

### I. What Is a Skill?

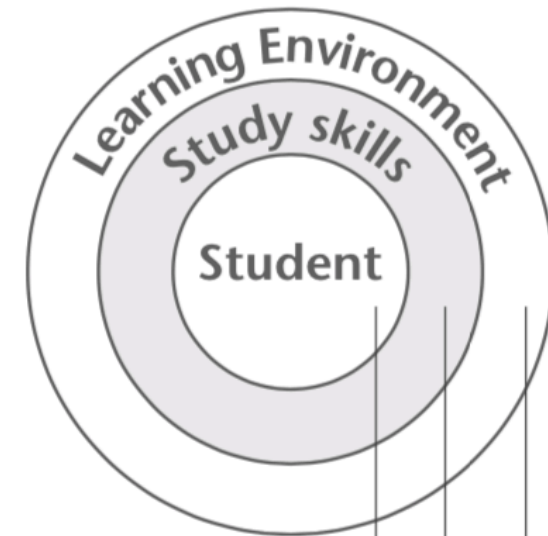
A skill is a learned ability rather than an outcome achieved through luck or chance and can, therefore, be relied on reasonably securely when you perform an equivalent task again. You can fine-tune skills through practice, feedback and reflection, just as athletes improve their performance by developing underlying skills in movement, breathing and pacing.

### II. What Are Study Skills?

The term 'study skills' is used here to refer to abilities, habits, understandings and attitudes that enable achievement in your studies. These can be categorised into four easy-to-remember, inter-related areas:

- 1 Self
- 2 Academic
- 3 People
- 4 Task

These are mainly methods and tactics utilised by pupils to improve their educational grasp. They consist of different talents ranging from arranging schedules and staying organised, to understanding what



- 1 You, the student, with your particular circumstances, goals, educational history, current abilities and habits
- 2 The course and overall learning environment in their entirety, which create new learning challenges
- 3 The combination of skills you need, personally, to manage those challenges to best effect.

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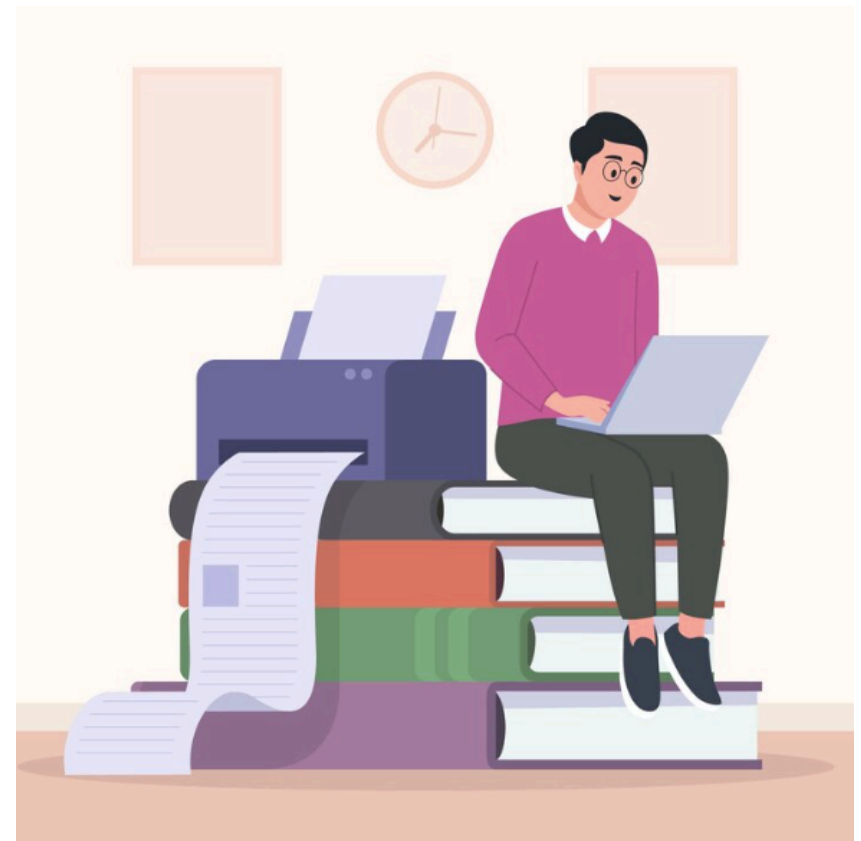
they've read, remembering key facts, and thinking critically (these aspects will be discussed thoroughly in upcoming lessons). Good study habits are vital for achieving school goals as they help kids handle their tasks, understand tricky study-related concepts, and excel in tests.

### III. Elements of Study Skills

- (a) **Time Management:** Efficiently managing your time to allocate sufficient hours for studying, attending classes, completing assignments, and personal activities. Time management includes setting priorities, creating schedules, and avoiding procrastination.
- (b) **Organization:** Developing systems for organizing study materials, class notes, and assignments. This includes using tools like calendars, planners, and folders to keep everything in order.
- (c) **Note-Taking:** Learning effective techniques for taking notes during lectures or while reading. This involves summarizing information, using abbreviations and symbols, and creating organized,

structured notes that are easy to review.

