



Survivors guide to Study

However important target grades are, we believe that you as a person ultimately are of supreme value - the MOST important thing in the equation. Through this booklet we hope to help you prepare as much as possible for study but also to get the balance right and keep yourself mentally and physically healthy.

Whether you are a student or an employee, you will need to learn how to survive. A good Work-Life balance consists of the required amount of work to reach a specific goal and enough rest, sleep, relaxation and fun in the mix. Essentially, the right proportions of WORK, REST and PLAY (Click [here](#) to see where this phrase was used)



This booklet contains some suggestions of how to handle revision, stress and plan your time wisely. You will [survive!](#)

We wish you every success in the year ahead.

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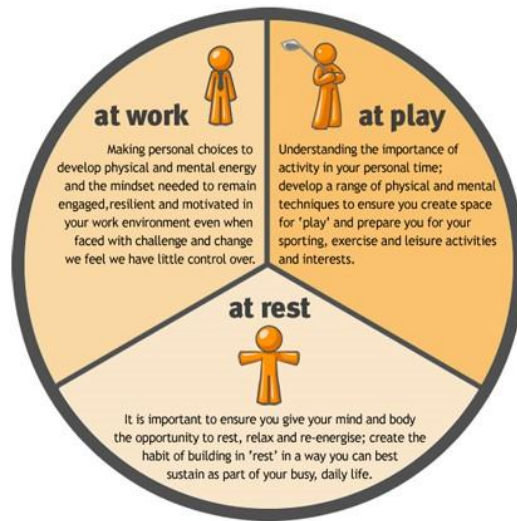
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WORK

College and Careers (year 11)

In your first term in year 11 you will spend time looking at your interests and career goals during PSHE.

Here are some websites that may be helpful to help you choose a career or give you some ideas:

<http://icould.com/watch-career-videos/by-job-type/>

<http://www.mynextmove.org/>

<https://nationalcareersservice.direct.gov.uk/advice/courses/Pages/default.aspx>

<http://www.nhscareers.nhs.uk/courses/>

<http://www.royalnavy.mod.uk/careers/role-finder>

Browse courses at colleges and see what qualifications you will need:

East Sussex College

Bexhill Sixth Form Prospectus

Hailsham Community College Sixth Form

BHASVIC courses

Seaford Head Sixth Form



Revision

Preparing to revise

Work in a quiet and well-lit room. A desk or your own personal space is a good idea as it allows you to leave out your highlighters, pens, revision planner and notebooks out when you want to have a rest. If revising at the dining room table keep these items handy in a box or in a tray.

Choose whether you work at a table best or do you need to curl up on a chair. You may be limited by the fact that you share a room, don't have a desk or other quiet space in the house. Consider using the local library or go round to a relative's house.

How to revise

Revision is all about [baby steps](#). It can be hard to get going but once you start with small steps it's much easier to maintain. Proper focused revision should begin about 8 weeks before your exams begin. If you start high intensity revision before this, you may risk burn-out before your exams are over.

So, start small by just doing small extras here and there on nights where maybe you don't have as much homework. Examples are highlighting some notes; reading the relevant revision guide topic from a recent lesson to solidify your knowledge; take your exercise book home to check understanding of the last 2 weeks and take any questions you have to your teacher to iron out niggles; reviewing a homework, etc.

Revision tips for revision before exams follow below. They vary massively and some will suit you, some will not. Try a variety but bear in mind that the least effective form of revision is just to *read* - research shows that a variety of techniques with various forms of interaction work best.

USE ALL YOUR SENSES



Some say you remember roughly

10% of what you read

20% of what you hear

30% of what you see

50% of what you see and hear

70% of what you say

But you are likely to remember 90% of what you see, do and hear so the more different methods you use the more likely you will remember the subject knowledge.

Find the methods that work for you.



Revision guides. Section the guide into chunks that you can revise in your chosen time slot* with post it's and use them for revision using one of the techniques below.

