apps available that are top of the list, such as Brain Boost on EdApp and iDoRecall. However, the top three free spaced repetition apps are:

<p>NoteDex</p>  <p>Makes the best flashcards</p>	<p>Anki</p>  <p>Uses the best spaced repetition</p>	<p>Quizlet</p>  <p>Has the most test options and premade cards</p>
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CREATING A STUDY SCHEDULE

Avoid cramming at the last minute. Instead, break down your study sessions into smaller, spaced intervals. Create the schedule the moment you have your exam dates. The earlier you start, the more work you will cover and the more time you will have for revision closer to the exam date.



Follow these steps to optimise your schedule planning:

- 1** Set up your schedule template. Break the day down into sections so that you take breaks regularly.
- 2** Write in your exam dates and times. Remember, if you write in the afternoon, you still have time that morning to study.
- 3** Write in any other appointments for which you have to set time aside.
- 4** What's left is the time you have to study. Count the slots. Then allocate the number of slots available to the subjects you have to write. You may want to allocate more slots to Business Studies and Mathematics than to languages, if those are your weaknesses and strengths.

- 5 Allocate one slot from each subject to the day before you write that exam. Then allocate the rest of the slots to fill your schedule.
- 6 Use colour font and highlights to tell the difference between examples, study time, class revision sessions and personal time.
- 7 Print out several copies and put them up on the fridge and in your study space, and paste one into your study notebook. Even save it as your screensaver!

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
		MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT	SUN
		10 Oct	11 Oct	12 Oct	13 Oct	14 Oct	15 Oct	16 Oct
3	AM 9am–1pm	Travel & tourism	Travel & tourism 0471/22 (2.5h)	English 0500/12 (2h)	8am Carl appt Mathematics	Business studies	Geography	Mathematics
4	LUNCH				Bus St 11.30–12.30	Geog 1–2pm		
5	PM 2pm–5pm	Travel & tourism	English	Art prep	Mathematics	Business studies	Engagement party Erin & Mike	Mathematics
6	SUPPER & WALK	BALLET	EXTRA MATHS	KICKBOXING	EXTRA MATHS			
7	EVE 8pm–10pm	Travel & tourism	English	Art prep	Mathematics	Business studies		
8		17 Oct	18 Oct	19 Oct	20 Oct	21 Oct	22 Oct	23 Oct
9				Maths 8–9.20 am	Business studies			
10	AM 9am–1pm	Mathematics	Bus St 11am– 12pm	Geography 0460/22 (1.5h)	Mathematics	Business studies		
11	LUNCH	Maths 12.40–2pm	Geog 12–1.30pm	Maths 12.40–2pm			CHILL DAY	CHILL DAY
12	PM 2pm–5pm	Mathematics 0580/21 (1.5h)	Business studies 0450/11 (1.5h)	Mathematics	Mathematics 0580/41 (2.5h)	Business studies 0450/21 (1.5h)		
13	SUPPER & WALK	BALLET	EXTRA MATHS	KICKBOXING				
14	EVE 8pm–10pm	Business studies	Geography	Mathematics	Business studies			
15		24 Oct	25 Oct	26 Oct	27 Oct	28 Oct	29 Oct	30 Oct
16	AM 9am–1pm	Geography	Geography	Geography	Geography 0460/12 (1.75h)	Geography	CHILL DAY	Geography
17	LUNCH			Spanish 1.20–2.30				
18	PM 2pm–5pm	3.30pm Braces	Geography	Geography		Geography		Geography
19	SUPPER & WALK	BALLET		KICKBOXING				
20	EVE 8pm–10pm							

- 8 Review the schedule periodically to update the content.
- 9 Regularly look back at what you have covered to strengthen memory retention. Ask: What did I learn in that section? What did I struggle with? Do I understand it now? Use the study techniques in this booklet to recall the information.

NOTE

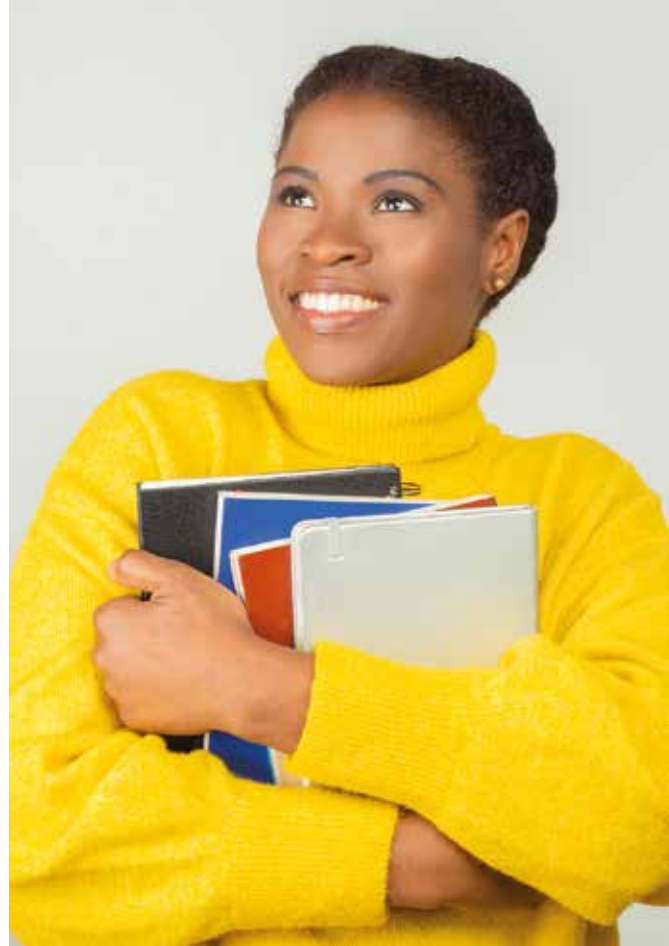
Everyone should already be making schedules for themselves at the start of the year that clearly allot the appropriate number of days to each subject. Allocate more days to difficult subjects. This helps break down subjects into manageable portions, which are then tackled in their own time slots. It creates a sense of accomplishment every day and prevents you from feeling overwhelmed.

