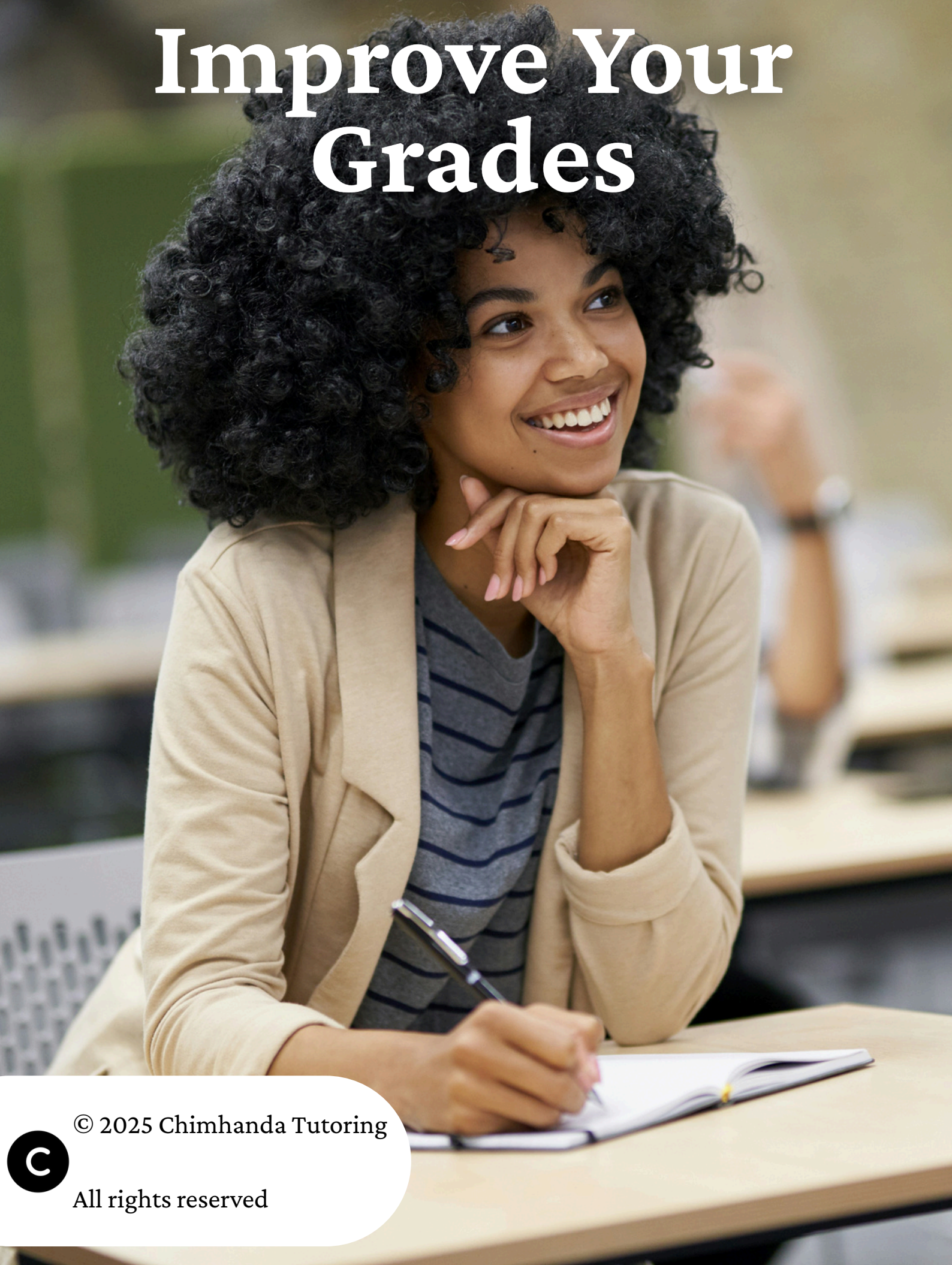


Improve Your Grades



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YOUR MINDSET MATTERS

“He’s just naturally smart.”

If you have ever thought this, then you have a problem. Let’s fix it

Your mindset, how you think about learning and your grades - **influences your school performance**. When you attribute good grades to anything other than work ethic, you take on a mediocre mentality.