(*most people find between 25- 45 minutes before a brain-break about right but everyone is different)

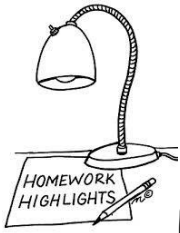
- **Condense, summarise, bullet.** Buy yourself some cheap notebooks or paper and spend time condensing (in your OWN words) what is written on the page of a revision guide. The things that are *really* obvious to you can be left out. Then in a future session use these reduced notes to summarise again what the topic is about. Finally, use some index cards or chop up A4 paper into 4 and bullet point the main things you need to know.
- **Repetition** Studies indicate that 66% of material is forgotten within seven days if it is not reviewed or recited again by the student, and 88% is gone after six weeks. Don't make life harder for yourself - build in a brief daily and weekly review of material covered. It will save you having to re-learn material from scratch!



- **Review** regularly. After a one hour memorising session: 10 minutes later revise the topic for 10 minutes. 1 day later revise the topic for 5 minutes. 1 week later revise the topic for 2-5 minutes. 1 month later revise the topic for 2-5 minutes. Before exams revise the topic as required. **Each time knowledge is reinforced; it enters deeper into the long-term memory and becomes more stable.**



- **Past papers.** Most exam boards will have past papers online. (see Department section for details) Either print them off (do multiple page print 2 sides to A4 to save paper) or have a notebook that you write your answers in and then mark later.

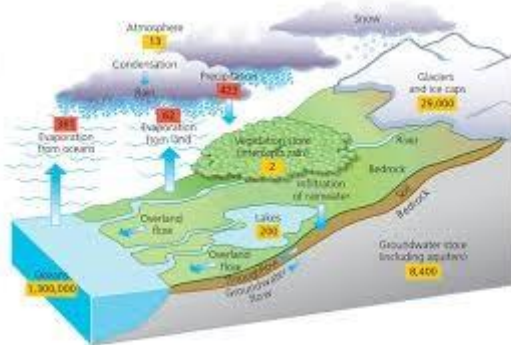


- **Past Homeworks.** Go through past tests and homework questions to review and check your knowledge. Read the SIR marking and ensure you have taken the improvements on board
- **BBC Bitesize.** Revision notes, videos, activities and quizzes. Be careful to follow the department guide to choose the correct exam board from the menu.
- **Rotate.** Make sure you mix things up a bit - don't revise one subject for hours on end, maybe over a day revise different subjects for a couple of hours each (in smaller chunks of course!)
- **Breaks.** Try and get away from your desk and do something completely unrelated
- **Water.** Stay hydrated; have a jug of water on your desk to save you having to keep refilling your glass.
- **Read-Cover-Write-Check.** Choose a page of notes, read them over (out loud can help!) a few times, cover them up and see how much you can remember by scribbling down notes (it doesn't need to be neat!), then uncover your notes and compare.



- **Record** notes into a voice recorder on your phone and then listen to it whilst you are reading your notes. You will learn the information, as it is repetitive. After you have read and listened to your notes make up a series of questions and then get someone else to test you on them.
- **YouTube** Use **Youtube** videos or songs
- **Rhyming** strategies can help you recall facts
- **Mnemonics** help you recall information or give you ideas as to how to structure your answers. E.g. PEE - In English you need to write your point, prove it with evidence and then evaluate your answer. This approach to writing can be used in History or R.E.

- Use different shapes to chunk information - for example in History write the opposition methods to Nazi Germany in triangles and write the terror tactics in circles.



- Draw diagrams and charts to help you recall facts- this works well in Science and Geography.