Create this schedule as soon as the exam dates are released. Some people only start their schedules when the exams start and they tend to fall behind.

3 Chunking

BREAKING DOWN MATERIALS

- Use your summarising skills here as well. You can also use this skill to rewrite your notes from class in a more ordered fashion, using colour, lists, diagrams and other tools.
- Divide large amounts of information into smaller, manageable chunks.
- Focus on mastering one chunk at a time before moving on to the next.
- If your textbooks include them, use the learning outcomes at the start of each chapter.
- Use each chapter to manage a chunk. If the chapter is long, use each main heading in the chapter as a chunk header.



INFO PACKS

- Use a folder, lever-arch file or plastic envelope to create info packs – one pack per subject.
- Keep them organised per grade. If you find that content in, say, Level 4 is relevant to Level 5 as well, make a copy (rewriting is a great way of reinforcing knowledge) to place in your Level 5 info pack. This way, you know that each pack is complete on its own.
- Keep your info packs until you have completed college. You will need to revise the foundational knowledge in your info packs to understand instruction in future years.

NOTE

Many students sell their info packs once they have completed their studies. So, be sure to compile detailed and complete notes if you want it to work for you financially too.

When studying for exams, especially on big subjects like Business Studies, Accounting and Mathematics, compile info packs in which you rewrite all the main points that need to be studied as well as at least one example of each. This helps not to get overloaded by information in the textbooks and in your own workbooks, as often there are extra elements in both that could distract your attention. Info packs keep everything important in one place with no distractions, and the creation of these packs should form a large part of your studies.

4 Visualisation

This is similar to creating associations (covered in the next section), but here we will use paper to create visual concepts instead of using mental associations.

CONCEPT MAPS

Create concept maps or diagrams to visually organise and connect related ideas. Examples include spider diagrams, flow/process charts, organisational charts and mind maps.

Spider diagram

A spider diagram works well with summaries. It can provide an overview of an entire chapter. It works well in your info pack as a cover to link the information it contains.

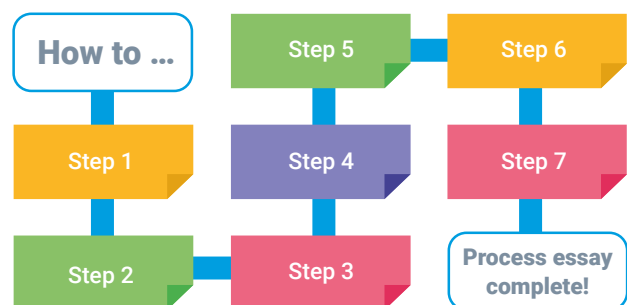
- 1 Write the main concept or topic in a circle in the middle of the page.
- 2 Write the subtopics around the centre, each in its own circle. Draw lines from the centre topic to each subtopic.
- 3 If the subtopic has subsubtopics, you can add them as well.



Flow/process chart

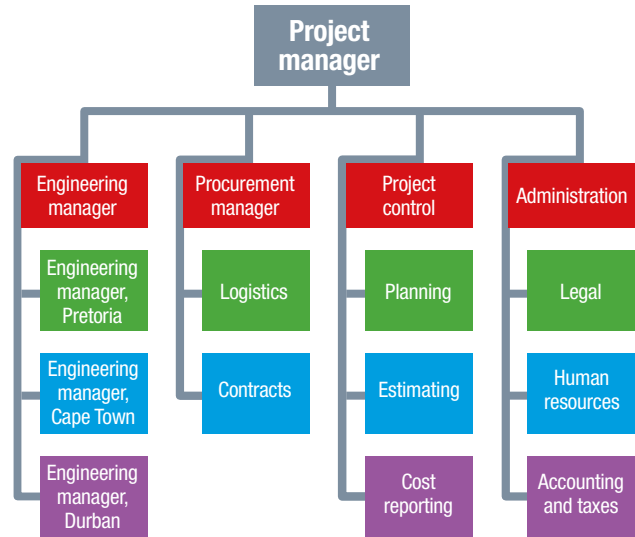
This works best when there are steps to remember in a process.

- 1 It has to follow a specific order.
- 2 Write the key word as a heading, with one sentence describing the step.
- 3 Link each step with an arrow to the next step.
- 4 You can use mnemonics or acronyms (discussed in the next section) to remember the order of the steps.



Organisational chart

This works well when there is hierarchy and process combined. It is best suited to staff structures in a company, or departmental structures in any organisation.

