Being a successful college student isn’t something that always comes naturally. To do it, it’s important to learn and develop a set of skills called the “Master Student” skill system. These learning abilities and study skills should address and develop to help you succeed in any classroom setting. First let’s preview what we will be learning:

**Time & Attention**
- Go To Class
- Ask Questions
- Tutoring
- Turn It In
- Use Syllabi
- Great Notes
- Study Group
- Office Hours
- Test Calming

**Flash Cards**
- Eat Breakfast
- SQ3RT
- Get Good Sleep

**Eat Breakfast**

**SQ3RT**

**Get Good Sleep**

**LET’S GET STARTED**
**Time & Attention**

Students who earn As and Bs have **two hours** of study time outside of class **for every hour spent in class**. Being a full-time college student is the same as having a full-time job in terms of time commitment. There are no shortcuts to getting a college education. Spend ample time prepping for exams, studying, and completing assignments and your time in college will be worth every minute.

Samuel Johnson, an 18th century writer, said that "the true art of memory is the art of **attention**." This is especially true for learning new things, so make sure that you have it when you’re studying! You can’t watch TV or text and expect to remember everything you learned while doing your homework. **Concentration** is key!

**Go to Class**

It may seem like a "Duh" thing, but many college students forget that one of the simplest keys to success is actually **attending** your classes. In-person learning gives you the opportunity to learn the materials in audio, visual, and kinesthetic learning styles—3 of the ways that occur amongst a large amount of the population. Going to class gives you the opportunity to understand and practice what you’ve learned, as well as **develop social skills** and **connections** that will help you after college. Serious students not only attend all of their classes, but they **arrive on time** with plenty of time before the lecture begins to prepare any materials needed. Showing up early or on time is also a mark of self-respect and respect for your professor and classmates.

**Ask Questions**

Asking questions in class is one of the best ways to demonstrate your commitment to learning. As you SQ3RT your reading assignments, write questions on an index card that you can take to class. When your professor asks if anyone has any questions, your arm can shoot straight up.

Once you ask a question in class you are **establishing a stronger student-professor relationship**. Instead of being a body in a chair, you become somebody as soon as you become active in your learning.

Ask for clarification from the day’s lecture that you are not sure of. The result of asking questions in class is **deeper learning** of the subject.

**Flash Cards**

Making and reviewing flash cards is a powerful way of learning information you expect to see on a test.

You’ll learn about the subject **as you create** the cards, and you learn when you **review** them.

When you’re standing in a line (like at a post office) get your cards out and start reviewing. Instead of texting or visiting with others between classes, go somewhere quiet and review your cards.

Flash cards are especially useful when you have to learn definitions, places, and dates.

There are many other study tools, but this is a common & simple one!
Tutoring

Working with a tutor is a sign of strength. We all need help in our learning journey and tutoring is an especially helpful strategy in preparing for exams. At Long Beach City College, the Tutoring and Supplemental Instruction center offers tutors for many subjects including maths, sciences, foreign languages, economics, social sciences, accounting, statistics, and much more.

All of the LBCC tutoring is free and is based in both appointments (guaranteed 30 minutes) and walk-ins (if tutor is available). The center also offers Supplemental Instruction, which is essentially a bonus group review for the class for anyone who needs additional help. Call the Tutoring & SI Center for more information at: (562) 938-4474 or visit in person in L-203.

Turn It In

Homework is not busy work! It’s your chance to practice what you’re learning from class lectures, discussions, and from your assigned reading. It makes sure that you have the foundations of the topic you’re learning so that you are prepared to move onto the next section in your class as well as allows you to demonstrate that you understand the topic and are more likely to remember the process or information.

If you’re having difficulty with your homework go to your professor’s office hours, take your questions to your study group, or ask your tutor to help you. In the majority of classes, homework is going to be a part of your final grade! Make sure that you never miss turning in your assignments!

Eat Breakfast

Study after study tells us that eating breakfast gives us focus and stamina all day long. It really is the most important meal of the day, as long as you eat the right things. The most advertised breakfast foods are full of complex sugars and carb-based like donuts or energy drinks, which is good for a quick burst of energy but not for the long run.

A good example of a healthy breakfast would be protein-rich items such as nuts, eggs, yogurts, and simple-carbohydrate foods such as multigrain cereals or fresh fruits. These healthy meals not only improve your overall health but will provide a longer lasting energy source without the crash. This is especially important for days you have tests, even if your test is in the afternoon or evening!

Great Notes

Start taking notes in all of your classes. Don’t worry if you think you’re not a very good note taker, you’ll get better with each passing semester.

The main thing is that you not try to be an exact recorder taking everything down, verbatim.

