



Revision Tips

These are our top ten tips to get you revising properly. Please note that some are more appropriate for different subjects and that mixing them up is not only more interesting but also more effective!

1. Active Recall

What it is: Instead of passively re-reading notes, actively test your memory.

How to do it: Close your book and write down or say everything you remember about a topic.

Example: After learning about World War I causes, write a list from memory of all the long-term and short-term causes. Then check your notes and fill in what you missed.

Why it works: It strengthens memory by forcing your brain to retrieve the information, making future recall easier.

2. Spaced Repetition

What it is: Reviewing material at increasingly spaced intervals over time.

How to do it: Use a revision timetable or an app like Anki to schedule repeated reviews of topics.

Example: Revise a biology topic today, then again in 2 days, 5 days, and 10 days.

Why it works: Your brain is more likely to store information long-term when it is reviewed just before it's about to be forgotten.

3. Past Paper Practice

What it is: Answering questions from real exam papers under timed conditions.

How to do it: Set a timer, sit down with no notes, and attempt a full or partial past paper.

Example: In GCSE Maths, do a full Paper 1 (non-calculator) under exam conditions, then mark it using the official mark scheme.

Why it works: It helps you understand how examiners phrase questions, how to manage time, and how marks are awarded.

4. Blurting

What it is: Writing down everything you can remember about a topic, then checking what you forgot.

How to do it: Pick a topic, grab a blank sheet, and write without looking at your notes.

Example: For English Literature, write everything you know about a key character (e.g. Macbeth) from memory, then review your notes and highlight what you missed.

Why it works: It's quick, shows gaps in knowledge, and makes your brain work harder than passively reading.

5. Teaching Others (Feynman Technique)

What it is: Explaining concepts out loud in your own words, as if teaching someone else.

How to do it: Pretend you're tutoring a younger student or friend — keep it simple.

Example: Explain photosynthesis to your pet, a sibling, or the mirror. Use plain language and examples.

Why it works: If you can explain it clearly, you understand it. If not, you know what to revisit.

6. Mind Mapping

What it is: A visual way of connecting key ideas and subtopics around a central theme.

How to do it: Use a large sheet of paper. Write the main topic in the centre, then branch out with subheadings and key facts.

Example: For a Geography topic on "Rivers," include branches like erosion, transportation, deposition, and human impact.

Why it works: Helps you visualise how ideas link together, which is especially useful for essay-based subjects.

7. Condensing Notes

What it is: Shrinking down your notes to their most essential points.

How to do it: Rewrite an entire topic on a single A4 page using headings, bullet points, and diagrams.

Example: Take 5 pages of notes on cell biology and condense them into a single-page summary sheet with key terms and diagrams.

Why it works: Forces you to prioritise key information, and the reduced version is easier to revise from later.

8. Interleaving

What it is: Mixing different topics or subjects during revision sessions.

How to do it: Instead of spending 2 hours just on algebra, spend 30 minutes each on algebra, geometry, ratios, and graphs.

Example: In a history session, revise one topic from WWI, one from the Cold War, and one from Elizabethan England.

Why it works: Switching between topics helps improve long-term learning and mirrors how you'll be tested in real exams.

9. Use of Mnemonics

What it is: Creating memory aids such as rhymes, acronyms, or visual images.

How to do it: Make up catchy phrases or acronyms to remember lists or processes.

Example: For remembering the electromagnetic spectrum: "Radio Waves Make Incredible Lasagna Using X-ray Goggles" (Radio, Microwave, Infrared, Light, UV, X-ray, Gamma).

Why it works: Mnemonics turn abstract or dull facts into something memorable and easier to recall.

10. Dual Coding

What it is: Using both visual and verbal materials together to reinforce understanding.

How to do it: Combine drawings or diagrams with your written notes.

Example: When revising the water cycle, draw a diagram with arrows and annotate each stage (evaporation, condensation, precipitation, etc.).

Why it works: Your brain processes information more effectively when it's presented in more than one form.