



Hints and Tips for Revision

Revising effectively will provide you with the best possible chance of success in your GCSEs. A good set of GCSE grades will open the door to the next stage of your life and they remain with you for the whole of your career. So, it really is worth preparing as well as you can by starting revision earlier rather than later, staying positive and developing your study skills.



How to get started

1. Make revision your priority

Between now and your GCSEs, you **WILL** have time to socialise with your friends, enjoy your holidays, spend time with your family, get a part time job, play sport, go to clubs, watch TV and play on your games console **BUT** your priority should be revising for your exams!

So you will need to get organised and start early.

2. Getting organised

- Clear your desk!
- Make sure you have all the equipment you might need:
 - Post-it notes
 - Revision folders
 - Lined paper
 - Pens, pencils, rulers, scientific calculator
 - Highlighters
 - Get one good revision aid for each subject that you study (e.g. revision books, flash-cards, revision notes etc.)



3. Plan your revision timetable

- The best timetables are **realistic** and **flexible**. When you create your timetable, ask yourself:
 - *How many days are there until my first exam?*
 - *What is the maximum time that I am willing to revise on a typical weekday, a typical Saturday, and a typical Sunday?*

- *How much of my holiday am I willing to spend revising?*
- *Are there any days or dates that I will miss due to other commitments? (e.g. birthdays, family days)*
- *How many subjects am I studying?*
- *How many topics do I have to revise for each subject?*

Top Tip:

Use your school timetable as the basis for your revision:

- Start and stop work at a reasonable time
- Split your revision into five sessions of no more than one hour each
- Plan in breaks
- Leave a gap for lunch
- Add in time to do the things you enjoy (e.g. in the evenings)

Adding your subjects

- Decide how much time you will need to spend on each subject by thinking about:
 - Which you find the hardest
 - Which subjects have more content
 - Which you will be examined on first

Adding your topics

- Look at the exam board specifications for each subject to find a list of topics to revise. Use a **Topic Planner** for each of your subjects. Tick each topic off as you become more confident
- Think about **what** you should prioritise (like you did with your subjects) and add those first
- Aim to include topics multiple times to give you a chance to revise them thoroughly

Revision is a very personal thing. What works for one person might not work for another, however simply reading through your notes will not work. You need to:

LEARN – REVISE – TEST YOURSELF

Revision Techniques

NB: you only remember 10% of what you read.
Mix it up and find out what works for you.

Aim to try all of these methods as part of your revision:

- Read your notes
- Mind Maps
- Mnemonics
- Summarising using revision cards
- Making Flow Charts
- Using Flash Cards
- Revise with a friend/family member
- Practise using past papers

Reading your notes

- Avoid passive reading (e.g. just 'reading through' or highlighting). Instead, think about the questions you might be asked. Underline important words; write key definitions in the margin; write short summaries (from memory) after you have completed a section
- Before reading any notes try to identify knowledge you know by writing it down in a brain dump activity

Summary: Brain dumps



1.

Identify knowledge

Identify the knowledge/topic area you want to cover.



2.

Write it down

Take a blank piece of paper/white board and write down everything you can remember about that topic. (with no prompts)

Give yourself a timed limit (e.g. 10 minutes)



3.

Organise information

Once complete and you cannot remember any more use different colours to highlight/underline words in groups.

This categories/links information.



4.

Check understanding

Compare your brain dump to your K/O or book and check understanding.

Add any key information you have missed (key words) in a different colour.



5.

Store and compare

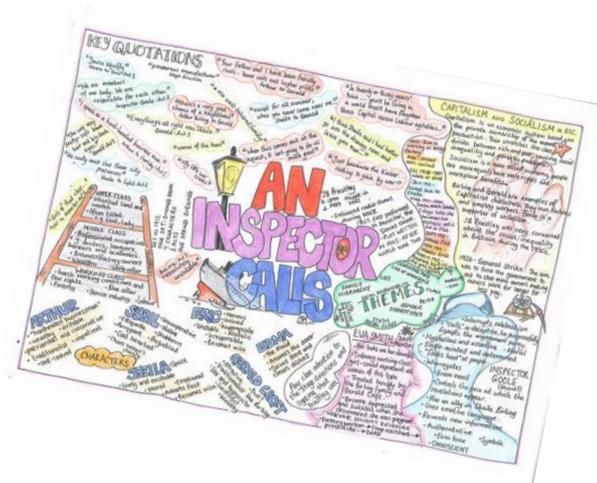
Keep your brain dump safe and revisit it.