Too harsh? **It had to be said**. Here is why

If you keep blaming your teachers, parents, and circumstances for your challenges in your education, you make yourself an innocent victim.

"The teacher is bad!"
"Most of the class failed too!"
"This subject is just too hard!"

Right? Are you guilty of this?

The first step is too **stop this language**. It does not help you in any way at all!

Reactive vs. Proactive Mindset

Having a proactive Mindset means you **take responsibility** for your life and make things happen.

Many struggling students have a reactive mindset. They believe their poor performance in school is caused by events beyond their control. They see themselves as innocent **victims of bad teachers**, difficult subjects, or unlucky circumstances.

On the other hand, students with a proactive mindset think differently. They know it’s **pointless to push blame**. So instead of making excuses and looking for whose fault it is, they look for solutions.

Excuses like “**the test was too hard**” are sometimes valid. What do you do then? **You take responsibility** for your education and make sure that **next time you're prepared** for that brick (slang for a hard test)

You’re responsible for your grades.
If you want to improve, it’s up to you.

HAVE A GROWTH MINDSET

Proactive Behaviour

If the teacher is bad, → Watch YouTube tutorials, ask a friend, or get a tutor. Find other ways to learn.

If you fail a test, → Review mistakes, learn from them. Change your study approach.

If a subject feels hard, → Research how to learn better; learning is a skill.



“Grades are not a measure of smartness. Never! Just a measure of work ethic and strategy.”

A higher form of **being proactive** can be achieved by **studying ahead of class**.

Here is how you can try it:

Start small, with a section. Suppose tomorrow’s mathematics class is **about quadratic equations**. You take twenty minutes to **watch one YouTube video** about the section.

Simple, but a totally different world!



Fixed and Growth Mindsets

A fixed mindset says:

"I'm either smart or I'm not."

"If I fail, that means I'm not good at this."

A growth mindset says:

"I can get better if I put in more effort."

"My past grades don't limit my potential"

A growth mindset will never allow you to say, “Tom is smarter than me.” Why would you say that? Are you a PhD psychologist trained to measure intelligence?

Just because Tom got an 80% on a pop quiz in grade 9 **does not mean him smarter** than you. **He just studied** for the test, and **you did not**.

How To Adopt A Growth Mindset

A growth mindset is the simple belief that you can improve and get better. That's it.

Who do you think is more likely to study, a student who **believes they can improve** (growth mindset) vs a student who believes that they will always fail maths no matter how hard they try (fixed mindset)?

HAVE A STUDY SYSTEM



Fastest route to bad grades? Only study when:

- A test is coming up.
- You feel like it.
- Your parents force you to study.

Unfortunately, this is the **only strategy for many students**. Studying without a proper study system is like **going to the gym once a month and expecting six-pack abs**—it won't happen. Most high performing students don't study more than the struggling; they study smarter, they **have a study system**.

Escape The Cycle of Doom

If you do not have a study system, you're probably trapped in the **cycle of doom**.



CYCLE OF DOOM

1. You avoid studying a subject because it feels hard.
2. You do badly on a test.
3. Now the subject feels even harder.
4. You avoid studying it even more and perform even worse.
5. Repeat.

Sound familiar? A study system **breaks this cycle** and puts you in control. A study system is essentially **a study timetable and a set of rules** for that study timetable.

Rules for your study system

Rule 1: Understand What Studying is

- Mindlessly reading your notes is not studying.
- Copying the textbook and calling them notes. [I hate it when students do this]
- Doing homework is not studying.

Studying is when you **go over content** on your own **without being instructed** to do so. Simple. The study strategy you use does not matter, although **some are more efficient**. What matters is that you're **putting in energy** into your academics.

Rule 2: Study for short sessions

- Study for about 2 hours a day. It's more than enough if done daily.
- Avoid studying after 7:00 pm. At that time, you're no longer productive.



Rule 3: Plan What You'll Study

- Don't sit down and think, "Okay, what should I study today?"
- Plan your study topics in advance.
- Example: "On Tuesday, I'll do Math Chapter 4, Exercises 1-5."

