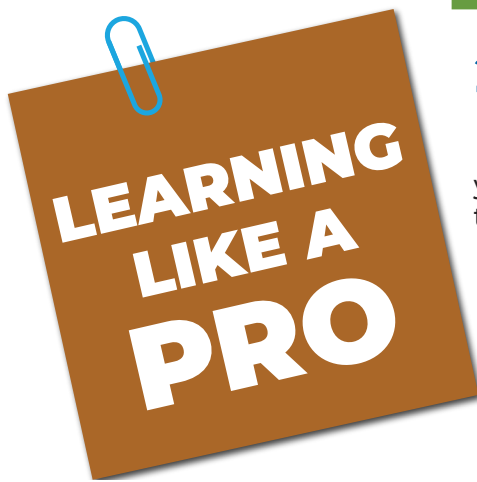




20 TECHNIQUES ANYONE CAN USE

By optimizing how your brain encodes, stores, and retrieves information, you can master any skill or subject. Search online to learn more about the techniques below.

Study Smarter, Not Harder

1. **Building Active Recall:** Force your brain to retrieve information from memory (such as by using flashcards) rather than simply re-reading notes.
2. **Using Spaced Repetition:** Review material at gradually increasing intervals.
3. **Applying the Feynman Technique:** Explain complex concepts in the simplest terms possible, as if teaching a child. This quickly reveals where your understanding is weak.
4. **Interleaving:** Mix different but related topics or skills in a single study session instead of focusing on only one topic at a time.
5. **Dual Coding:** Combine words with visuals (charts, graphs, or doodles) to give your brain two different ways to recall the information.
6. **Elaborating:** Connect new information to things you already know. Building a network of meaning makes concepts stick longer.
7. **Providing Concrete Examples:** Anchor abstract, theoretical ideas with specific, real-world examples to visualize and understand them better.

Maximize Mental Output

8. **Following the 80/20 Rule (Pareto Principle):** Focus on the 20% of the material that yields 80% of the results or understanding.
9. **Chunking:** Break large volumes of information into smaller “chunks” rather than trying to swallow the whole text.
10. **Using the Pomodoro Technique:** Work in highly focused 25-minute intervals, followed by a 5-minute break, to fight procrastination and maintain peak focus.
11. **Taking Notes by Hand:** Writing notes by hand is better for learning because it forces you to actively process, summarize, and synthesize information rather than transcribing word-for-word.
12. **Using Self-Explanation:** Frequently ask yourself why a fact or formula makes sense.
13. **Creating Concept Maps:** Draw visual networks connecting ideas, steps, and themes to see the “big picture” of the subject.

Protect Your Brain's Hardware

14. **Prioritizing Sleep:** Sleep is when the brain consolidates short-term memories into long-term storage. All-nighters destroy retention.
15. **Using Pre-Testing:** Try taking a practice test on the material before you learn it. Even if you get every question wrong, it primes your brain to spot the correct answers while you study.
16. **Eliminating Friction:** Make studying easy. Prepare your study space and eliminate distractions (like phone notifications).
17. **Embracing Desirable Difficulty:** Lean into the struggle instead of defaulting to easier, passive learning methods.

Play the Long Game

18. **Adopting a Growth Mindset:** Believe that your intelligence and abilities can be developed through dedication and hard work.
19. **Setting Process Goals, Not Outcome Goals:** Focus on what you can control (“I’ll read for 30 minutes”) rather than what you can’t (“I’ll score in the top ten percent on the exam”).
20. **Conducting Post-Learning Reflections:** At the end of a learning session, quickly ask yourself what worked, what didn’t, and how you can learn more efficiently next time.