Next time you attempt the same topic try and complete the same amount of information in a shorter period of time or add more information.

Brain dumps are a way of getting information out of your brain.

Mind Maps

- Mind maps are a very visual way to organise information
- One mind map usually represents one topic
- Put the name of the topic in the middle with sub-topics and further details added around it
- Details should be **short** and **concise**
- Use colours if it will help you to organise ideas
- Boxes or bubbles can help things to stand out



Summary: How to create a mind map



1.

Identify knowledge

Select a topic you wish to revise. Have your class notes/knowledge organisers ready.



2.

Identify sub topics

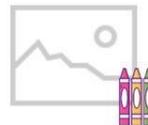
Place the main topic in the centre of your page and identify sub topics that will branch off.



3.

Branch off

Branch of your sub topics with further detail.
Try not to fill the page with too much writing.



4.

Use images & colour

Use images and colour to help topics stick into your memory.



5.

Put it somewhere visible

Place completed mind maps in places where you can see them frequently.

Avoid using too much information: mind maps are designed to summarise key information and connect areas of a topic/subject. If you overcrowd the page, you lose the point of the mind map and will find it harder to visualise the information when trying to recall it

Mnemonics & Acronyms

- A mnemonic is a simple system for recalling key information (e.g. topic words)
- They can be visual
 - *E.g. Italy is the shape of a boot; a Bactrian camel's back is shaped like a B*
- They can be rhymes
 - *E.g. Thirty days has September*
- They can be letter triggers
 - *E.g. Never Eat Shredded Wheat (North, East, South, West)*

How to write an acronym:

- Write the facts you need to remember
- Underline the first letter of each fact
- Arrange the underlined letters to form an acronym that is a real word or a nonsense word you can pronounce

E.g. To remember the order in which the great Greek philosophers lived, use the acronym SPA — Socrates, Plato, and Aristotle.

Summarising using revision cards

- Start with your notes, text book and a revision guide
- Read your notes and check your understanding
- **Simplify** and **summarise** the notes into **key points**
- Condensing topics makes your revision interactive, which is much more effective than just reading your notes again and again

AIM TO GET EACH TOPIC ON A SINGLE PAGE

TEST YOURSELF on what you've covered

- Cover up your notes and write down as much as you can remember
- Compare what you've written to your notes and fill in any gaps – use a different colour so you can see which bits you missed
- Keep doing this until you remember everything on the topic

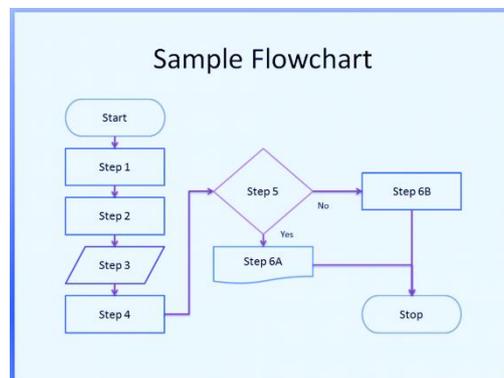


Making Flow Charts

A flow chart is a diagram that will show you a process from start to finish. They can be really useful to organise information clearly, especially when what you are learning has some form of order.