Your Study Timetable

- Should have **consistency**. Thus, does not change every week.
- Should be **balanced**.
- Should be **simple** and installed in a calendar app. See example.

How to Make Studying Easier

- ✓ Study in a quiet environment.
- ✓ Avoid distractions when studying.
- ✓ Avoid using your phone in anyway during study time.
- ✓ Avoid copying down the textbook and calling it studying.
- ✓ Avoid study marathons [after 3 hours, you need a break]
- ✓ Avoid group studying [for groups, do discussions only]

TAKE ACTION

Make a weekly timetable and make sure:

- You study daily, with two hours a day.
- Make sure that it is balanced
- Always ensure that each study slot has a goal

Respect Your Study Time

Your study time should be **non-negotiable**. 17h00 - 18h00 **should not be moved** to 18h00 - 19h00 just because you want to finish your episode. If your study timetable says you should start studying at 17h00, **stick to it**.



SET 'SMART' GOALS



“I want to get better grades”

“Better grades” are **not a goal**. If your academic goals are “**to get 80's**”, then chances are, **you will never get there**. Here is why:

Vague goals are hard to achieve because they have no plan. A goal without a plan is just a wish. If you seriously want to improve, just wishing for good grades isn't enough; you **need to set SMART goals**, create a plan and take action.

If your goal is to improve from 55% to 65% in mathematics, ask yourself:

How many hours will I study math per week?
When will I study these hours?
What resources will I use to study?
Who will I ask for help from if I struggle?

Break Down Big Goals

A goal like “*I want to go from 40% to 80% this term*” is too big. When a **goal is too big**, you set yourself up for **disappointment**. Instead, break it into smaller mini goals. For example you can aim for **10% - 15% improvements** each term. Then create a plan about how you will achieve those goals.

“I know what I want”

“I want a 75% final mark in term 2 for chemistry;

I will achieve this by reading the textbook consistently and watching YouTube videos”

SMART goals defined

SPECIFIC



What exactly do you want to achieve? The more precise the better! Saying you want to pass math isn't enough. What does "pass" mean? Is it 50%? Or 85%?

MEASURABLE



How will you tell if you've reached your goal. How many hours will you study per week to get good grades? Track your study hours and test scores.

ATTAINABLE



Be honest about what you can realistically achieve within the time and means that you have. You must believe that your goal is achievable.

RELEVANT



Align your goals with your long-term dreams. Make sure they matter to you. It's easier to accomplish a goal that's very important to you than one that's not. How important is passing to you?

TIME-BOUND



Set a timeframe for achieving your goal. This creates a sense of urgency and helps you stay focused. Set a deadline (e.g., by the end of the term).

ASK FOR HELP



It's Okay to Ask for Help

Asking for help **might be challenging**. It can feel like an **admission of defeat**. Like a cry to the world: I am not enough. After all, the “**smart kids**” do not seem to need any help - they **just get good grades**.

By that logic, then going to the dentist means you're weak and you have bad teeth. Exactly! No, going to the dentist actually results in you getting better teeth.

Same thing applies for grades. Most students who do well **actually have private tutors** that guide them throughout the entire syllabus **from day one** and that is why they are getting good grades. Not because they are “smarter”. Here is another example to drive the point.

Imagine you know nothing about cars and you're trying to fix a broken car without a mechanic. It would take forever, right? It's the same with school. **Why waste hours** being confused when you can ask someone who already understands and can explain to you.

Who Should You Ask for Help?

Teachers

Best for: Understanding tricky concepts, and knowing what's important for tests.

Don't sit quietly in class if you're lost, **raise your hand and ask questions!** If you're shy, talk to the teacher after class. Even if you feel your teacher isn't great at explaining, they can still guide you to useful resources.

Friends & Study Groups

Best for: Quick explanations, motivation, different ways of understanding a topic.

Ask a classmate who's doing well, “Hey, do you understand this? How do you study this?”

Tutors (For Personal Support)

Best for: One-on-one help, fast-tracking your improvement.

A tutor can identify your weak spots and help you improve faster. If you're serious about levelling up, invest in tutoring—**it's worth it.**

Main Point

Asking for help isn't a weakness — it's how you get better, faster.

The smartest move?

Get a tutor & escape bad grades.

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From Struggling To Confident

