

How To

GET ORGANIZED

Being organized makes your day run more smoothly and saves you time. When you're organized, you also have less stress and feel more in control of your life.



Being organized will not only make you a better student, it will help you succeed in your career and in life.

ORGANIZATION TIPS

Use a planner

Take a planner to every class. Record assignments, tests, quizzes, special events, and appointments. Also use your planner to break large assignments and projects down into more manageable parts.

Have a system for organizing papers

Whether you use folders or binders, the important thing is that you have a system for organizing all of your papers—handouts, homework, and class notes. *Have a specific place for every paper.*

Develop routines

Have a morning routine that gets your day off to a good start and a nighttime routine that includes getting everything ready for the next day.

Eliminate clutter

Throw out what you don't need. Put the papers you want to keep in a home file and keep your study area clean and neat.



VIDEO

For 10 ways to improve your grades, watch this quick video.

How To

STUDY SMART

The key to success is not studying a lot. It's studying smart.

Students who "study smart" know how to make the most of their study time.



GET OFF TO A GOOD START

Get started.

Getting started on your studying is often the hardest part. Don't put it off until later, don't make excuses, and don't wait until you're "in the mood."

Set a time to start studying and stick to it. If you have a hard time getting started, begin with something you can finish quickly or a subject you like.

Have a good place to study.

Your study area should be quiet, comfortable, well-lit, and have a surface for writing. Equip your study area with the supplies you need (such as paper, pencils, and pens). Turn off the TV and *silence your phone.*

Create a study plan.

Before you begin studying, decide exactly what you want to get done and the order in which you're going to do it. Be specific, and start with the things that are the most important.

Break large assignments down.

Large assignments and projects can be overwhelming. Break them down into smaller, more manageable parts, and start on them early.

How To

TAKE GOOD NOTES

Taking notes in class helps you stay focused on the information being presented. And because tests usually cover material that's been discussed in class, having good notes to study from can significantly improve your test grades.



GET READY

Create a notetaking system

Whether you use three-ring notebooks, binders, or spiral notebooks for your class notes, the important thing is that you have a system for organizing your notes that works for you.

Format your notes

- ▶ Start a new page for each day and class. At the top of the page, write the name of the class, date, page number, and the topic of your notes.
- ▶ Use only one side of the paper and skip lines between ideas/topics. This will give you space if you want to add something later.

Be an active listener

When you're actively listening in class, you aren't just hearing the words. You are also thinking about and trying to understand the information being presented. Teachers often give verbal cues so you'll know what information they think is important. Listen for these cues: louder or slower speech, repeating information, and the use of phrases such as "the main point."



VIDEO

For more class success tips, watch this quick video!

How To

PREPARE FOR TESTS

Whether you're studying for a quiz, test, or exam, there are simple test-prep strategies that can help you improve your grades and test scores.



TEST PREP STRATEGIES

Create a study plan

Have all textbook reading done early and create a study plan that spreads out your studying.

Make flash cards

Write any information you need to remember on index cards. Take these with you and go over them whenever you have a few extra minutes (for example, when waiting for a ride).

Explain it to a mirror

You really know something if you can explain it in your own words. Stand in front of a mirror and "teach yourself" what you need to know.

Study class notes and review sheets

Because most test questions come from information that's been presented in class, your class notes are your best test prep resource. Highlight any key information in your notes. If you've been given a handout or review sheet, know everything on it.

Review often

When you review, you move information from your short-term memory to your long-term memory. **Review is the key to learning anything.** Review early and often.

How To

READ TO LEARN

To do well in your classes, you must be able to understand and remember the information you read.



To comprehend and retain more of what you read, follow these three steps:

1) SURVEY 2) READ 3) REVIEW

SURVEY

Before you begin reading an assignment, take a few minutes to survey it. This will give you a quick overview of what you'll be reading.

To survey an assignment, do the following:

- ▶ Read the section headings and everything in **bold** and *italic* print.
- ▶ Look at the pictures, graphs, and charts.
- ▶ Read the introduction, summary, and review questions.

READ

To improve your comprehension, use all the learning tools the author provides, and read with a purpose.

Use learning tools. Textbook authors provide the following learning tools to make it easier for you to understand the material they're presenting: headings, subtitles, **bold** and *italic* print, pictures and graphs, chapter summaries, vocabulary lists, review questions.

Read with a purpose. To help you stay focused, turn each section heading into a question. Keep your question in mind as you read. When you're finished, see if you can answer it.