Subject	Example
Business	To show the different stages within a supply chain
History	To make a timeline of events
Chemistry	To set out the steps of a practical experiment
Geography	To present the different stages of a process (e.g. erosion)
Biology	To show how food passes through the digestive system

Flow charts can be really simple or more complex to show interconnecting relationships:



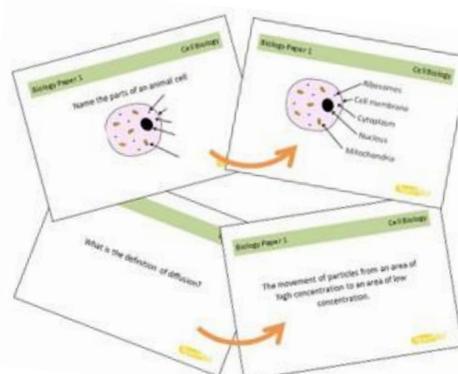
Using Flash Cards

Flash cards are small cards with a question or prompt on one side and the answer on the other side. They are a great way to test yourself and find the gaps in your knowledge.

Flash cards are useful for learning things like:

- Important dates in history
- Vocabulary
- Key words and definitions
- Formulae
- Labelled diagrams

You can purchase flashcards but it's a good idea to make your own as it is more interactive.



Summary: How to use flash cards



1.

Identify knowledge

What are you creating flash cards on?

Do you have your knowledge organizer?

Use your book to look at previous misconceptions from whole class feedback.



2.

Colour coding

Use different coloured flash cards for different topics. This helps with organization. NOT recall



3.

Designing

1 Question per flashcard.

Making them concise and clear.

Use a one word prompt, so that you can recall as much as you can.

No extended answer questions.



4.

Using

Write your answers down, then check. Or say your answers out loud. This really clearly shows the gaps in your knowledge.

Do not just copy & re-read.

Shuffle the cards each time you use them.

Use the Leitner system to use flash cards everyday.



5.

Feedback

How have you performed when you look back at your answers?

Is there anything you need to revisit in more detail?

Is your knowledge secure? If so, move onto applying knowledge in that area in specific extended exam questions.

Avoid answering the questions in your head: research shows that when you read a question and answer it in your head, you aren't actually testing your knowledge effectively. Say the answer out loud or write it down before checking it against the card, so you are truly testing if you can explain the answer properly

Revise with a friend/family member

- Tell someone what you have learned – if you can explain it to someone else, you've learned it really well! If not, what are the gaps in your learning?
- Revise with a friend – test each other about you have just studied.
- Get people around you to test you – doing this regularly will let you (and them) see how much **more** you know than last time!

Practise using past papers and self quizzing

Summary: Self Quizzing



1.

Identify knowledge

Identify knowledge/content you wish to cover.



2.

Review and create

Spend around 5-10 minutes reviewing content (knowledge organisers/class notes/text book)

Create x10 questions on the content (If your teacher has not provided you with questions)



3.

Cover and answer

Cover up your knowledge and answer the questions from memory.

Take your time and where possible answer in full sentences.



4.

Self mark & reflect

Go back to the content and self mark your answers in **green** pen.



5.

Next time

Revisit the areas where there were gaps in knowledge, and include these same questions next time.

Ensure that you complete all subjects and all topics – not just the subjects you enjoy the most **of** find easiest.

Practice makes perfect!

The more used to the style of questions in your exams, the more confident you will be, the higher your grades will be. Practice papers are key to success as they allow you to practise your exam technique. Use them alongside your notes as a way of checking that your notes are complete.

When you start, try answering the questions with your notes on the table for you to refer to. When you need a little help, look at your books, find the information and attempt the answer straight away.

As you get more experienced, try sitting past papers under 'exam conditions' at home. Time yourself! Even if you haven't covered all of the course content, it will still be valuable practice for you. You might even surprise yourself at how much you can do!

TOP TIP:

It is really important to do some realistic exam practice – some questions will ask you to apply what you've learnt in different ways. Past papers allow you to see what you know and what you still need to work on.



REVISION TIMETABLE

Date:				Weeks to go:		
		Session 1	Session 2	Session 3	Session 4	Session 5
Monday	<i>Subject</i>					
	<i>Topic</i>					
Tuesday	<i>Subject</i>					
	<i>Topic</i>					
Wednesday	<i>Subject</i>					
	<i>Topic</i>					
Thursday	<i>Subject</i>					
	<i>Topic</i>					
Friday	<i>Subject</i>					
	<i>Topic</i>					
Saturday	<i>Subject</i>					
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Useful Revision Sites

General

<http://www.bbc.com/bitesize>

English

Oak National Academy has revision lessons on Macbeth, An Inspector Calls and A Christmas Carol.