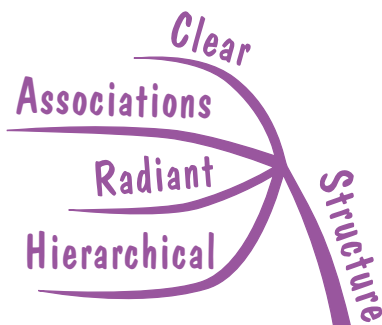


Mind map

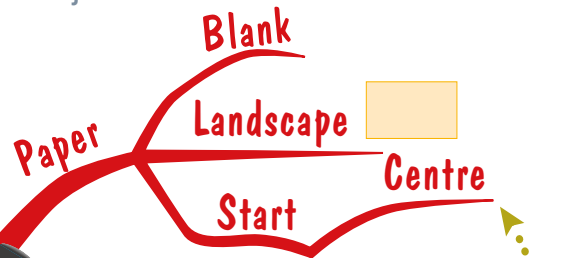
This is the most popular form of written visualisation used for studying. While it is similar to a spider diagram, it can contain more information and is flexible in its design.

Read through the diagram below for steps on how to create and use a mind map.

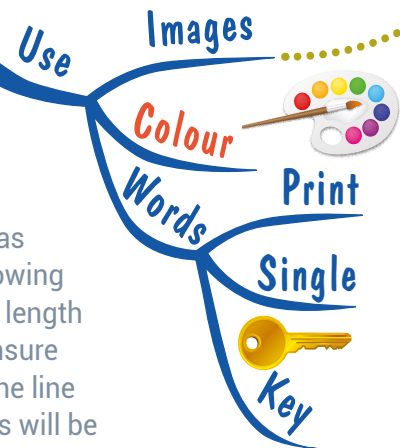
5. The structure that should develop will be a 'radiant hierarchy', with ideas radiating out from your central theme and main branches.



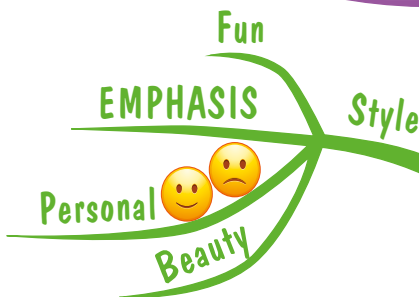
1. Start at the centre of a blank landscape page, ideally with a colourful image to represent your subject.



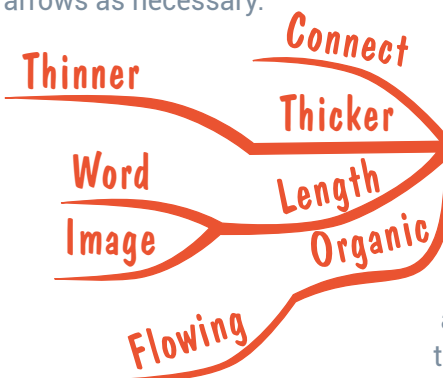
2. Use words and pictures throughout your map. Wherever possible, use single keywords, printed along a line. Each word or picture sits on its own line.



4. Experiment with different ways of linking and emphasising different aspects. Use highlighters, codes and arrows as necessary.



3. The lines make the associations between ideas as clear as possible. Make them flowing and organic – each line the same length as the word or image. Always ensure that lines connect to the end of the line at the previous level. Typically, lines will be thicker at the centre and thinner further out.



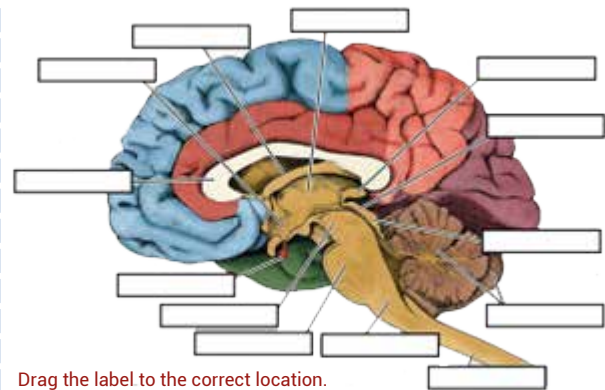
DIAGRAMS, GRAPHS AND TABLES

Diagrams

These comprise diagrams that you need to draw or label (or both).

- 1 To draw:** Make a list of labels that need to appear on a diagram or drawing. Use mnemonics or acronyms to remember the labels.
- 2 To label:** Create blank templates of diagrams with blank lines linked to the parts you need to label. Make several copies so that you can complete one in each revision session.

Corpus callosum
Fornix
Thalamus
Pineal body
Superior colliculus
Inferior colliculus
Cerebellum
Pituitary
Pineal body
Midbrain
Pons
Medulla
Spinal cord



Graphs

Certain subjects, such as Mathematics, Science and Business Studies, require you to recognise or draw graphs that define certain theories or concepts.

Create a page of the graphs you need to know. Flashcards work well here.

Tables

Tables are a great tool to summarise information that you want to compare. Examples of comparisons include advantages and disadvantages, characteristics/properties of different items or concepts, differing viewpoints and lists of formulae.

If there are only two columns in a table, these can easily be adapted into flashcards by enlarging the squares, printing them out and then folding them along the middle line (see the diagram in the section on flashcards).

NOTE

When chunking information into info packs, use different diagrams, graphs and tables for each major topic of a subject. For example, spider diagrams are an easy and intuitive way to break down information. However, each diagram, graph and table used should be unique with different colours, styles and sizes. This will also help during the exam; if you can't remember the actual information, try to remember what each diagram, graph or table looks like and then think about what information your brain is naturally looking for in that image.

