



# ‘Study SMARTer’ The Ultimate Guide

*For Parents & Students*

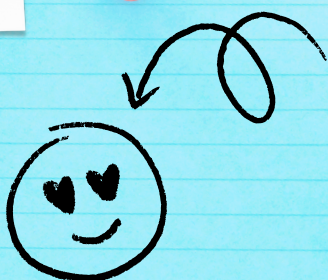




# KEY POINTS



01



SMART Goals

&  
Planning

Recommendations &  
Tips

02



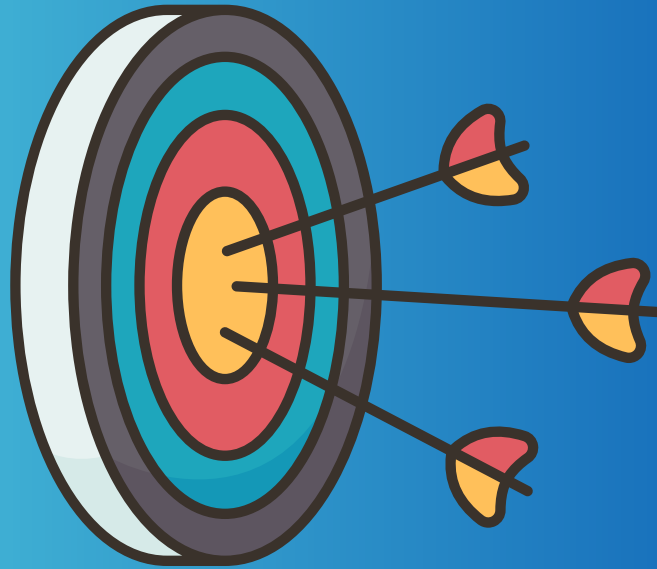
03



Timetables

&  
planners

# SMART Goal Setting & Planning



"fail to plan, plan to fail"

*Benjamin Franklin*

**Step 1: Set Goals using the  
SMART Technique!**



# SMART GOALS

SMART is a helpful way to plan your studying so you get better results.

## SPECIFIC

Set clear and specific goals. Specific goals answer the questions who, what, where, when, and why.

## MEASURABLE

Make sure your goals are measurable so you can track progress and know when they are achieved.

## ACHIEVABLE

Set goals that are realistic and achievable with the resources and skills you have.

## RELEVANT

Make sure your goals are relevant to your needs, values, and long term goals.

## TIME BOUND

Set a time limit to achieve your goal. Deadlines provide a sense of urgency and help you stay focused and motivated.





# SMART GOALS

WHEN SETTING GOALS, MAKE SURE IT FOLLOWS THE SMART STRUCTURE. USE THE QUESTIONS BELOW TO CREATE YOUR GOALS.

S	<u>SPECIFIC</u> WHAT DO I WANT TO ACCOMPLISH?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>◆ Bad: "I want to do better in school."</li><li>◆ Good: "I want to improve my math grade."</li></ul>
M	<u>MEASURABLE</u> HOW WILL I KNOW WHEN IT IS ACCOMPLISHED?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>◆ Bad: "I'll study more often."</li><li>◆ Good: "I'll study maths for 30 minutes a day, 5 days a week."</li></ul>
A	<u>ACHIEVABLE</u> HOW CAN THE GOAL BE ACCOMPLISHED?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>◆ Bad: "I'll study 12 hours every day."</li><li>◆ Good: "I'll review one chapter of science each week."</li></ul>
R	<u>RELEVANT</u> DOES THIS SEEM WORTHWHILE?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>◆ Bad: "I'll learn Latin because it sounds cool."</li><li>◆ Good: "I'll practice English vocabulary to improve my writing."</li></ul>
T	<u>TIME BOUND</u> WHEN CAN I ACCOMPLISH THIS GOAL?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>◆ Bad: "I'll get better at history someday."</li><li>◆ Good: "I want to raise my history grade by 10% by the end of this term."</li></ul>

# SMARTer Goal Planners

Set SMART goals for each subject

## Junior Cycle SMARTer Goals

Subject	What is my Goal?	How will I achieve that?
English		
Irish		
Maths		
Language		
History		
Geography		
Science		
Religion		
Other Subject		

## Senior Cycle SMARTer Goals

Subject	What is my Goal?	How will I achieve that?
English		
Irish		
Maths		
Language		
Subject 1		
Subject 2		
Subject 3		



# Plan SMARTer

## Step 2: Plan your study time!

Make sure to sit down each week and write out what you plan to cover. Analyse how they align with your overall goals and focus on them when creating your timetable.

