

Best ways to study - that you've probably never heard of

Have you heard of these revision methods? Whether it's the latest trend on studytok, or a scientifically proven way to learn, there's always a new trending study method with an odd name. From social media to study forums, we've found the revision strategies that students swear by - so you can make the most of your study time.

Active recall

Do you struggle to remember what you study? Active recall trains your brain to retrieve information when you need it. Instead of just reading and copying notes, test yourself repeatedly. It's one of the best ways to make learning stick.

Feynman technique

This is a great method for talkers and practical learners. Teach a topic in simple terms to a friend, a pet, or even an AI tool. Identify what you don't fully understand, then simplify it more and try again.

Blurting

Study a topic, then put your notes away and write down everything you remember. After that, check for gaps and errors, then review that information and repeat until you've nailed it.

Tip:

You could use the voice option of an AI like Google Gemini or Chat GPT as your student, and get it to ask you follow up questions.

Spaced repetition

This scientifically proven method boosts memory by reviewing information at increasing intervals. It helps you move knowledge to your long term memory while reducing overall study time. On page 8 we'll show you how to plan your revision using this method as you get closer to an exam or assessment.

Flashcards

Great for testing yourself! Write a question or prompt on one side and the answer on the other. Use apps like Anki, Quizlet or Gizmo to make digital flashcards with spaced repetition built in.

Pomodoro

Stay focused with short bursts of studying. Work for 25 minutes, take a 5-minute break, then repeat. After four rounds, take a longer break. This is a great method for ADHD or anyone who struggles with focus.

Mind maps

The humble mind map never becomes obsolete, plus it works for any kind of studying; coursework, exams, essays, presentations and more. Particularly good for visual learners, start with a central topic and branch out into key themes and details. Perfect for breaking down complex subjects and identifying connections.

Mnemonics

Make facts or names memorable with acronyms or silly phrases. For example "My Very Easy Method Just Speeds Up Naming" for the planets. The funnier the phrase, the easier to remember.

Traffic light system

Don't know where to start with your revision or studying? Use the traffic light system to find out what you need to work on most.



Confident

Needs review

Needs serious work

Focus on red topics first and plan more sessions for them, then move onto orange to strengthen your knowledge. Change the colours to ones you can recognise easily if you need to.

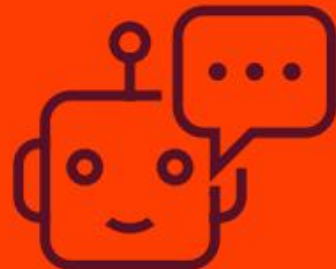


Best apps and AI tools for studying, revision and coursework

You might be wondering if you can use AI Large Language Models (LLM) like ChatGPT to revise. While it can be pretty tempting to let it do all the work for you, that won't help when you get to your exams or assessments and realise you can't remember anything. It's also important to remember that Generative AI can make things up and pose them as facts.

However, this doesn't mean AI can't be an amazing tool for revising, studying or even doing your coursework, if you use it in the right way. You can think of AI tools and apps as your research assistant, helping you organise your notes, identify themes and even test your knowledge.

We've listed the top AI tools and apps you can use to study like a pro and maximise your efficiency.



1. Google NotebookLM – turn your notes into podcasts

This can genuinely transform your studying and revision, plus it's FREE. You can upload notes, slides, audio files, YouTube links and more to create a personalised library or podcast based on what you've uploaded. Unlike other AI tools, it only uses the sources you've added, meaning it won't make mistakes or make things up - unless you upload incorrect information!

The podcasts it generates sound like a genuine conversation between two people, and turn the driest topic into an engaging discussion you can listen to anywhere. You can ask it questions, make a quiz, get ideas for flashcards, create study guides, and more.

Tip:

If you're struggling with a concept, upload your notes and ask NotebookLM to "explain it to me like I'm 5!"



2. Gizmo – create flashcards and quiz yourself on any topic

Tip:

Gizmo uses active recall to help you study smarter not harder, read our [active recall blog](#) to learn more about this.



Gizmo is a free tool that uses AI to quickly turn notes, YouTube videos, recordings and more into flashcards. Plus, you can access a library of other users' cards, so you don't always have to start from scratch.

What makes Gizmo great is the different ways it quizzes you, like multiple-choice questions or open-ended prompts. If you're having trouble remembering something, you can ask it to explain and throw in more questions to really get the hang of it.

3. Forest – focused study sessions

Our attention spans are shorter than ever and focusing on work can be challenging. This app helps you to stay focused by setting a timer to study and in each session you'll grow a tree, gradually building a forest as you work. But if you leave the app during the timer your tree will die!

It's essentially a Pomodoro timer with a bit of extra incentive. If trees aren't your vibe, there's also an app called Study Bunny which does the same, but you get to look after a pet rabbit instead.

Tip:

Use the **Pomodoro method** for your sessions: 25 minutes studying, 5 minutes break.



My revision timetable

How to get started and plan your revision

Getting started is often the hardest part of revision. Here's a way to plan your study sessions and know when to start.

The 2, 3, 5, 7 method and spaced repetition

Spaced repetition is a scientifically proven method for studying that involves reviewing information at regular intervals. This boosts your memory retention long-term.

Combining this with the **2, 3, 5, 7** method provides a clear schedule for spaced repetition ahead of exams:

1. Start from the date of your exam and plan a revision session the day before
2. Two days before your last session plan another one
3. Then count three days back from that and plan another session
4. Count five days back and plan a session there
5. Then count seven days back and plan your first study session

Using this technique, you can plan your revision as little as 18 days away from your exams.

Here's an example timetable showing three exam dates and the revision sessions for them planned in.



Tip:

The best way to be ready for an exam is to study all term or semester. Use tools like NotebookLM and Gizmo after every lesson to get ahead.



“Creating a revision timetable has really helped me avoid last-minute cramming, which can be very stressful. For your own peace of mind, break down topics into manageable chunks.”

Mercy | Diagnostic Radiography student

“Take your rest breaks seriously! I found my revision and grades improved the most when I included regular breaks and quality rest time into my schedule. My overall productivity increased as I was more energised!”

Danish | Psychology student

Download your blank weekly template at

bcu.ac.uk/month-planner

Monthly planner

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
	1	2	3	4	5 Revise Maths	6 Revise Computing
7	8	9	10 Revise Biology	11	12 Revise Maths	13 Revise Computing
14	15	16	17 Revise Maths Revise Biology	18 Revise Computing	19	20 Revise Maths
21 Revise Computing	22 Revise Maths Revise Biology	23 Revise Computing Maths Exam	24 Computing Exam	25 Revise Biology	26	27 Revise Biology
28 Biology Exam	29	30	31			

Key Dates



Mock exams



BTEC exams and assessments



Exams begin



BTEC exams are over!



GCSE and A Level exams are over!



(Onwards) BTEC results



GCSE and A Level results days