5 Creating associations

This is closely linked to visualisation, but is a bit more specific. Here you connect new information to existing knowledge or personal experiences. Visualise concepts or create mnemonic devices to aid recall. Making up little personal memory devices is one of the most popular and easiest devices used to improve memory. Here are some suggestions.

MNEMONIC PHRASES

This device is very useful when you want to remember lists.

A mnemonic phrase uses the first letter of each word you are trying to remember to make a sentence using new words that you can relate to. For example, to remember the names of the planets in their correct order:

Mercury, **V**enus, **E**arth, **M**ars,
Jupiter, **S**aturn, **U**ranus, **N**eptune

Rewrite this as:

My **V**ery **E**ager **M**other **J**ust **S**erved **U**s **N**oodles

ACRONYMS

Acronyms take the first letter of each word you want to remember, and then form a new word. For example, in business, the acronym PESTEL is used to remember the factors influencing the macro environment. By remembering the acronym, your memory will be triggered to recall all the other information shown in the diagram as well.

NOTE

Acronyms can be a big part of your studies, because just by chanting phrases of broken-down lists and characteristics, you may be able to retain at least 50% more than you normally would have.



P

Political

The impact of government, including taxes, tariffs, trade agreements and labour regulations

E

Economic

Includes inflation, employment rates, exchange rates, oil prices, GDP growth and others

S

Sociocultural

Includes cultural attitudes and demographic factors such as age, race and income

T

Technological

Includes the impact of the Internet, smart devices and automation on business and society

E

Environmental

Includes availability and care for natural resources, pollution levels and carbon footprints

L

Legal

Requirements related to labour and consumer protection, equality and product safety

RHYMES AND SONGS

A popular rhyme is the one to remember how many days there are in each month.

*Thirty days has September,
April, June and November,
all the rest have thirty-one.
February has twenty-eight,
but leap year coming one in four
February then has one day more.*

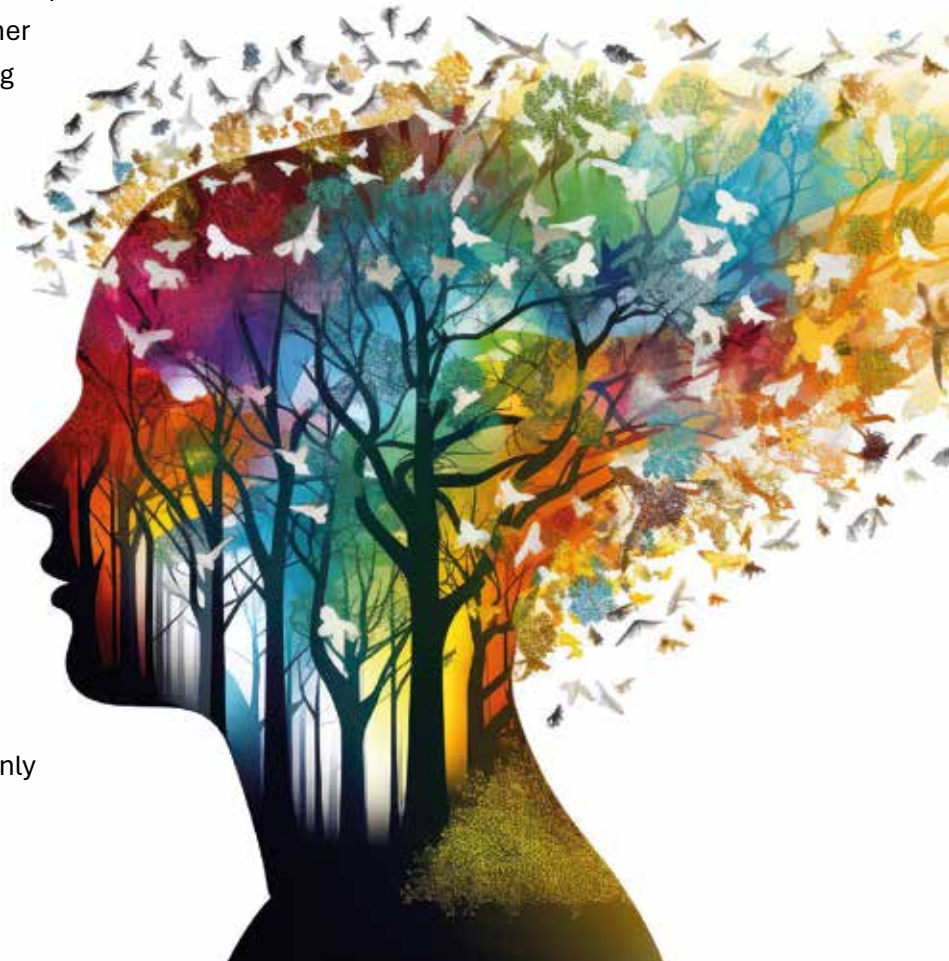
It can also help to remember parts of speech in English:

*A NOUN's the name of any thing,
As school, or garden, hoop, or swing.
ADJECTIVES tell the kind of noun,
As great, small, pretty, white or brown.*

PAINTING A MENTAL PICTURE

Create little scenarios with groups of words and paint a mental picture to help you remember the words. For example, one student told that she was helping her boyfriend study Accounting one evening and noted that 'book value', 'carrying value' and 'net realisable value' all referred to the same thing. To help him remember, she suggested that he paint a mental picture of a little guy carrying a book and a net. Everyone has a different visualisation of this, but once he imagined the scene, he found it hard to forget, even if it didn't make any sense at all.