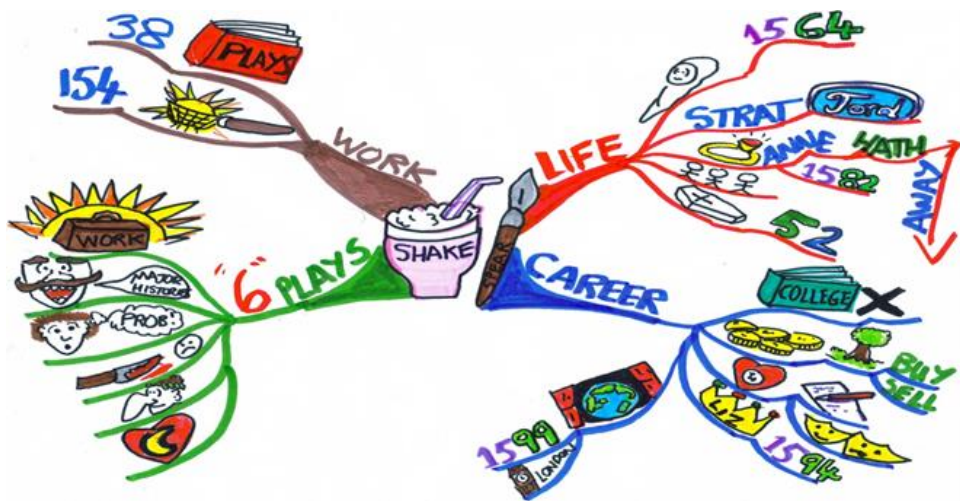
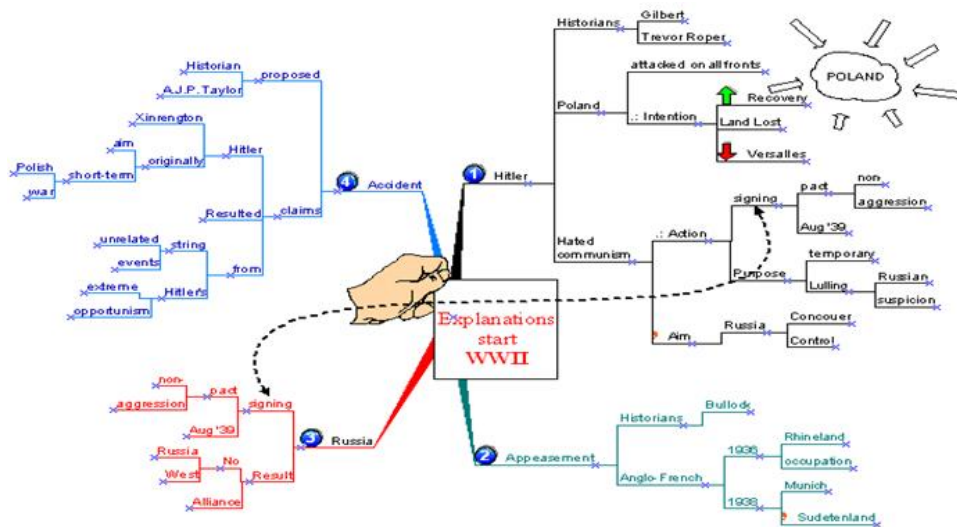


- Use post it notes - stick the notes to the wall and write key facts down on them. Use different colour post it notes for different topics or subjects. Your walls will be covered with a selection of brightly covered notes and then you will be able to visualise the information you have written down on them.

a group of children travel in a time machine to visit Ancient Egypt <small>card 12 name that game</small>	a spaceship lands at the beach and aliens go surfing <small>card 12 name that game</small>
a delicious family travels to Plymouth on the Mayflower with the Pilgrims in 1692 <small>card 13 name that game</small>	a made up character takes part in the Civil War <small>card 14 name that game</small>
cookies are missing from the cookie jar and a team of children use clues to discover who took them <small>card 15 name that game</small>	a detective solves the case of the broken mirror <small>card 16 name that game</small>
a boy named Jack climbs a beanstalk <small>card 17 name that game</small>	a fable that explains why people believe that skunks have white stripes on their backs. <small>card 18 name that game</small>
two girls start a club at school for children who like horses <small>card 19 name that game</small>	a group of boys play on a little league baseball team and win a big game <small>card 20 name that game</small>

- Make a list of key words for a topic and remember to use them in your exams: subject specific language can make a whole difference to your overall result.

