

## Spacing and timing of revision to help you learn

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**Did you know?** The brain requires a physical “**prompt**” in order to keep something in **long-term memory**. Otherwise, it is designed to **let it go**.

### What is ‘Spacing’?

- Spacing is a revision technique which is all about **spacing out your revision** so you don’t get swamped and overwhelmed
- It means introducing **time intervals** into your revision sessions as well as spacing out the days which you use to revise for topics
- To commit something to memory, it takes time and repetition.

### Why is spacing beneficial?

- Doing something little and often – **spacing** – beats doing it at once, or cramming.
- The time in between revision allows you to forget and re-learn the information, which cements it in your **long-term memory**
- It cements information into your long-term memory
- We can learn more information over time than in one longer session
- It helps you revise more efficiently

### Optimum spacing

- Research suggests there is an ‘optimal gap’ between revision sessions so you can retain the information.
- If the test is in a month, you should review the information around once a week. If the test is in a week, create time once a day

Time to the test	Revision Gap
1 Week	1-2 days
1 Month	1 week
3 Months	2 weeks
6 Months	3 weeks
1 Year	1 month

## Create the perfect revision plan using the spacing technique

1. **Organisation:** determine where you need to focus your time – e.g. which subjects, topics, what you know, what you struggle with etc.
2. **Planning:** map out what you are going to revise and when. Use a timetable or revision planner to do this. Choose a mixture of a subject's topics to focus on each day to make sure you are spacing them out
3. **Review:** build in different revision techniques to help you do some quick 5 – 10-minute reviews of your topics throughout your revision plan. E.g. reading through notes, highlighting information, making post-it notes
4. **Transformation task:** These are 30 minute activities to help you take in information. For example, writing summary sheets, flash cards or mind maps for topics
5. **Practice testing:** test yourself on the area that you have reviewed such as with quizzes or by testing yourself with a friend.
6. **Exam questions:** complete an exam question or questions on the area you have reviewed and mark this yourself, using a mark scheme

Five hours of time, spent in smaller chunks and spaced periodically, is a far more effective way to learn something than five hours spent the night before

## Top tips to manage your revision time

1. Know what your **revision goals** are and **set aside blocks of time**
2. Don't work too much – **work smarter, not harder**
3. Establish **good habits** and a structured **revision routine**
4. **Don't procrastinate-** don't waste precious time worrying or thinking about what to do –**just do it!**
5. **Review** your work – **prompt your brain** with short review exercises

**To commit something to memory, it takes time and repetition**