Think creatively when you study for an exam. If something interesting pops into your head, use it to remember what you are studying – the sillier the better! Creating associations can only enhance your memory.



6 Self-testing

QUIZZES

Regularly test yourself on the material using quizzes or practice problems. Actively recalling information strengthens memory and aids retention.

Textbooks usually have revision quizzes at the end of each chapter, but it is unlikely that you will get the same questions in an exam. Instead, create your own quizzes that cover all the content.

Here are a few guidelines to creating your own quizzes:

- 1 Create one question per idea. If it's something you need to remember, make it a question.
- 2 Use a variety of question types: true or false, multiple choice, fill in the gaps, give a word for a definition, match Column A to Column B, short-answer questions (1–4 marks) and essay questions (6–12 marks).
- 3 Allocate marks to the longer answers to make sure you include all the relevant points.
- 4 Create the quizzes per chapter so that you can compile a set of chapter quizzes based on what you need to cover for the exams.
- 5 Find other students who are also creating quizzes and swap out your question papers and answer sheets with them before the exams so that you have a range of questions.
- 6 Entrepreneurial students can even sell these quizzes to classmates!



NOTE

Create your own mock exam papers (you could try to outsource these to parents or even ask sympathetic lecturers). Use them as revision at home and get used to the stress of a real exam. Often, one of the main causes of failure in written exams is the stress of actually sitting down to write. The overwhelming anxiety that makes your mind go blank and throws all your study techniques out the window is very real. Therefore, getting as accustomed to that sensation as possible is a valuable skill, and mock exams are a good way to do it (especially when you monitor your time).

PAST PAPERS

Reviewing past exams or assignments can help identify areas of weakness and guide your study focus. Most curriculums have associated past paper websites. Here are a few website links:

- South African CAPS past papers for Grade 10 to 12:
[https://www.education.gov.za/Curriculum/NationalSeniorCertificate\(NSC\)Examinations/NSCPastExaminationpapers.aspx](https://www.education.gov.za/Curriculum/NationalSeniorCertificate(NSC)Examinations/NSCPastExaminationpapers.aspx)
- TVET Colleges past papers:
<https://www.tvetpapers.co.za/>
- IEB past papers:
<https://www.ieb.co.za/pages/pastiebpaperslibrary>
<https://www.sapapers.co.za/ieb>
- Cambridge IGCSEs (navigate to O level and A level papers from here):
<https://papers.gceguide.com/Cambridge%20IGCSE/>
- GED practice questions:
<https://www.gedpracticequestions.com/>



How to optimally use past papers

- 1 Practise at least one past paper per subject per week. This will help you identify weak points in your studies and help with content recall.
- 2 Make sure you have covered all the content relating to the paper you are practising.
- 3 Work through the first paper without worrying about time limits. Try to answer all the questions. Use your textbook to help you if you get stuck. The point is to find the answers to every question as best you can.
- 4 Once ALL questions are answered, mark your work. Insert and highlight any points you may have missed. Set aside the work.
- 5 At your next study session, redo the question paper. This time, try to stick to the time limits given in the paper. Do not use your textbook to help you answer.
- 6 Mark your work. Highlight the sections where you are struggling. Are these highlights the same as with your first attempt? If yes, you know this section is where you need to focus. Make a note of these areas and focus on them during your revision closer to the exams.
- 7 Try to practise with as many past papers as possible. Go back at least five years to make sure you cover all possible formats of questions.



7 Teach-back methods

PEER TEACHING (STUDY GROUPS)

Practise teaching the material to a study group or peer. Teaching others reinforces your understanding and helps identify areas for improvement. (This is covered in more detail in the section on active learning techniques.)

ONLINE FORUMS

Participate in online forums or discussion groups where you can explain concepts to others and receive feedback. This is especially useful for distance-learning and part-time students who do not have the benefit of classroom learning every day. Your lecturer should be able to advise you on which groups to join.



NOTE

While WhatsApp groups are cheap and easy to access, without voice and visual interactions some concepts may not be that easy to grasp. Use this format for back-up and short questions instead.

CRASH COURSES

While not always the most advised method of studying, a crash course (AKA cramming session) works when you don't have access to regular study groups. This is a once-off session, usually just before the exam, where a group gets together to ask questions, quiz one another, compare notes and share flashcards as well as any tips – including some of the methods suggested in this guide – on how to remember the content.