- Write out a list of words on one side of a page and write out their definition opposite. Cut out the words and the definitions. Now you need to match them and then check in your notes to check you got the right.
- **Mind maps or flow chart.** Use different colours to highlight different parts of what you are trying to remember. Mind maps can just be text:



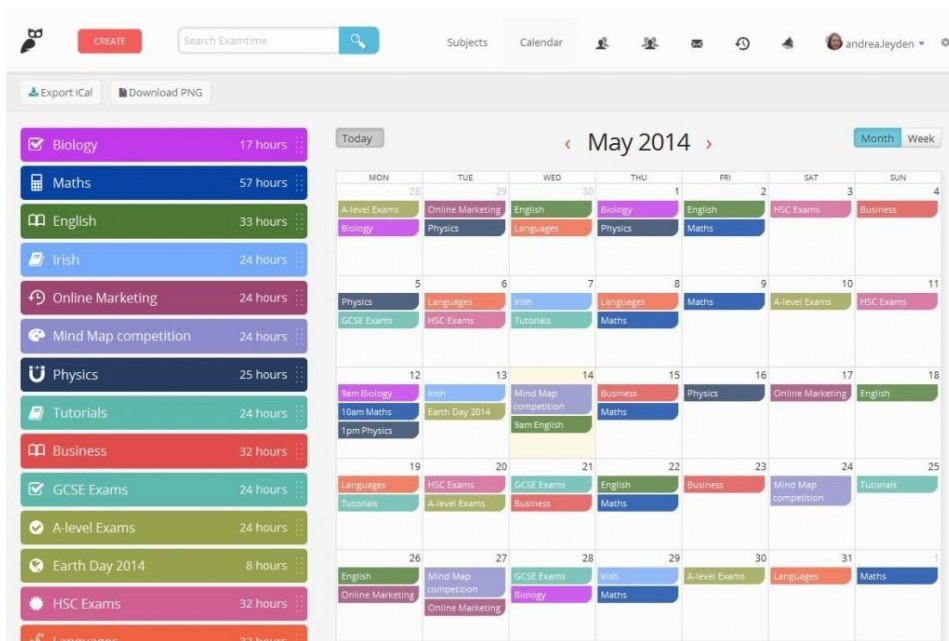
Or they can include more images (much easier to remember!) Look at this one summarising William Shakespeare's life..... (Again - much better in colour!)

Revision timetable



About 8 weeks before your exam you should plan a revision timetable to help you manage your time. You will receive a revision timetable with all your exams and school-based revision sessions on it in term 5. This will also be available as a word document on the website so that you can save and edit it.

Be extremely careful when editing that you check your exam entry papers against the timetable to ensure you do not delete anything important.



You can then highlight when you have an exam, revision session and add extra columns for weekends, evenings etc. so that you can plan equal coverage of your revision for all subjects. Alternatively you can search and use an online planner programme such as [this one](#).

Exams

Performing on the Day



Get a good night's sleep

While the temptation is to stay up half the night 'cramming' in more facts and figures, the evidence suggests this approach is counter-productive. In the context of a two-year course, an extra night's studying can make very little difference to your knowledge.

However, having a mind that is refreshed, alert, and ready to respond to circumstances will obviously be of far greater benefit.



- **Arrive in plenty of time:** To perform well on the day, you need to be relaxed and to feel in control of the situation. This is difficult to achieve if you have missed breakfast and are stuck on a bus in traffic or standing on a train for 45 minutes as the exam time approaches. You will need about 15 minutes 'quiet time' to mentally rehearse your exam and run through your 'game plan' for the final time.