VIDEO

For more study tips, watch this video!

How To

SUCCEED IN CLASS

Showing up for class isn't enough. To succeed in your classes, you need to be engaged and involved.

When you're engaged, you are more likely to learn and remember what's being taught, the time goes faster, and you have a lot less to learn on your own.



CLASS SUCCESS TIPS

Be prepared

When you come to class, have all of your homework done, and bring everything you'll need with you. Be alert, well-rested, and ready to learn.

Eliminate distractions

Put away anything that isn't directly related to what you are doing in that class.

Have a positive attitude

Walk into each class with a positive attitude and be determined to learn as much as you can. Remember, the more you learn in class, the less you need to learn on your own.

Take good notes

Most test questions come from information that's been presented in class. It is, therefore, important to have notes that are organized, complete, and neat to study from.

Taking notes also helps you pay attention and stay focused—when you're taking notes, you don't have time to think about or do anything else. *For tips on how to take good notes, watch this short video.*



VIDEO

How To

STAY MOTIVATED

We all get stuck sometimes. When you're feeling less than your best, it's important to keep a positive attitude and find ways to stay motivated.



HAVE A POSITIVE ATTITUDE

Surround yourself with positive people

In life, we come across all kinds of people. Some are positive influences in our lives and some are not. Try to stay away from people who are negative or critical. Instead, choose to be around people who support and encourage you. These are the people who will help you achieve your goals and realize your dreams.

Believe in yourself

You have a greater chance of succeeding when you believe in yourself. Whether you're a student tackling a difficult subject, an athlete preparing for a competition, or a musician getting ready for a performance, it's important that you recognize the talents and abilities you have, and believe that you can succeed!

Set goals

Goals give you focus and direction. They help you decide where you want to go and what you need to do. Set both short-term goals (*get a B on my biology test*) and long-term goals (*graduate from high school with a 3.0 GPA*).

Move with positive energy

Stand tall and walk with confidence and purpose. *If you act positive, you just may find that you feel more positive.*

How To

REACH OUT FOR HELP

There are many people in your life who want to see you succeed, but ultimately, your success is your responsibility. It's up to you to reach out for help when you need it.



TALK TO YOUR TEACHER

If you have questions, need advice, or are struggling in a class, talk to your teacher.

Teachers usually know if you're having trouble in their class, but they may or may not approach you to see what's going on, or to offer extra help. Asking for help is your responsibility.

Teachers are busy during the class period and usually don't have time to talk to students then. If you need any kind of help, talk to your teacher before or after class to schedule a time to meet—and tell them what you want to talk about. You may want to go over the results of a test, ask for help with an assignment, or inquire about earning extra credit.

If you are struggling and feel you need a tutor, ask your teacher for advice on how you can get some extra help. Perhaps there is a teacher or another student who can tutor you after school or during a study hall. The important thing is to not wait. Ask for help at the earliest sign you need it.

Asking for help isn't a sign of weakness, it's a sign of maturity and a desire to succeed!

"You are never so strong that you don't need help."
Cesar Chavez

How To

WRITE A PAPER

To succeed in school, you must be able to clearly communicate your thoughts and ideas in writing.



THE WRITING PROCESS

Following these steps makes writing a great paper easier and less stressful.

1. Choose a topic

Choose a topic that you're familiar with, or want to learn more about. Make sure that your topic isn't too broad and that there's plenty of information readily available.

2. Gather information

Create a system for organizing your information. Use 3x5 cards, a notebook, and/or printouts from online sources. Be sure to record details (title, author, page number, URL) for each source you use.

When writing a paper, it's important that you do your own work and cite your sources. To learn more, watch this video on academic integrity.



3. Organize your ideas

Before you begin writing, make an outline or diagram of your ideas. Put the main ideas in the order you want to present them, and write your supporting ideas under each main idea.

4. Write the first draft

Expand your outline ideas into paragraphs. Don't worry about making mistakes at this point.

How To

MANAGE YOUR TIME

We all have the same amount of time each day. How we use this time is time management. When you use your time well, you have time for the things you need to do *and* the things you want to do.



BE ORGANIZED

Use organization tools

Use a planner to keep track of assignments, tests, and appointments. Use a wall or phone calendar for events and project deadlines.