NOTE

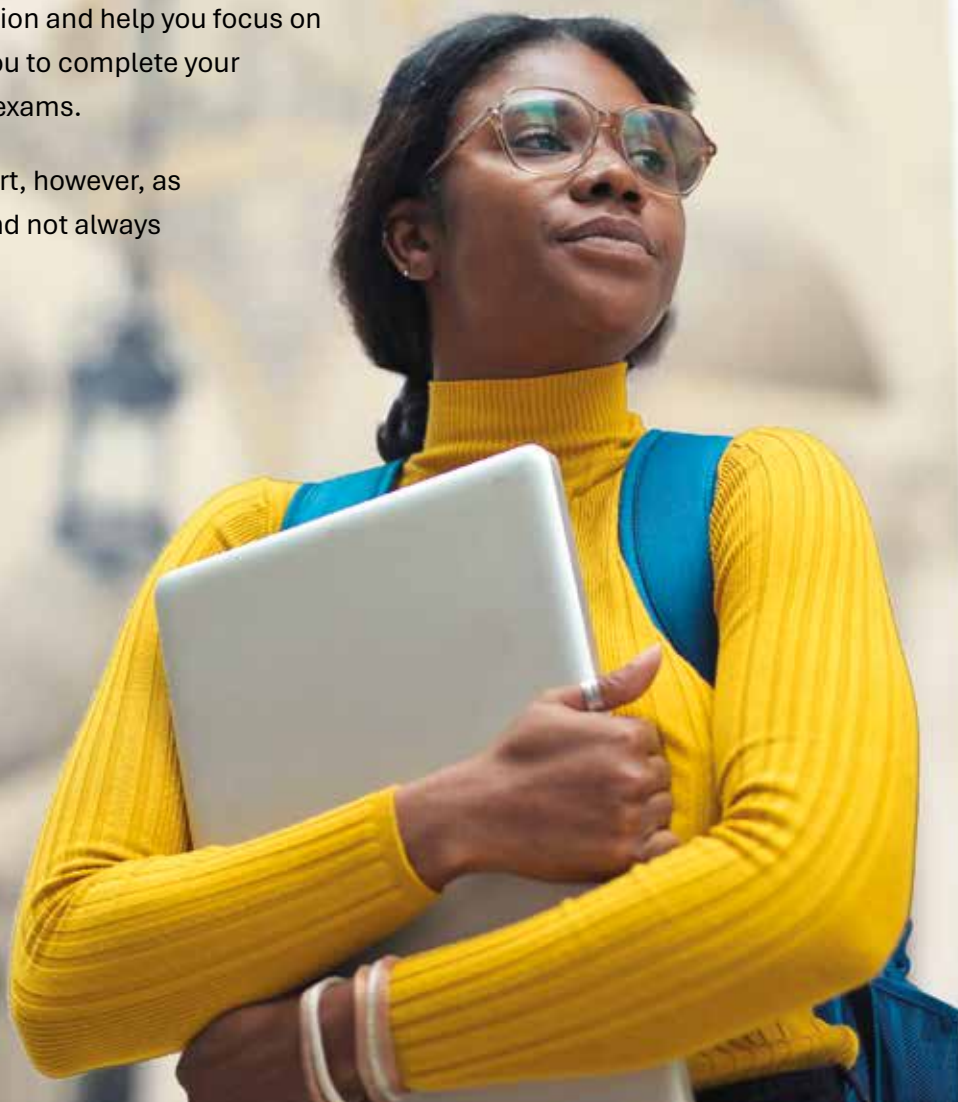
Several students consider the most valuable study technique to be crash courses with peers on the mornings of exams. For that golden hour, exchange and compare info packs, and then quiz one another or just explain different concepts to one another. It helps activate the parts of your brain that work during actual classes, and this allows you to remember a lot more, because it works like muscle memory.

EXTERNAL HELP

Institutions such as Master Maths offer group tutoring where you can ask the facilitator questions while you work through activities and worksheets.

Tutors offer personal attention and help you focus on your weak points, driving you to complete your study schedule before the exams.

These should be a last resort, however, as these options are pricey and not always within our budgets.



8 Interleaving

MIXING UP SUBJECTS

Instead of studying one subject intensively at a time, interleave different subjects or topics during study sessions. This helps to strengthen overall retention.

This concept is repeated throughout this guide, particularly in your study schedule, working through past papers, chunking, and review and reflection.

Teaching your brain to switch between subjects will improve your recall abilities and help you understand content better. It also helps with integration between subjects – you may recall a formula from your Mathematics studies that will help in Business Studies or Science.

9 Using multiple modalities

VARIED STUDY RESOURCES

- Use a combination of textbooks, online resources, videos, college notes and hands-on activities to engage different learning styles and reinforce understanding.
- The point of this guide is to give you a variety of options for study techniques and tools instead of limiting you to one or two only.
- Try every technique **at least once** per subject – different techniques work for different subjects.

ACTIVE LISTENING

Sometimes the pace of teaching in class is too fast and because learning is like building blocks, if you miss the first block, everything that follows won't make sense. You need to keep up with the lesson plans and make sure that you fully understand what was taught by the next class lesson.

- Record lectures or readings and listen to them while commuting or exercising to reinforce learning through auditory channels.
- Download YouTube videos that explain certain concepts using visual support. These videos often break down the explanations in a way that makes it easier to understand.
- Ask a classmate to explain how they understood the concept. This will help them too, as your questions could let them rethink their own understanding.



SCENTING

- Put on some perfume, essential oil, body spray or scented lotion while you study. Then put on the same scent just before taking the exam. The scent will trigger the memory your brain stored while you were studying.
- Use a scent that doesn't bring up any other associations.
- Calming scents such as lavender, rosemary, peppermint, citrus, basil and eucalyptus are known to enhance focus and memory and help you to relax during the exam.
- A lava bead bracelet can be worn under your sleeve. Add a few drops to the porous beads before studying. It retains the scent for hours, even days. You can hold your wrist close to your face while you write to get the full benefit.
- Chewing flavoured gum also triggers memory. Use a different flavour for each subject – a flavour you don't regularly choose. The flavour and texture will help you retrieve information. The repetitive chewing will help to relax your jaw (and your nerves). Just make sure you are allowed to chew gum during exams!