- **Have your equipment ready**

Each exam has its own requirements and your pencil case will have to be CLEAR plastic. Apart from properly functioning pens, pencils, rulers, etc, you may need a calculator for the Maths or Science exam. Drawing pencils may be required for diagrams in some subjects. A lot of nervous energy can be expended on last-minute hassle if these items aren't checked in advance.



- **Think positive**

On the day of the exam, remind yourself of the good things (the material you know well, the revision you have completed, all the past exam questions done, the good grades achieved) rather than dwelling on areas of weakness. Having that self-belief will give you the confidence to trust your judgement within the exam hall and 'hit the target'.

- **Maintain your focus**

There can be a lot of tension, drama, and hysteria in the air on the days of an exam. You want to keep the balance between maintaining your focus and interacting normally with your friends and classmates. Try finding a quiet spot *far from the madding crowd* to 'warm-up' before each exam and 'warm-down' afterwards. Surround yourself with people who are likely to add to the calm rather than add to the clamour.

- **Beware of post-exam analysis**

The more you participate in the exam post-mortem, the more confused and disheartened you are likely to become. You can't change what has happened, you can only focus on the present and this will need your full attention.



Here are four golden rules to apply to all your GCSE papers:

1. Allow time to read the paper carefully

The importance of reading the paper carefully and choosing your questions wisely cannot be emphasised enough at this stage. The natural inclination is always to start writing immediately and launch into a favoured topic. Resist the urge. Take your time. Be smart and size-up the paper before answering.

2. Stick to your game plan

An overall strategy should have emerged from your revision and exam preparation in each subject. This covers the areas you will tackle, the topics you will avoid if they appear on the paper, the sequence in which you will tackle the various sections, the style of answering you will employ in each subject, the amount of time you will allocate to answering each section. In some cases, this plan will work like a dream but there will always be surprises to deal with in some papers. Don't get flustered. Stick to your game plan, trust your judgement, and move on.

3. Sweep up any mistakes

In the pressure of the exam hall, it is easy to make elementary errors. These will sometimes have the potential to lose you a lot of valuable marks. Misreading the instruction on a question can render an entire answer invalid. You might have known the correct answer, but you didn't put it down. A simple miscalculation can lose you valuable time as you try to figure out the balancing item. Be disciplined with your time. Always leave a few minutes at the end to tidy-up errors. Simply changing a definition / formula / calculation at this stage could be the difference between a good and an average grade.

4. Attempt all questions

It is amazing how many exam scripts are handed up unfinished. Every year, capable students who just didn't get time to finish the paper lose easy marks. Don't fall into this trap. Work on the basis that you will get an answer written for the required number of questions. Remember that it is much easier to get the first 20% of the marks for any question than the final 5%. You can always polish an answer further but, if there is no attempt made at part of a question, the examiner can't give you any marks. BUT if

the instructions on the front of the paper tell you to answer a certain number of questions - stick to this - don't answer too many!

Some key terms used in examination questions

Account for Explain the process or reason for something being the way it is.	Discuss Explore the subject by looking at its advantages and disadvantages (i.e. for and against). Attempt to come to some sort of judgement.
Analyse Explore the main ideas of the subject, show they are important and how they are related.	Distinguish Explain the difference.
Calculate Find out using mathematics.	Enumerate Make a list of the points under discussion.
Comment on Discuss the subject, explain it and give an opinion on it.	Estimate Guess the amount or value.
Compare Show the similarities (but you can also point out the differences).	Explain Describe, giving reasons and causes.
Complete Finish off.	Express Put the ideas into words.
Conclude Decide after reasoning something out.	Evaluate Give an opinion by exploring the good and bad points. It's a bit like asking you to assess something. Attempt to support your argument with expert opinion.