If your professor writes something on the board, write it down. Pay attention to what is being said so you can write enough of it down so you can review it later, and it makes sense.

Incorporate your notes as you SQ3RT your book. Read and review your notes on a regular basis.
The syllabus you receive on the first class of the semester holds all of the information you need to pass the class. Spend time studying what's in your syllabus. Understand all of the components:

**Professor contact and office hours**
Near the top of page one you will find your professor’s office address, email address, and their official Office Hours.

**Course description and objectives**
When you understand the purpose of the class and understand all of the key objectives, you will always know what you’re doing, where you’ve been, and where you’re going.

**Attendance policy**
Know the exact number of classes you can miss before it starts to affect your grade. Use absences wisely. Schedule your appointments around your course times.

**Assignments**
All of your assignments for the entire semester are listed and explained. You always know what is due and when.

**Grading Scale**
This section explains exactly how your assignments will be graded and at what value. Keep track and plan ahead.

**Class discussion and reading agenda**
This is the most important part of your syllabus. A tentative agenda for the entire semester is included, and that is where you learn what will be discussed during each class session along with your reading assignment for each class.

When you show up for class prepared to discuss that day’s topic you create a deeper learning of the information. Always read the assigned reading prior to class.

**SQ3RT**
SQ3RT was first introduced in Francis Pleasant Robinson’s *Effective Study* in 1946. It’s an old technique for using college textbooks that really works. SQ3RT stands for Survey, Question, Read, Recite, Review, and Think.

**Survey:** Preview the chapter by surveying (looking) at the pictures, captions, headlines, and bolded vocabulary words.

**Question:** Take a look at the review questions in the textbook if they are available at the end of each chapter. This will give you a brief overview of what content in the chapter will be most important. Also ask yourself is “What do I already know about this subject?”

**Read:** Try to answer any questions you posed as you go along and take notes. You can do this either on a separate sheet of paper, in your textbook, or on post-it notes in your textbook. Flash cards may be a good idea as well.

**Recite:** The best way to learn something is to teach it or say it out loud. Reciting new information as you learn it helps move the information from short term memory to long term memory. Review any important notes you took while reading this way. When you can recite it without peeking, it means you’ve learned the material.

**Review:** 20-30 minutes of reviewing key information a day will help you use repetition as way to learn and remember everything. Keep flash cards on you for downtime such as traveling on a bus or waiting in a line to review. This will eliminate cramming, decrease stress, and help you learn better.

**Think:** Don’t just block out the information you’ve learned once you’ve passed the test. Connecting it to newly learned information can make learning easier and help you form connections and think critically.

Use these steps each time you read and you will get a better grade overall.

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Creating and participating in a study group has many benefits. You help others learn, they help you learn, and your group reviews and recites information from class notes and textbook readings.

Participating in study groups takes time and results in a deeper learning of material you’ll need for the next test. It helps you take responsibility for your own learning and creates bonds between students that will form a long-lasting relationship between you and the other members of your study group.

The best place to organize a study group is in your class. Three to five students is an ideal number for a study group.

Your professors have posted office hours as long as they are a full-time instructor. Office hours are a time when the professor will be in his or her office available to speak with you without an appointment. Check your syllabus for information about when these times are.

Attend office hours so you can get to know your professor. Go to ask for clarification or to ask for help in solving a problem. Go with questions you’d like answered. Listen and learn.

By attending office hours you will have gained new insights about your professor and about the subject you’re studying. It will help in class and might get you a needed recommendation for a transfer or job.

If you’ve employed these smart study skills on a regular basis, you will more than likely have the opportunity to get enough sleep. Students who missed classes, who didn’t take notes, who didn’t read the textbook, and who didn’t study will be staying up very late cramming and trying to catch up. Cramming does not have a history of student success.

So what does? Getting to sleep at the same time and waking up at the same time every night has been shown to help people live longer, increase their ability to concentrate, and helped them feel better all day around. If you’re a night person, you might stay up until 2am and that’s fine-- as long as you get the right amount of sleep for your age group at a consistent period.

Even after using these study skills, it’s normal to experience some anxiety before you begin working on a test. You can rid your body of these feelings by conducting an isometric exercise as soon as you sit down.

Place both hands under your seat. Pull up with your arms and push down with your torso. Release for a few seconds. Do this 3-4 times to get rid of the anxiousness.

You can also do some deep breathing to get yourself centered. Begin by exhaling as much air as you can. Slowly breathe in through your nose to the count of five then slowly exhale through your mouth to the count of seven. Repeat this several times making sure you continue to increase the count of inhalation and exhalation.

You can now be a MASTER STUDENT!

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