Make to-do lists

- ▶ Each day, make a list of all the things you need to do. Rate each item as an A (*must do*), B (*should do*), or C (*want to do today, but it can wait*).
- ▶ Take all of the As and rank them in order of importance (1, 2, 3...). Do the same with the Bs and Cs. Rewrite your list with the As at the top (in order of importance), followed by the Bs and Cs.
- ▶ Cross things off as they get done. At the end of each day, take the tasks that didn't get done and put them on the next day's to-do list.

Make a weekly schedule

Using an hour-by-hour schedule will help you organize your time after school. First, write in all appointments, practices, chores, and meal times. You will then be able to see when you have blocks of time for homework and studying—and when you have time for relaxation and social activities.



How To

TAKE TESTS

Doing well on tests involves more than just studying the material. You also need to be a smart test-taker.



TEST-TAKING TIPS

Get off to a good start...

- ▶ When you go to class, make sure that you have everything you need for the test.
- ▶ While you are waiting for the test to begin, stay calm and think positive thoughts. If you're nervous or anxious, take several deep breaths.
- ▶ As soon as you get your test, write anything you want to remember at the top (such as names, dates, or mathematical formulas).

Develop a plan

Before you begin answering questions, quickly look over the entire test and decide how much time you'll spend on each section or question. For example, if a test has 25 multiple choice and 2 essay questions, you could plan to spend 10 minutes on the multiple choice questions and 20 minutes on each essay.

Don't get stuck on difficult questions

Don't spend too much time on any one question. Mark it and come back to it later.

Check your answers

If you have time, check all of your answers, even the ones you know are correct. You may find that you've made a careless mistake. *Always use all of the time you're given.*

How To

DO GROUP WORK

Being able to work as part of a group is an important skill. It's also a skill that colleges and employers value—and one that will help you succeed in school and beyond.



GROUP ROLES

Group members take on a variety of roles. Some roles are positive, and some are not.

Positive roles

In successful groups, members take on these positive roles to help the group complete their task.

- ▶ **Leader** – takes charge of the group
- ▶ **Secretary** – records the group's ideas and plans
- ▶ **Encourager** – supports and helps group members stay positive
- ▶ **Contributor** – offers new ideas and ways to complete task

Negative roles

Unfortunately, people sometimes take on negative roles that make group work more difficult.

- ▶ **Blocker** – opposes every idea, but doesn't offer suggestions
- ▶ **Disrupter** – uses group time to play around or be in the spotlight
- ▶ **Non-participant** – doesn't contribute or do their share of the work

Think about the roles you've assumed in the past. Are there things you can do to be a more positive and productive group member in the future?

How To

STAY ENGAGED

When you're engaged in your classes, you are more likely to learn and remember what's being taught.



KEEP YOUR MIND ENGAGED

Come to class prepared

Have all of your homework done. It's very hard to stay engaged when you don't know what everyone is talking about. Also, be well-rested, alert, and ready to learn.

Eliminate distractions

If students are allowed to have cell phones in class, turn yours off and put it away. To help eliminate all distractions, put away anything that isn't directly related to what you are doing in class.

Get involved in your learning

Try giving yourself a reason to focus and pay attention. Challenge yourself to take notes that are good enough to share with others—or imagine that you will have to report on what's being taught.

Participate in class

Don't be afraid to ask questions about something you aren't clear on or want to know more about. (Just make sure your questions relate directly to the current discussion.) When your teacher asks questions, raise your hand to answer, and try to be actively engaged in class discussions.

Want more tips for succeeding in class?
Watch this short video!



How To

MAKE PRESENTATIONS

To deliver an outstanding presentation, you must have content worth listening to and be able to present the material with confidence.



PREPARE THE PRESENTATION

Start and finish strong

Begin with something that will get everyone's attention—a personal story, a humorous quote, or an interesting statistic. End with a thought-provoking story, quick summary, quote, or question.

Prepare note cards

While note cards can help keep you on track, you should know your presentation well enough that you don't need to look at your note cards very often.

Write key words and phrases large enough so that a quick glance will provide you with the memory cue you need.

Include visual aids

Visual aids and props can help engage an audience, but you should use them wisely. Too many props and visual aids can be distracting and difficult to manage. If you're using presentation software, choose an appropriate theme and don't use too many fonts or animations.

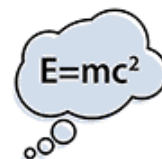
Practice, practice, practice

Practice talking slowly, speaking clearly, and putting pauses between ideas and sections. Time your presentation to make sure it's the correct length and then record it. Look for ways to improve your presentation and record it again.