<p>Concise</p> <p>Short and brief.</p>	<p>Factors</p> <p>The fact or circumstances that contribute to a result.</p>
<p>Contrast</p> <p>Show the differences ~ compare and contrast questions are very common in exams - they want you to say how something is similar and how it may be different too.</p>	<p>Give an account of</p> <p>Describe.</p>
<p>Criticise</p> <p>Analyse and then make a judgement or give an opinion. You could show both the good and bad points. You could refer to an expert's opinion within this question.</p>	<p>Give reasons for</p> <p>Use words like <i>because</i> in your answer as you will be explaining how or why something is that way.</p>
<p>Define</p> <p>Give the meaning. This should be short.</p>	<p>Identify</p> <p>Recognise, prove something as being certain.</p>
<p>Describe</p> <p>Give a detailed account.</p>	<p><u>Illustrate</u></p> <p>Show by explaining and giving examples.</p>
<p>Differentiate</p> <p>Explore and explain the difference.</p>	<p><u>Indicate</u></p> <p>Point out, make something known.</p>
<p><u>Interpret</u></p> <p>Explain the meaning by using examples and opinions.</p>	<p><u>Relate</u></p> <p>Show the connection between things.</p>
<p><u>Justify</u></p> <p>Give a good reason for offering an opinion.</p>	<p>State</p> <p>Write briefly the main points.</p>
<p><u>List</u></p> <p>An item-by-item record of relevant images. This would normally be in note form without any need to be descriptive.</p>	<p><u>Summarise</u></p> <p>Give the main points of an idea or argument. Leave out unnecessary details that could cloud the issue.</p>

<p>Outline</p> <p>Concentrate on the main bits of the topic or item. Ignore the minor detail.</p>	<p>Trace</p> <p>Show how something has developed from beginning to end.</p>
<p>Prove</p> <p>Give real evidence, not opinion, which proves an argument and shows it to be true.</p>	

REST

Sleep

Sleep is food for the brain. During sleep, important body functions and brain activity occur. Skipping sleep can be harmful — even deadly. You can look bad, you may feel moody, and you perform poorly. Sleepiness can make it hard to get along with your family and friends and affect your scores on school exams, on the court or on the field.

When you do not get enough sleep, you are more likely to have an accident, injury and/or illness.

FACTS:

- Sleep is vital to your well-being, as important as the air you breathe, the water you drink and the food you eat.
- Biological sleep patterns shift toward later times for both sleeping and waking during adolescence -- meaning it is natural to not be able to fall asleep before 11:00 pm.
- Teens need about 9 1/4 hours of sleep each night to function best (for some, 8 1/2 hours is enough). Most teens do not get enough sleep — one study found that only 15% reported sleeping 8 1/2 hours on school nights.
- Teens tend to have irregular sleep patterns across the week — they typically stay up late and sleep in late on the weekends, which can affect their biological clocks and hurt the quality of their sleep.

Not getting enough sleep or having sleep difficulties can:

- Limit your ability to learn, listen, concentrate and solve problems. You may even forget important information like names, numbers, your homework or a date with a special person in your life;

- Make you more prone to spots. Lack of sleep can contribute to acne and other skin problems;
- Lead to aggressive or inappropriate behaviour such as yelling at your friends or being impatient with your teachers or family members



- Cause you to eat too much or eat unhealthy foods like sweets and fried foods that lead to weight gain;
- Increase use of caffeine and nicotine
- Contribute to illness.

SOLUTIONS:

- Make sleep a priority.
- Naps can help pick you up and make you work more efficiently, if you plan them right. Naps that are too long or too close to bedtime can interfere with your regular sleep.
- Make your room a sleep haven. Keep it cool, quiet and dark. If you need to, get an eye mask or blackout curtains. Let in bright light in the morning to signal your body to wake up.
- No pills, vitamins or drinks can replace good sleep. Consuming caffeine close to bedtime can affect your sleep, so avoid coffee, tea, fizzy drinks and chocolate late in the day so you can get to sleep at night. Nicotine and alcohol will also interfere with your sleep.
- Establish a bed and wake-time and stick to it, coming as close as you can on the weekends. A consistent sleep schedule will help you feel less tired since it allows your body to get in sync with its natural patterns. You will find that it's easier to fall asleep at bedtime with this type of routine.
- Don't eat, drink, or exercise within a few hours of your bedtime. Don't leave your homework for the last minute. Try to avoid the TV, computer and telephone in the hour before you go to bed.
- Stick to quiet, calm activities, and you'll fall asleep much more easily!

