

MAKING THE  
DAYS COUNT

SPECIAL  
POINTS OF  
INTEREST:

- Maximize your exam potential
- How soon is too soon to prepare for exams?
- Getting Ready for Exams
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# iAspire Student Support

Maximize Your Exam Potential

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## Maximize your exam potential

As we head towards the mid or the end of the semester we start thinking about exams. Remember it's never too early to prepare, particularly if you have fallen behind. It is easy to fall behind on your notes when you are focusing on assignments. It is important not to judge yourself harshly but to think rationally and get organized.



1. Prepare for exams weeks in advance (see Condensing Lecture Notes in iAspire Student Support: [How to make, revise and condense lecture notes](#)).
2. Condense your notes: you should have about 20-30 pages of condensed notes for each subject. As you study continue to condense the notes ([see condensing notes tips](#)).
3. Start studying the areas you are least familiar with ([see study strategies](#)).
4. Join a study group (see iAspire Student Support: [Study Groups—Join One Today](#)).
5. Break your study time into 25 minute segments. Set a timer, study undistracted for 25 minutes and then get up and move around before your next study segment. In your break get a drink, pet the dog/cat, do some stretches, change the scenery (go to another room or look outside) get a quality snack.



## How soon is too soon to prepare for exams?

*It's never too soon!*

The longer you wait the more cramming is required and the higher your level of stress. It is best to prepare your exam study notes as you go through the semester rather than waiting till the last minute.

*Seize the day! (Carpe Diem)*



# Getting Ready for Exams

The longer you wait, the more effort is needed to refresh your memory which can cause a very stressful situation for you.

Remember iAspire Student Support: The [five steps to a great assignment plan](#)? Well the principle is the same for exam planning.

Make a timeline counting backwards from the **exam date** and add the number of days you need to review. Be sure to note if you have more than one exam on the same day which will require adding an extra day or two prep.

It is best to have one day for **intensive review** before the exam. Then add in your **long**

**review** dates.

If you are unsure how long you will need, do the math – count the number of chapters or weeks of material you have to review and estimate how long for each.

Before you can begin your long review it's best to **identify your knowledge gaps** caused by missed, skipped, skimmed or lack of clarity for all courses content.

Give yourself additional time in your preparation to **fill in the knowledge gaps** (maybe a study group could help?).

The following is a general guideline...






*“Anyone who has never made a mistake has never tried anything new.”*

*- Albert Einstein  
(physicist)*

*“Action is the foundational key to all success.”*

*- Pablo Picasso  
(artist)*

## FIVE LITTLE TIPS

1. Caffeine is a stimulant and it can increase your stress and anxiety response. 
2. Avoid people that are panicking and freaking-out. If you are panicking and freaking-out it's good to know others may be avoiding you for that reason.
3. Do not have anyone test you the day of the exam. If they stump you it will undermine your confidence or confuse you. 
4. Never trade your valuable sleep time for study time. You need your rest.
5. Schedule some fun activities throughout your exam prep. Don't overdo your study periods. Take frequent breaks, take care of yourself. 
6. Take Care of yourself see iAspire Student Support: [Feeling Anxious? What to do.](#)

# Quality Study Snack

## Brain Food

In preparing for exams when all that matters is grades, grades and more grades the common mistake is to eat poorly.

Due to stress most people reach for junk foods (chocolate, crisps and energy drinks) rather than having normal meals that are healthy.

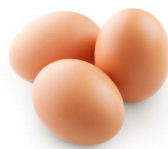
Junk food is harmful to your long-term health but it can also negatively affect your exam performance.

Here are some brain food recommendations for stressful study periods:

1. Oily Fish – salmon, sardines, mackerel are the healthiest types of fish because they contain lots of protein and omega 3 which are essential to keep our brain functioning optimally.



2. Eggs – fried, boiled, poached or sunny-side up, eggs are good brain food. Early morning and late night rumbling tummy? Reach for an egg. Hard boil a bunch and keep them in their shell in the fridge for an easy snack.



3. Fruit and Veg – this is a no-brainer, fruit and veg provide much-needed minerals, vitamins and liquids and are low in calories. They give you an energy boost due to their healthy sugars that your body can easily convert to energy. Top choices are apples, bananas, avocados and berries.



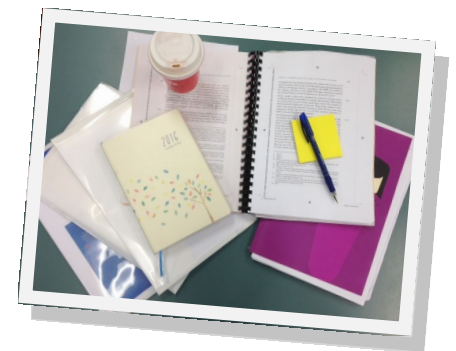
4. Peanut Butter – PB is high in protein and healthy fats as are most nut-butters, making it a good brain food. Keep a jar handy for study nibbles or for yummy PB & J sandwiches .



5. Drink plenty of water



Note: These are only suggestions and do not take into account individuals' dietary requirements or allergies.



## Exam Tips from Students

- Don't cram - You lose more energy and increase stress levels
- Don't study the morning of the exam - You'll stress yourself out and think you don't know anything
- Set up a study timetable - and stick to it. Routine helps you focus
- Past exams if available – can give a feel for how exams are written and what questions are asked
- Reward yourself when studying – it gives you motivation to keep studying
- Get plenty of rest!!
- Remain balanced - Don't sit in your room all day studying, take breaks
- Eat a healthy breakfast - Exams are three hours of concentration
- Be open with friends and family - If you are feeling stressed