How To

MEMORIZE

Whether you want to remember facts for a test or the name of someone you just met, memorizing information is a skill that can be developed.



MEMORIZATION STRATEGIES

Use all of your senses

The more senses you involve, the more likely you are to remember information. For example, to memorize a vocabulary word, look at it, close your eyes, and try to see it in your mind. Then say it and write it down.

Look for logical connections

For example, to remember that Homer wrote *The Odyssey*, just think, "Homer is an odd name."

Create unforgettable images

Take the information you're trying to remember and create a memorable image in your mind. For example, to remember that Pizarro conquered the Inca empire, imagine a pizza covering an ink spot.

Create silly sentences

Use the first letter of the words you want to remember to make up a silly sentence. For example, to remember the names of the eight planets in order (Mercury, Venus, Earth, Mars, Jupiter, Saturn, Uranus, and Neptune), make up a sentence like this one:
My very elegant mother juggled seven ugly neckties.

Review often

When you have something to memorize, concentrate on learning it, take a break, and then go back and review it. Keep reviewing until you know it.

How To IMPROVE ATTENDANCE

Attendance is the #1 school success factor! To succeed in school, you need to be there every day. Even if you miss just a few days here and there, your grades are likely to suffer.



WHY REGULAR SCHOOL ATTENDANCE IS IMPORTANT

Better grades

The better your attendance, the higher your grades.

Less stress

When you miss school, you have lots of assignments to make up—and that can be very stressful.

Learning is easier

Learning a little every day in class is much easier than having to learn everything you missed on your own.

Time with friends

When you are at school, you're able to spend time with your friends—and make new friends.

Personal development

Regular attendance means you learn more. And the more you learn, the more intelligent, interesting, and capable you become.

Help and support

Your school is full of people who can offer you advice and guidance, like your teachers and counselor. If you aren't in school, you can't develop relationships with the people who want to help and support you.

Homework Tips for Students

To succeed in school, you need to get your homework done correctly and on time. Using the following tips will help you make the most of your study time and get better grades.



Create a study plan

Before you begin studying, decide exactly what you want to get done and the order in which you're going to do it. Be specific, and start with the things that are the most important.

Have a good place to study

Your study area should be quiet, comfortable, well-lit, and have a surface for writing. Equip your study area with the supplies you need.

Avoid procrastination

Procrastinating wastes time and energy. If you have a hard time getting started on your studying, begin with something you can finish quickly or with a subject you like.

Break tasks into manageable chunks

Break down large assignments or projects into smaller, manageable tasks. Focus on completing one task at a time to avoid feeling overwhelmed.

Change it up

Alternate types of work. For example: 1) read short story; 2) do math problems; 3) read history.

With lots of homework, you need good time-management skills. Check out this short video to learn more.



VIDEO

Top 10 Reasons to Do Your Best in School

Doing your best in school doesn't mean always getting straight As—it means making a consistent effort to do what you can to succeed!

Here are 10 good reasons why you should always try to do your best in school.

1. You'll have more opportunities.

The better you do in school, the more college and career options you will have when you graduate from high school.

2. You'll become more confident.

When you work hard and realize that you can do whatever you set your mind to, your self-confidence will soar.

3. You'll earn respect from others.

When you consistently work hard in school—even if your grades aren't always perfect—you will earn the respect of your teachers and peers.

4. You'll develop lifelong skills.

The habits that you develop from doing your best in school will also help you succeed in a career and in life. Habits such as setting goals, managing your time, and being organized are skills you will use throughout your lifetime.

Top 10 Ways to Improve Your Grades

To help you zero in on how you can improve your grades, go through the list below and put a check mark by the things you should do.

- 1 Be more engaged in your classes.**
Being engaged in your classes pays off in lots of ways. When you ask and answer questions and participate in discussions, you learn more (which means you have less to learn on your own), your teachers see that you're trying, and the time goes a lot faster.
- 2 Improve your attendance.**
Attendance is the number one success factor. You can't succeed in your classes and get good grades if you're often a "no-show."
- 3 Complete homework assignments.**
When you do your homework, you get more out of your classes, do better on tests, and get higher grades.
- 4 Have a more positive attitude.**
Having a positive, can-do attitude can make all the difference. Use positive self-talk and believe in your ability to succeed.
- 5 Take better notes.**
Since most test items come from material that's been presented in class, it's important to have good class notes to study from. Take organized notes, and underline or highlight the most important information.