- If you do the same things every night before you go to sleep, you teach your body the signals that it's time for bed. Try taking a bath or shower (this will leave you extra time in the morning), or reading a book.
- Try keeping a diary or to-do lists. If you jot notes down before you go to sleep, you'll be less likely to stay awake worrying or stressing. *From sleepfoundation.org*

Food

It is very important that you maintain a healthy diet whilst revising and in the run up to exams. Comfort eating as a reward, increased appetite, decreased appetite and not making time to eat are all different responses to stress. Skipping meals may well give you extra cramming time, but it can also leave you hungry and unable to concentrate. So, eat regularly and sensibly. Think wholemeal sandwiches and fruit, rather than cakes and biscuits!

Ensure you are eating 3 balanced meals a day

- Bread, pasta, cereals and potatoes are filling and packed with starchy carbohydrates, which release energy slowly, meaning you can keep going for longer.
- Fruit and vegetables give you essential vitamins and minerals. Aim for at least five portions a day.
- Food like pasties, chips and crisps are high in fat. Unless you want to emerge from your room looking like Jabba the Hut, keep them for treats.
- Drink plenty of fluids. Dehydrated brains don't think clearly and water is healthier than sweet, fizzy drinks.
- Don't make the mistake of using energy drinks and chocolate to keep you going. If you are so tired you feel you need these then read the sleep section above.
- Meat, fish, pulses, milk and dairy foods are good sources of protein. Moderate amounts are essential for a healthy diet.
- Make sure you eat breakfast on the day of an exam.
- If you're not getting enough iron then you'll damage your ability to concentrate for long periods of time and your energy levels will begin to drop. If hour long sessions of revision are proving too much, try eating more red meat, eggs and leafy green vegetables like spinach. Check out these [Brain foods](#)

Relaxation

As well as the right amount of sleep, you need to build in some relaxation time. Relaxation is not the same as rest where people may sit down, read, watch TV etc. People can rest and still feel anxious or stressed.

Relaxation causes muscle relaxation and slows the breathing

1. Pray or meditate

A few minutes of prayer or [mindfulness meditation](#) per day can help ease anxiety.

Meditation is simple. Sit up straight with both feet on the floor. Close your eyes. Focus your attention on reciting -- out loud or silently -- a positive mantra such as "I feel at peace" or "I am calm." Place one hand on your belly to sync the mantra with your breaths. Let any distracting thoughts float by like clouds.

Prayer is how we communicate with God how we are feeling and asking him for help. A prayer that you could use is as follows:

Father God,

Thank you that you love me and know me inside and out.

Thank you that you know my thoughts, fears and anxieties but you also know my hopes and dreams.

Lord I ask you for your help with my revision and exams.

Please help me be wise in how I plan my time and help my revision be effective.

Thank you that I am never alone; that you are always with me.

I hand over my worries, anxieties and stress to you now,

Knowing that you care for me and will give me peace.

Amen

2. Breathe Deeply

Take a 5-minute break and focus on your breathing. Sit up straight, eyes closed, or lie on your bed with a hand on your tummy. Slowly inhale through your nose, feeling the breath start in your tummy and work its way to the top of your head.

Reverse the process as you exhale through your mouth. Breathe in slowly for a count of 5 and out for a count of 7.

3. Reach Out

Your family and close [friends](#) are your best tools for handling stress. Talk to others - preferably face to face, or at least on the phone. Share what's going on. You can get a fresh perspective while keeping your connection strong. Talk to your tutor, teacher or the School Nurse.