NOTE

Scenting is a technique that can be quite successful for those who respond well to smell stimulation. Smelling certain scents during your study periods allows your brain to link what you are reading with what you are smelling. So, when you smell the same scent again, you should be able to recall what you studied when you last smelled that scent. This may only work for two subjects maximum at a time. Or you can use different scents for each subject, while others are simply put into the study state of mind by a single scent.

THE FIVE SENSES

We can appeal to all five senses during study time. Scenting appeals to the sense of smell, chewing gum to the sense of taste, while many others appeal to the sense of sight and sound. But what about the sense of touch?

- Some people are very tactile. If they play with a pencil grip while studying, it may help them recall information during exams. Others use scented playdough or stress balls while studying.
- Play music while you study. Don't play music with lyrics, as this will distract you. Apps such as Spotify and Zen Radio have music specifically aimed at study and focus.



- Making notes in class is useful, but often students cannot keep up with the lecturer talking. They also spend all their time writing instead of really listening in class to what is being taught. This could mean that important information is lost. At the start of the class, ask the lecturer whether notes will be made available. If not, ask the lecturer to pause or point out when note-worthy information is being shared.
- Another option is to record the lecturer in class and create your notes afterwards. However, the quality of the recording may be compromised if you are near the back of the class, or if the class is noisy or has background noise.

NOTE

Some students **doodle and draw** while the lecturer is talking during class. They use symbols and small characters and let their pencil flow. At home, these doodles would trigger them to recall at least 80% of what was taught in class. Then they write down any interesting and relevant information without rushing, using colour and diagrams to consolidate their memory.



10 Personal wellness

DEDICATED STUDY SPACE

- Create a study area that you use for studying only. If you only have your room, set a small table to one side. Avoid your bed – that is where you sleep and it should not be associated with stress.
- Have everything handy while you study, from stationery to scents, snacks and lots of water.

ADEQUATE REST PERIODS

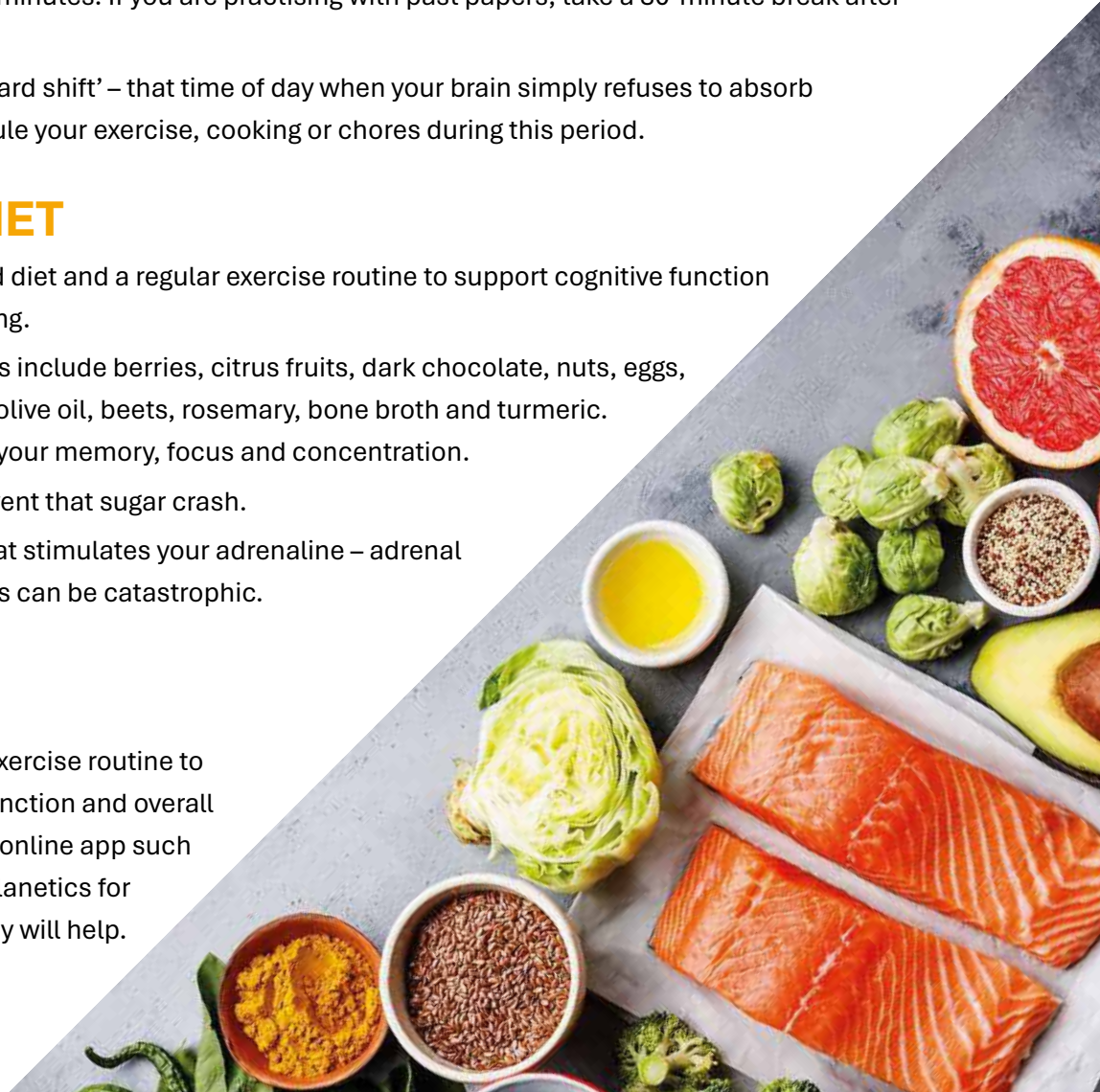
- Prioritise sleep. Get enough sleep every night, as a lack of sleep creates mental fatigue and affects your memory.
- Take walks outside. Even 10 minutes of breathing fresh air and looking at nature helps.
- Listen to music. No lyrics. Play different music to help you disconnect and sleep.
- Take breaks regularly. You should take one 15-minute break every 90 minutes or shorter 5-minute breaks every 20–30 minutes. If you are practising with past papers, take a 30-minute break after 3 hours.
- Identify your ‘graveyard shift’ – that time of day when your brain simply refuses to absorb information. Schedule your exercise, cooking or chores during this period.