<https://classroom.thenational.academy/subjects-by-key-stage/key-stage-4/subjects/english>

Quizlet

<https://quizlet.com/en-gb>

Maths

<https://vle.mathswatch.co.uk/vle/> - students have logins for this and can access videos and worksheets on every topic

<https://www.mathsgenie.co.uk/gcse.html> - no login required, past papers, exam questions by topic with worked solutions and videos explaining each topic

<https://corbettmaths.com/contents/> - no login required has a video and a worksheet for every topic

Science

<http://www.freesciencelessons.co.uk/>

<https://www.bbc.com/bitesize/subjects/zrkw2hv>

Computer Science

In addition to GCSEpod for Computer Science:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=t8H6-anK0t4&list=PLCiOXwirraUAvkTPDWeeSqAKty3LAG37->

<https://classroom.thenational.academy/subjects-by-key-stage/key-stage-4/subjects/computing>

Cooking and nutrition and hospitality and catering

<https://www.foodafactoflife.org.uk/>

[GCSE Hospitality \(CCEA\) - BBC Bitesize](#)

Dance

<https://www.aqa.org.uk/subjects/dance>

Design Technology

<https://designmuseum.org/>

<http://www.technologystudent.com/>

<https://www.bbc.com/bitesize/examspecs/zby2bdm>

Drama

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/examspecs/zrnjwty>

Enterprise & Marketing

<https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PL27vaenVnLtYSNf-RKwKzCJtLV3O3CiOP> Select Miss CooperICT on Youtube and select Enterprise and Marketing playlist.

<https://www.businessed.co.uk/index.php/home/theory/camnat-public/camnat-theory-notes-public#r066-market-and-pitch-a-business-proposal> Powerpoints available to view online.

French

<https://quizlet.com/gb/topic/languages/french/> (free for students to register to revise/test themselves on lots of different topics of vocab)

<https://studyrocket.co.uk/revision/gcse-french-aqa> (revision tips - vocab by theme or module and grammar specific to the AQA French GCSE spec)

<https://www.lawlessfrench.com/faq/lessons-by-level/> (practise reading/listening/grammar/vocab at various levels of difficulty)

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/examspecs/zr8bmfr> (of course, you need the AQA spec for the French on BBC bitesize too.

I would also suggest following French social media accounts such as “learnfrenchwithclemence” or “frenchpod101_” on Instagram which post daily vocabulary, handy French idioms, and highlight common errors.

Geography

<https://senecalearning.com/en-GB/> - Students already have an account

<https://geographyeducationonline.org/>

<https://timeforgeography.co.uk/> - Really useful for physical geography and landform formation

Health and Social Care:

<https://www.ocr.org.uk/qualifications/cambridge-nationals/health-and-social-care-level-1-2-j801-j811/textbooks/>

<https://www.ocr.org.uk/Images/82469-unit-r021-essential-values-of-care-for-use-with-individuals-in-care-settings-specimen-assessment-material.pdf>

History

<http://www.senecalearning.com/>

iMedia

<https://www.ocr.org.uk/qualifications/cambridge-nationals/creative-imedia-level-1-2-award-certificate-j807-j817/assessment/> Exam Papers

<https://www.gcsepod.com/>

Music

<https://goldington.musicfirst.co.uk/>

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/examspecs/zv7qxyc>

GCSE PE

www.bbc.com/bitesize/examspecs/ztrcg82 - BBC Bitesize

<https://theeverlearner.com/>

Spanish

<https://quizlet.com/en-gb> (free to register for students to compete and test themselves on vocab)

<https://www.languagesonline.org.uk/> (reading and grammar exercises)

Religion, Philosophy & Ethics

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/topics/zbndy9q> (Christian beliefs and practices)

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/topics/z4v7gwx> (Islamic beliefs and practices)

<https://www.truetube.co.uk/> (YouTube for RS)

<https://classroom.thenational.academy/subjects-by-key-stage/key-stage-4/subjects/religious-education>