4. Relax those tight shoulders!

Place a warm heat pack around your neck and shoulders for 10 minutes. Close your eyes and relax your face, neck, upper chest, and back muscles. Have a warm bath.

5. Laugh Out Loud

A [good belly laugh](#) doesn't just lighten the load mentally. It lowers cortisol, your body's stress hormone, and boosts brain chemicals called endorphins, which help your mood. Lighten up by tuning in to your favourite sitcom or video, reading the comics, or chatting with someone who makes you smile.

6. Crank up the Tunes

Research shows that listening to soothing music can lower blood pressure, heart rate, and anxiety. Create a playlist of songs or nature sounds (the ocean, a bubbling brook, birds chirping ...ask Mr Clayton-Harding..), and allow your mind to focus on the different melodies, instruments, or singers in the piece. You also can let off steam by singing at the top of your lungs!

7. Get [Moving](#)



You don't have to run in order to get a runner's high. All forms of [exercise](#), including yoga and walking, can ease depression and anxiety by helping the brain

release feel-good chemicals and by giving your body a chance to practice dealing with stress. You can go for a quick walk around the block, take the stairs up and down a few flights, or do some stretching exercises like head rolls and shoulder shrugs.

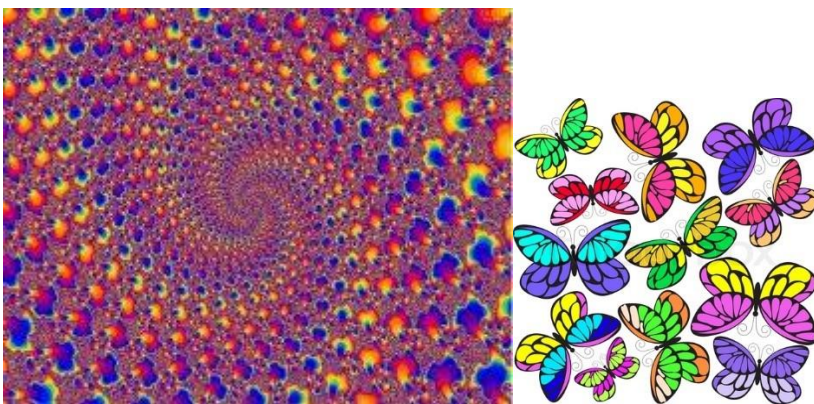
8. Be Grateful

Keep a gratitude journal to help you remember all the things that are good in your life and that you are thankful for.

When you start feeling stressed, spend a few minutes looking through your notes to remind yourself what really matters.



PLAY



We lose many of the skills of play when we get older. Remember how you used to love playing in the sand and water in reception and then all of a sudden you are 'too old'?! Research shows that creative 'play' or activity uses the right side of the brain whereas study uses the left or logical side of the brain. Doing more creative activities can relieve stress.

Try one of the following in one of your revision breaks (if you think it sounds childish you don't need to tell anyone ;))

Tie dye a t shirt	Doodling	Marbling
Sewing	Drawing	Cooking
Customising clothes	Painting	Baking
Rearrange your room	Singing	Colouring
Clear out and organise a drawer	Playing an instrument	Photography
Lego	Jewellery making	Photo editing
Play with a younger sibling	Card making	Hair braiding
	Playing with sand	Creative writing
	Playing with water	Dance
	Pastels	Gardening
	Crochet	Blow bubbles
	Knitting	Play dough/blutak

Exercise has been mentioned as a stress reliever already, but you will also feel much better if you stay fit. Sport with friends can also be a lot of fun and give you a few laughs, even if it's only penalty shoot-out at the park, splashing in the sea or playing with a cheap badminton or sponge ball set from a supermarket.



For more resources to support your mental health, see our wellbeing resources on the website:

[Wellbeing resources](#)