Five Steps to Academic Success

Whether you are an A student or are looking to improve your grades, these five steps will put you on the path to academic success—and a bright future!



1. Get organized

Use a student planner. Take your planner to every class and record daily assignments, quizzes, tests, important dates, activities, and appointments.

Make daily to-do lists. Put the most important tasks at the top. Cross things off as they get done, and put unfinished tasks on the next day's to-do list.

Manage your time. If you never seem to have enough time, identify activities you can eliminate, shorten, or postpone. *Never sacrifice sleep to get everything done.*

2. Succeed in class

Have all homework done. In many classes, homework is a significant portion of your final grade. Don't think of homework as something you should do—think of it as something you must do.

Participate in class. Participating makes class more interesting and helps keep your mind focused. Ask and answer questions and participate in class discussions.

Ask for help. If you're having difficulty with a class, your teacher will be happy to help, but you need to ask. If there's something else that's making it difficult for you to succeed (a bully, problems at home, a health issue), see your counselor.

Top 10 Ways to Overcome Test Anxiety

A little nervousness before a test is normal, but if you're overly anxious, it's hard to do your best. The good news? There are ways to overcome test anxiety.



1. Start studying early

Have all reading done early, spread your studying out, and give yourself enough time to prepare. Cramming the night before a test or exam only increases anxiety.

2. Be prepared

Study enough to feel confident you know the material. Being well prepared increases confidence and helps reduce test anxiety.

3. Visualize taking the test

The day before the test, visualize yourself confidently walking into the classroom, taking the test, and correctly answering the questions.

4. Use relaxation techniques

Before you begin a test, take a deep breath. Breathe in, count to four, and breathe out. Repeat. This will help you calm down and relax. *For more calming techniques, watch this short video.*



VIDEO

Choosing the Right Classes



To succeed in school, you need to be in the right classes. To help ensure that you put together the best course schedule for your academic and career goals, consider the following.

Know your options

Learn all you can about the programs and courses available at your school and in your district. Most high schools offer the following:

- ▶ career and technology programs for the students who like a more "hands-on" approach to learning or want to explore a career.
- ▶ programs that allow students to take college courses in high school (dual-enrollment).
- ▶ advanced, honors, and AP classes for students who excel in specific subjects.
- ▶ assistance for students who need extra help.

If you want to go to college

Four-year colleges recommend that students take the following college prep courses in high school:

- ▶ 4 years of English
- ▶ 3 years of science
- ▶ 3-4 years of math
- ▶ 3 years of social studies
- ▶ 2-3 years of one world language
- ▶ 1 year of fine or performing arts

Competitive schools and programs consider these courses to be the minimum requirements. They recommend that students challenge themselves by taking advanced courses whenever possible.

SMART GOALS

Goals give you direction, focus, and purpose. They also give you something to work toward. Just make sure that your goals are SMART goals.

S

Specific

Specific goals are well-defined and clear-cut. Instead of, "I want to do better in school," a more specific goal would be, "I want to earn a 3.0 GPA."

M

Measurable

Measurable goals make it easier to know how successful you are. Instead of, "I will get in shape," a better goal would be, "I will be able to walk a mile in less than 15 minutes."

A

Achievable

Achievable goals set you up for success because they're goals you can realistically accomplish. Improving your math grade one letter is achievable. Raising a grade from a D to an A probably isn't.

R

Relevant

Setting relevant goals ensures that you're working toward goals that are worthwhile. For example, learning a new computer program is a more worthwhile goal than beating a video game score.

T

Time-bound

Time-bound goals have a definite time or date they are to be accomplished. "Complete my science project by Friday" is more motivating than "Complete my science project."

HOW TO ACHIEVE YOUR GOALS



Accomplishing your goals involves careful planning, dedication, and consistency. Here are steps and strategies that are sure to help you achieve yours.

SET CLEAR, SPECIFIC GOALS

Make sure your goals are precise and measurable. Clearly define what you want to achieve, why it's important, and when you want to achieve it.

CREATE A PLAN

Break down your goals into smaller, manageable tasks or milestones. Develop a step-by-step plan to reach each milestone, including timelines and deadlines.

STAY ORGANIZED

Use tools like planners, calendars, to-do lists, and/or project management apps to organize your tasks and your schedule. Keep track of your progress and adjust your plan as needed.

