

Ten Dos and Don'ts for Studying

1. **People cannot multitask when learning something new** - to study properly you must be able to shut out distractions. And sadly, the people who think they are better at multitasking are on average even worse. That ideally means no TV, no phone, and no emails – but studying with others is strongly encouraged.
2. **It's not all about the time you put in** - the time you put in makes a big difference but it's not everything, the way you study matters just as much.
3. **Re-reading your notes (or re-watching the videos) is not a good way to study** - it's better than doing nothing but you are far better trying to remember what the notes said (testing yourself), explaining things to others, or working through practice questions/quizzes/activities. Only go back to your notes and videos if you get something wrong or forget something.
4. **Highlighting the textbook is not a good way to study** - you would be better off forming your own (short) summary, or even better - stopping at the end of each chapter and writing down the key point from memory or by describing the main ideas to someone else (even your cat).
5. **Make a clear study plan for each week.** Block off any commitments/events and highlight any deadlines then decide what you want to complete each day.
6. **Find or make a study group.** Working together is often a lot more efficient and more fun! You are also a lot less likely to get stuck if you study together. Agree a couple of hours a week when you will study together.
7. **Different skills require different methods.** Ask yourself what you are trying to do: Understand a bit of background knowledge, solve a paper-and-pencil exercise, carry out a practical coursework task. All these require different approaches.
8. **Learn how to learn from others.** Talk to students who are in the years ahead of you, for example your PASS leaders or GTAs, about how they approached learning in particular areas. Collect ideas from several people and try out whether they work for you.
9. **Don't be afraid to ask questions.** Formulating questions about the material is a good way of actively engaging with it. There are lots of reasons to ask questions: making sure you have understood something correctly, clarifying potential points of confusion, understanding why things are done in a particular way, and learning to critically engage. Asking questions can be difficult, in particular when everybody around you is pretending that everything is completely clear.
10. **Communicate with your lecturers.** If you are having difficulty understanding some unit content or a question on a problem sheet, then the chances are that other students will be too.