HEALTHY DIET

- Maintain a balanced diet and a regular exercise routine to support cognitive function and overall well-being.
- Brain-boosting foods include berries, citrus fruits, dark chocolate, nuts, eggs, avocados, salmon, olive oil, beets, rosemary, bone broth and turmeric. These will enhance your memory, focus and concentration.
- Avoid sugars to prevent that sugar crash.
- Limit medication that stimulates your adrenaline – adrenal fatigue before exams can be catastrophic.

EXERCISE

- Maintain a regular exercise routine to support cognitive function and overall well-being. Even an online app such as Daily Yoga or Callanetics for 20 minutes every day will help.



- Allocate time for this to your study schedule.
- The best exercise is outdoors, where you breathe in fresh air and benefit from the healing properties of nature. Add taking a dog for a walk and you get double points in feeling good!

NOTE

The temptation of all-nighters and caffeine-riddled last-minute study sessions is strong and can work, but only in emergencies and in very short spurts. More reliable and healthy methods of studying always beat the manic sprinters in the long run.

NATURAL REMEDIES

There are many natural remedies, herbal or homeopathic, that can help with focus, clarity, memory and exam anxiety. Talk to your healthcare practitioner, pharmacist or health shop assistant for the formula that best suits your needs.

NOTE

Exam water has quite a good track record. Not only does it keep you hydrated, but it also calms the mind and helps it focus on the tasks at hand. Pre-make the bottles for a week's supply, and then sip it through the entire exam.

Exam water

created by  NATURA (www.natura.co.za)

500 ml water

10 tablets tissue salts no. 6 (crushed)

*10 ml/2 tsp Stressless tonic**

60 drops Rescue Remedy

60 drops Cerbo

Drink slowly during the day

... sip, sip, sip!

*Stressless tonic is hard to find – Nervuton has the same ingredients, so you can substitute 50 drops of that, if necessary.



11 Reflection

REFLECTING ON LEARNING

Take time to reflect on what you've learned and how it applies to real-world situations. Reflective practice enhances understanding and retention.

APPLYING KNOWLEDGE

Apply concepts learned to solve real-world problems or scenarios. Application reinforces understanding and aids in long-term retention.

Example

- In Science, ask to do the experiments in the college laboratory, either on your own or demonstrated by the lecturer.
- In Accounting, work out your own budget and follow all the advice given in your textbooks. Draw up the statements, no matter how small they may be. Balance them at the end of each month.
- Read articles online to see how certain key concepts translate into real life. Use keywords in your summaries or diagrams in your online search.

TRACKING YOUR PROGRESS

Keep a schedule where you can see how much you've covered and achieved so far. It's often motivating to see how much you've done already before you tackle what is still ahead of you.

Example

- On your study schedule, cross off days that you have successfully completed.
- On your subject topic breakdown, use colour to show your progress. For example:
 - Use **green** to highlight the topics/sections you are comfortable you know.
 - Use **yellow** to highlight the sections you need to revise a little more.
 - Use **pink** to highlight the sections where you need help.



Reward yourself with every goal you reach. You might remember using a star chart as a child for every achievement. Create your own 'star chart' with rewards that will encourage you to complete. For example, buy your favourite coffee at the end of each week and put the takeaway mug on your windowsill – then brag about how many mugs there are! Whatever drives you – coffee, movies, cards, apps, games, music, books – set your goals and reward yourself. You will always feel a sense of satisfaction in achievement, which increases self-confidence in exams and lowers anxiety.

12 Review and feedback

REGULAR REVIEW

- On your study schedule, set aside time for regular review sessions to reinforce memory and identify areas requiring further study.
- Set the revision at spaced intervals. For example:
Week 1: Study chapters 1 and 2.
Week 2: Study chapters 3 and 4.
Week 3: Revise chapters 1 and 2.
Week 4: Study chapters 4 and 6.
And so on. This way, you don't revise immediately after study, but focus on other topics before coming back to the revision.
- If there is not enough time to do this in your schedule, use your flashcards, summaries and past paper highlights to review and revise.



ASKING FOR FEEDBACK

- Seek feedback from lecturers, peers or mentors to gain insight and improve your understanding.
- Ask lecturers to return any marked class tests so you can see where you went wrong.
- Make an appointment to discuss any issues where you don't understand why you lost marks.
- Make notes – you might think you'll remember what was said, but with stress and other subjects, it's unlikely that you'll be able to recall everything that was said, even the next day!