DEVELOP A ROUTINE

Establish a daily or weekly routine that includes dedicated time for working towards your goals. Consistency in pursuit of your goals will help build momentum and progress.

STAY COMMITTED AND PERSISTENT

Stay dedicated to your goals, even when facing challenges or setbacks. Adapt your approach to overcome obstacles, and don't get discouraged when things don't go according to plan.

Overcoming Procrastination

Do you have a hard time getting started on your schoolwork or chores? The tendency to procrastinate is a common challenge for many students. Here are some effective strategies to help you overcome procrastination.

Understand the root cause

Try to identify the underlying reasons for your procrastination. It could be fear of failure, lack of interest, feeling overwhelmed, or the desire to always be perfect. Understanding why you procrastinate can help you make a plan to address it.

Develop routines

Routines can help you get things done in a timely manner. For example, getting into the routine of always doing your homework right after dinner could help you get your homework done early—and have time for other things.

Use time-management techniques

Employ time-management methods like the Pomodoro Technique (work for 25 minutes, then take a 5-minute break) or the “2-minute rule” (if a task will take less than 2 minutes, do it immediately).

To learn more about time-management techniques, check out this short video.



ATTENDANCE

Why is being in school every day important?

IT IMPACTS YOUR GRADES

Even if you miss just a few days here and there, your grades are likely to suffer.

IT AFFECTS HOW YOU LEARN

When you are in class, you learn the material along with your classmates. When you're not in class, you have to learn the material on your own, which is stressful, time-consuming, and a much less effective way to learn.

GRADUATION IS AT RISK

Chronic absenteeism is the leading indicator that a student will drop out of high school and not graduate.

YOUR FUTURE DEPENDS ON IT

When you're in school every day, you get a better education, which means that you will have more career options and a much brighter future!



For more on why you should be in school every day, watch this video!



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10 WAYS TO REDUCE STRESS



These 10 tips will help you manage stress, find your calm, and get more enjoyment out of life.

1. IDENTIFY YOUR STRESSORS. Make a list of the things that are stressing you out and determine how each can be dealt with. Having a plan will help you feel less overwhelmed and more empowered.

2. TAKE TIME FOR YOURSELF. Do something that has made you feel calm and relaxed in the past. Listen to music, go for a walk, or spend time in nature.

3. IF IT'S BEYOND YOUR CONTROL, LET IT GO. If you're stressed about things you can't change, let those worries go completely.

4. RELAX. Close your eyes and imagine a relaxing scene. Breathe in slowly and slowly exhale. Repeat.

5. EAT HEALTHY. Having a healthy diet improves your mood, motivation, and mental health.

6. GET ENOUGH SLEEP. The amount of sleep you get affects your mood and your ability to tackle problems. Never sacrifice sleep to get everything done.

ANXIETY

Information and Coping Tips

Occasional anxiety is a part of life—it's a natural reaction to events or situations that are frightening or stressful.

The start of a new school year, waiting to hear if you passed the test, made the team, or got the job—all of these things can make us feel nervous and anxious.

When we feel anxious, our bodies often react by releasing adrenaline, which can increase our heart rate and breathing. For most people, the feelings of anxiety go away when the situation that caused it is over, or the problem is resolved.

OVERLY ANXIOUS?

Some people suffer from anxiety that's persistent. Their anxiety affects their well-being and interferes with their day-to-day lives. These people often:

- ▶ worry excessively and become fearful.
- ▶ have difficulty sleeping and concentrating.
- ▶ feel irritable, restless, and on edge.

If this sounds like you, talk to a counselor or doctor. They can help you explore ways to lessen your anxiety.

WHAT IS A PANIC ATTACK?

A panic attack is a sudden feeling of severe fear and distress. A person who is having a panic attack may have chest pains, nausea, sweating, shaking—and feel like something is physically wrong.

If you experience a panic attack, take deep breaths and get to a safe place until it passes.

Growth vs. Fixed Mindset



Sometimes your successes, failures, talents, and shortcomings are defined by how you look at them—and by the mindset you have.

A fixed mindset is the belief that you either are or aren't good at something. A growth mindset, on the other hand, means you believe that with effort, you can develop and improve your skills and abilities. Here are some examples.

Fixed mindset	Growth mindset
If you aren't good at something right away, you probably just don't have a "knack" for it.	Anyone can be good at something as long as they practice and work hard at it.
It's better to stick with what you know so you don't fail.	Stepping out of your comfort zone helps you learn and grow.
Failure is something to fear.	Failure is an opportunity to learn.

