

## The Five Day Study Plan

The key to performing well on exams is starting early and using short, frequent study sessions. The human brain learns academic material faster and better for an exam if done in brief blocks of time spread out over several days, rather than in a lengthy “cram” session. Why five days? Research has proven processing information five to seven times is required to make the shift from short to long term memory. Information stored in long term memory, in most cases, is retrievable even if anxiety sets in. This level of preparation has also been noted to combat test anxiety.

### Keys to the Five Day Study Plan

- Short, frequent learning sessions are the key to the Five Day Study Plan. It should be noted that if one hour a day is spent studying for ten days verses ten hours of study over a couple of days, brain performance and retention will be much more efficient.
- **Space out learning** over a period of five (or more) days. (If the level of difficulty is high or if there is a lot of material to be studied, five days will probably not be enough preparation time. Each student is unique and for some, eight to ten days may be required to achieve an A or a B on an exam. This is just a general guideline.)
- Divide the material to be covered into “**chunks**” of information—preferably by chapter.
- Each day, prepare a chunk of material and review a chunk of material. Use **active** (writing and reciting) study strategies. Refer to the example below. (See page two for five day time frame example.)
- Self-testing is included to measure learning.

**During preparation, the student is becoming familiar with possible testing material. When reviewing, the student is simply checking for understanding of possible testing material.**

Prepare	Review
Re-copy/Re-organize notes (Cornell format)	Study notes. Cover questions, recite answers then reverse the sequence
Predict Possible Essay Questions	Practice reciting main points and writing answers
Make flash cards, vocab cards, formula cards	Practice flash cards by reciting; retest items missed
End of chapter questions or practice test	Write out answers and add to notes
Draw a Picture	“One picture is worth a thousand words” Recreate the picture, graph, or concept map
Answer Questions on Study Guide or at End of Chapter	Practice answering the questions to the study guide in your own words
List Practice Problems	Work practice problems
Make Formula Cards	Practice writing formulas
Re-mark text and star unknowns	Recite these points out loud
Select and construct possible exam questions	Take the practice test, written or recited out loud. Retest.

### Instructions for Preparing the Five Day Study Plan

1. Break the material into chunks. Usually, material can be broken down by chapter.
2. Plan to spend a minimum of two hours studying, each day, over the next five days.
3. Studying is accomplished in two ways: Preparing and Reviewing

Example of the Time Frame for the Five Day Study Plan:

(\*Time will vary according to the level of difficulty of material.)

Tuesday:			
Prepare	→	1 <sup>st</sup> Chunk	2 Hours
Wednesday:			
Prepare	→	2 <sup>nd</sup> Chunk	2 Hours
Review	→	1 <sup>st</sup> Chunk	30 Minutes
Thursday:			
Prepare	→	3 <sup>rd</sup> Chunk	1 to ½ Hours
Review	→	2 <sup>nd</sup> Chunk	30 Minutes
Review	→	1 <sup>st</sup> Chunk	15 Minutes
Friday:			
Prepare	→	3 <sup>rd</sup> Chunk	1 Hour
Review	→	2 <sup>nd</sup> Chunk	30 Minutes
Review	→	1 <sup>st</sup> Chunk	15 Minutes
Review	→	1 <sup>st</sup> Chunk	10 Minutes
Sunday:			
Review	→	4 <sup>th</sup> Chunk	30 Minutes
Review	→	3 <sup>rd</sup> Chunk	20 Minutes
Review	→	2 <sup>nd</sup> Chunk	10 Minutes
Review	→	1 <sup>st</sup> Chunk	10 Minutes
Self-Test			

### Five Day Study Plan

Exam Date \_\_\_\_\_ Course \_\_\_\_\_

Day One	Prepare What?	Prepare How?	Review What?	Review How?
Day Two				
Day Three				
Day Four				
Day Five				