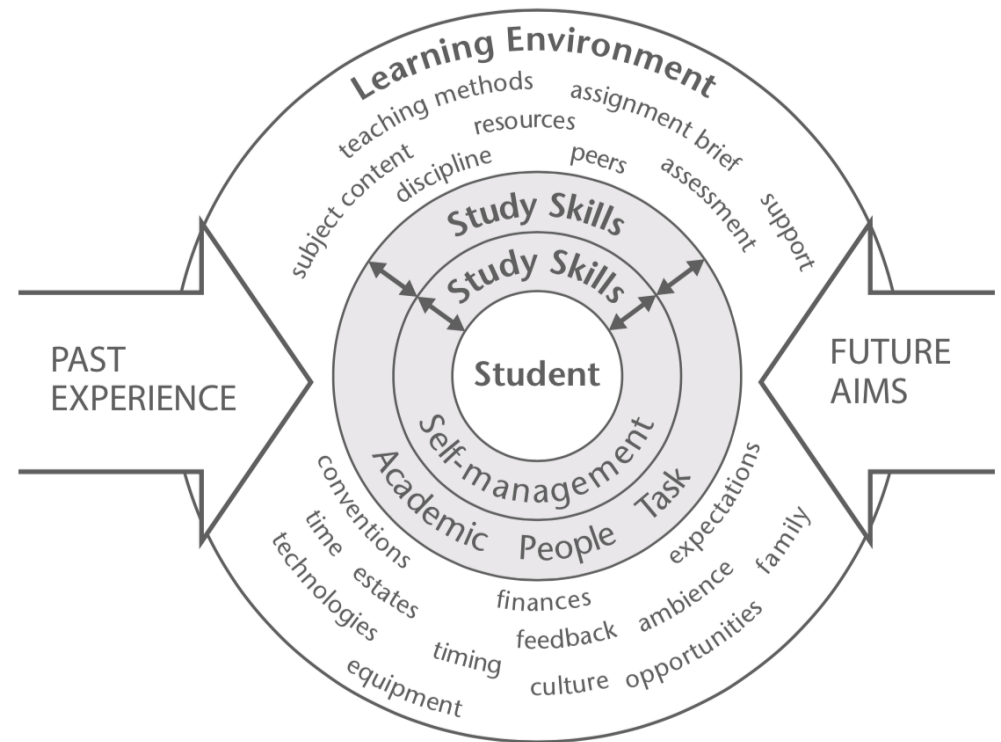
- (d) **Reading Comprehension:** Strategies to improve understanding and retention of complex texts. Techniques may include active reading, highlighting key points, asking questions, and making connections between ideas.



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- (e) **Critical Thinking:** Developing the ability to think critically and analytically about information, ideas, and arguments. This involves evaluating evidence, identifying biases, and forming well-reasoned opinions.
- (f) **Active Learning:** Engaging actively with the material through techniques such as summarization, questioning, and self-testing. Active learning promotes deeper understanding and long-term retention.
- (g) **Problem-Solving:** Strategies for solving academic problems and challenges. This may involve breaking down complex problems into smaller steps, seeking help when needed, and using logical reasoning.
- (h) **Memory Techniques:** Learning methods to improve memory retention, such as mnemonic devices, visualization, and spaced repetition.
- (i) **Study Environment:** Creating an effective study environment that minimizes distractions, promotes focus, and enhances

productivity.



- (j) **Test-Taking Strategies:** Techniques for preparing for and taking exams, including managing test anxiety, time management during exams, and strategies for answering different types of questions.
- (k) **Communication Skills:** Effective communication with professors, peers, and tutors to seek help, clarify doubts, and collaborate on

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academic projects.

- (l) **Resource Utilisation:** Making use of available resources, such as libraries, academic advisors, study groups, and online tools to support learning.
- (m) **Self-Assessment:** Regularly evaluating one's own strengths and weaknesses as a learner, reflecting on study habits, and making adjustments as needed.
- (n) **Goal Setting:** Setting clear academic goals and objectives, both short-term and long-term, and developing strategies to achieve them.

### IV. Importance of Study Skills

*Study skills typically help you to:*

- 1 know what you are doing
- 2 organise your independent study

- 3 build your confidence
- 4 reduce study stress
- 5 improve the quality of your work
- 6 enjoy study more
- 7 study more efficiently
- 8 save time
- 9 avoid unnecessary errors
- 10 gain better grades.

### V. Identifying Strengths and Weaknesses

To develop a skill, you first need to know where you are starting from. What are your current strengths and weaknesses? What do you want to achieve? Where do you need to improve? How are you going to improve? What are your resources? What could obstruct your goals?

*Ways of developing such awareness include:*

- 1 using self-evaluation questionnaires
- 2 monitoring your progress
- 3 maintaining a reflective journal or blog
- 4 group discussion and chat
- 5 feedback and criticism from other students
- 6 feedback and comments from tutors.

All skills improve through practice, feedback and monitoring. The more you study and reflect on your learning, the more you become:

- 1 adept at finding shortcuts
- 2 aware of underlying skills, qualities and habits that you can improve
- 3 able to see patterns in what you do
- 4 able to focus on study for longer
- 5 able to perform skills automatically.

The way to study well and easily becomes a habit. If you have been away from study or are not used to managing so much unscheduled time, you may find you need to build good study habits.

## VI. How to Study More Effectively and Efficiently?

- (a) **Target Setting:** Clearly determine your accomplishments for each learning session or specific class.
- (b) **Managing Time:** Make a plan breaking down time for learning, class attendance, and personal tasks.
- (c) **Interactive Studying:** Get involved with your coursework materials. Summarize, ask questions and quiz yourself.
- (d) **Good Note Creation:** Build a note system that suits you. Highlight main points and make summaries.
- (e) **Getting Support:** If necessary, don't hold back from asking for help from instructors, tutors, or classmates.
- (f) **Try Critical Thought:** Promote critical thought by questioning, examining data, and developing your ideas.
- (g) **Use Facilities:** Use all the university services. This includes libraries, academic counselors, and study clocks.

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### *Main references:*

Cottrell, S. (2013). The study skills handbook. Macmillan International Higher Education.

Moore, S., Neville, C., & Murphy, M. (2010). The ultimate study skills handbook. McGraw-Hill Education (UK).