Ways to Build a Growth Mindset

- ▶ Turn off the fixed mindset voice that tells you you're going to fail.
- ▶ If something doesn't turn out the way you want, instead of getting frustrated or giving up, think about how you can do it differently.
- ▶ Know the power of the word yet.
I don't understand it...yet.
I don't know how to do that...yet.
I'm not good at this...yet.



For more, watch this quick video.

VIDEO

Top 10 Ways to Develop a Growth Mindset



Here are 10 things you can do to build a growth mindset and become a better you.

1. Use positive self-talk.

When you talk to yourself, be kind. If the voice in your head is negative or critical, change the message and use self-talk that's positive and encouraging.

2. Have a can-do attitude.

Fear of failure holds so many people back in life. When you believe that you can do whatever you set your mind to, you open yourself up to exciting new experiences and growth.

3. Use the power of yet.

When you feel frustrated because something isn't going well, adding the word *yet* reminds you to be patient and keep at it. "I don't know how to do this...yet."

4. Develop your interests and skills.

Whether it's playing a sport or knitting a sweater, find out what brings you joy and spend time doing it. As you develop your skills and interests, you'll become a more accomplished, confident, and interesting person.

The Power of YET



Once you learn to add the word *yet* to your thoughts and statements, all kinds of things become possible.

When you feel frustrated because something isn't going well, or you can't get something quite right, adding the word *yet* reminds you to be patient, stay hopeful, and keep at it.

Take a moment to look at these two sentences.

I don't understand this.

I don't understand this yet.

See the difference in the second sentence—how adding the word yet changes the meaning?

Adding the word *yet* to a statement shows that you have a growth mindset, and that you aren't going to give up.

This is the power of YET!

When you add the word *yet* to your statements, you're saying that you're not at a dead end—instead, you're saying that you are still working at it, and that you're hopeful you'll succeed.

Here are some examples.

- ▶ I'm not ready for the test yet.
- ▶ I can't do this math problem yet.
- ▶ I'm not fast enough yet.

Be Open to Feedback



Receiving negative feedback can be hard, but it might provide information you can use to improve yourself and grow.

Negative feedback or criticism can be tough to take, but what if you learned how to make it work for you? What if you learned how to take negative feedback and use it to become a more confident, capable version of yourself?

Whether it's a low grade on a test, a coach critiquing your skills, or a friend pointing out something you don't like to hear, you can use their feedback to motivate you to study harder, practice more, or become a better friend.

Evaluate the feedback you receive

To make sure the feedback you receive is going to be helpful, ask yourself:

- ▶ Is the feedback or criticism true?
- ▶ Is this meant to help me or hurt me?
- ▶ Is the feedback information I can use?

Not all criticism is well-intentioned or useful. Sometimes those who aren't happy with their own lives will try to make others feel badly about themselves. However, if the criticism is valid and comes from someone who cares or wants to help you, let it sting for a moment—and then use it to motivate you to improve and grow.

Grit

The Key to Mental Toughness

Grit means being tough, and having what it takes to persevere through difficult times. It means working toward a goal with a spirit that won't be defeated. For some, this mental toughness comes naturally. Others have a harder time staying strong in the face of adversity.

What does grit mean to you?

Because we all have different challenges in life, grit means something different to everyone. If you have a hard time speaking up in class, it can mean participating in class discussions. If you're trying to get in shape, it might mean not missing a workout. Think about a challenge you're facing right now. Define what it means for you to have grit as you deal with this challenge.

How can you build grit?

To help you build grit when facing a challenge, have a plan for what you'll do when it gets hard or you just feel like giving up.

Think of a challenge you're facing now, and of an obstacle you'll likely encounter. What is the obstacle and how will you deal with it?

Academic Integrity

Academic integrity means that when it comes to academic endeavors, you are honest and responsible. You don't do anything to give yourself an unfair academic advantage, and the grades you receive are a result of your own efforts.



Never compromise your academic integrity by doing the following:

- ▶ Cheat or help others cheat on a test
- ▶ Copy something from the internet or another source without acknowledgement
- ▶ Receive information about a test from someone who's already taken it
- ▶ Summarize another's ideas without recognizing where they came from
- ▶ Copy someone else's homework
- ▶ Provide false information or excuses for incomplete assignments or absences

Always do your own work. You'll learn more, and your grades will be something you can truly be proud of!

Avoiding plagiarism is a key component of academic integrity. Turn over to learn about avoiding plagiarism.

Using AI

Dos and Don'ts for Students

AI (artificial intelligence) can be a valuable tool for learning. However, as with any technology, there are certain dos and don'ts that students should be aware of. The following tips will help ensure that you use AI ethically and responsibly.

- Do** Use AI for educational purposes. You can ask AI questions and get detailed answers and explanations. You can also use AI to generate ideas for a paper or project, or to help you solve a tough math problem.
- Do** Be critical of AI-generated content. When using AI-generated content, review the results carefully and cross-reference the information with other reputable sources to ensure accuracy.
- Do** Protect your personal information. Be cautious when providing personal data to AI applications. Only share information that's necessary for educational purposes.
- Do** Ask questions and seek help. If you don't understand how an AI system works or have concerns about its usage, don't hesitate to ask your teachers or school administrators for clarification and guidance.

Critical Thinking

Critical thinking is the act of examining the facts and challenging your assumptions so that you can evaluate information objectively. Essentially, it means that you think independently, clearly, and rationally when evaluating information.

What are the benefits of critical thinking?

Better decision making. When you stop and think about what you're going to believe, say, or do, you make smarter decisions.

Better relationships. Critical thinking helps you think more deeply about others' feelings and points of view.

Better future. Critical thinking is one of the most sought after skills in the workplace today. All employers are looking for people who can use information to solve problems and make smart decisions.

Get the Facts!

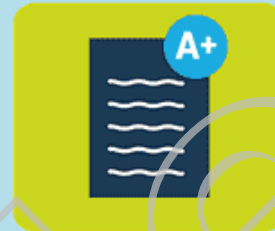
At some point, everyone has made assumptions and formed opinions based on emotions, or on incomplete or incorrect information. Think about a time you've gotten the wrong idea about something because you didn't stop and think about it. How did that turn out?

Building critical thinking skills encourages you to gather the facts, and to think about what those facts are telling you—before you form an opinion or take action.



REASONS TO BE IN SCHOOL EVERY DAY

1. Better grades.
The better your attendance, the higher your grades.



2. Less stress. When you miss school, you have lots of assignments to make up. That's stressful.

3. You learn more. Learning a little every day in class is much better than having to learn everything you missed on your own.

4. More likely to graduate. Students who have poor attendance are less likely to graduate.



5. Time with friends. When you are at school, you can spend time with friends (and make new ones).

6. Good habits.
You'll develop good habits for success—like showing up every day and being on time.

For more on the importance of attendance, watch this video!



VIDEO

Doing Research

Information for Students

Whether you're writing a research paper for English or gathering material for an informative speech in history, doing research helps you develop your reading, writing, and critical-thinking skills. Here's what you need to know about doing research efficiently and effectively.

Online searches

- ▶ You can usually count on websites ending in *.edu* (education-related), *.gov* (government-related), and *.org* (nonprofit-related) to include credible information.
- ▶ Try to find a copyright year to indicate how up-to-date the information on the site is.
- ▶ Never use Wikipedia as a primary source of information (though the citations at the bottom of an article's page may yield good sources).
- ▶ For more reliable results, use Google Scholar instead of Google to search for sources.
- ▶ Putting your search terms in quotation marks will only give results that contain that exact phrase.
- ▶ Putting *or* between two search terms will give you results with either of the terms; putting *and* between two terms will give you only results that contain both.

Libraries

- ▶ Take advantage of your school and public libraries. They have a wealth of resources, and if you can't find something, chances are a librarian will be able to.

Having a Healthy School-Life Balance



Information for Students

Maintaining a healthy balance between school and life is crucial for your overall well-being, academic success, and personal development. Here are some strategies to help you achieve a healthy school-life balance.

Set Goals

- ▶ Set achievable short-term and long-term personal and academic goals.
- ▶ Develop step-by-step plans to reach your goals, and reward yourself for your successes.

Develop time-management skills

- ▶ Make to-do lists or use a planner to prioritize tasks and assignments.
- ▶ Allocate specific blocks of time for studying and completing your work.
- ▶ If you don't have enough time for everything you need to do, think about what activities you can shorten, eliminate, or postpone.

Manage stress

- ▶ Have ways to manage stress—do yoga, practice mindfulness, or have relaxing hobbies.

For more tips on reducing stress, check out this short video.



VIDEO