For Example

Subject	Goal	How will I Achieve that?
English	To be able to write an essay in the comparative for my 5th year Summer Exam.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Compare 3 texts under 3-5 specific headings</li><li>• Outline points in a comparison grid.</li><li>• Identify key moments.</li><li>• Practice using whiteboard.</li><li>• Examine past questions</li><li>• Prepare sample paragraphs.</li></ul>

# Planning

## Monthly Planning

- **Prepare Early** - Fill out your monthly study plan at the beginning of each term
- **Organize By Subject** - Create dedicated planning sections for each course with specific goals
- **Document Key Deadlines** - Record all assignment due dates and test schedules prominently
- **Schedule Revision** - Plan regular study sessions well before assessment dates
- **Track Completions** - Check off finished tasks to monitor progress throughout the year
- Use the **blank planners** to help you



## Weekly Planning

- **Plan in Advance** - Fill out your weekly study plan each Sunday in preparation for the week ahead
- **Be Specific** - Itemize exactly what you'll study for each subject on specific days
- **Schedule Breaks** - Allocate time for rest and set realistic goals
- **Display Visibly** - Keep your timetable posted in your study area for easy reference
- **Follow Consistently** - Refer to your plan during homework and study hours to stay on track
- Use the **blank planners** to help you





# Monthly Planners

Establish what needs to be covered in each subject

Monthly Planner Junior Cycle

	Week 1	Week 2	Week 3	Week 4
English				
Irish				
Maths				
Language				
Subject 1				
Subject 2				
Subject 3				
Geography				
History				
Religion				

Senior Cycle Monthly Planner

	Week 1	Week 2	Week 3	Week 4
English				
Irish				
Maths				
Language				
Subject 1				
Subject 2				
Subject 3				

# Monthly Planners

Senior Cycle Monthly Planner

	Week 1	Week 2	Week 3	Week 4
English				
Irish				
Maths				
Language				
Subject 1				
Subject 2				
Subject 3				

For Example

Senior Cycle Monthly Planner

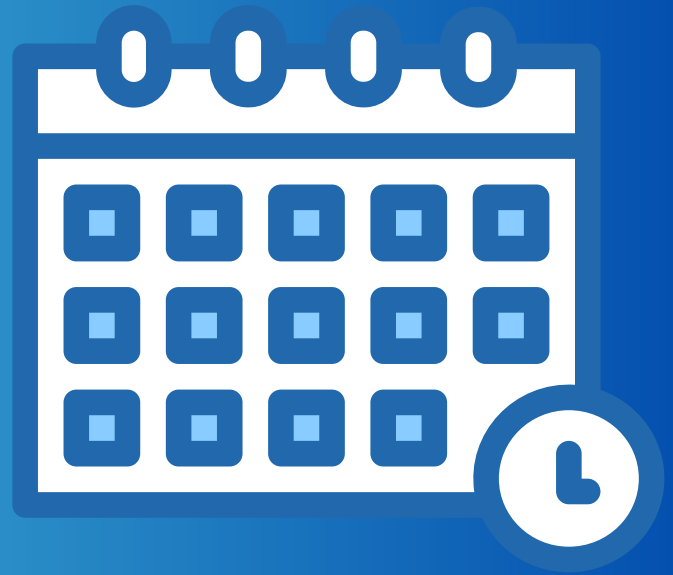
	Week 1	Week 2	Week 3	Week 4
English	Comparative Revise Grid King Lear Revise Quotes for characters	Poetry- Boland & Dickinson Reading Comprehensions	King Lear- Themes Paper 1: Question B Practice	Poetry- Smith & Kavanagh Poetry Unseen Paper 1: Composition Practice & Planning



# Timetables

## Step 3: Create your Timetable!

Once you have your goals in place it is time to make a schedule. The clearer your goals are the easier this will be. Keep in mind the Idea of SMART when making up your timetable. The more specific and realistic you are the more likely you are to achieve your goal.



The following are some examples of timetables .

- General non specific
- Mid Week Timetable
- Friday Timetable for those who finish early
- Weekend Timetable

[illegible]





# Study Schedule

## Mid Week



	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday
5:00-5:45				
5.45-6.00	Break	Break	Break	Break
6.00-6.45				
6.45-7:00	Break	Break	Break	Break
7:00-7.45				
7.45-8:00	Break	Break	Break	Break
8.00-8.45				
8.45-9:00	Break	Break	Break	Break
9:00- 9:30	Review and Planning	Review and Planning	Review and Planning	Review and Planning
9:30-10:00	Personal Time/Relaxation	Personal Time/Relaxation	Personal Time/Relaxation	Personal Time/Relaxation

Here is an example of how you could break down your time after school

- Recommended time per session is 45mins
- Break every 15mins
- It is important at the end of each session regardless of how it went to take time to reflect and assess how the session went.
- Examine your goals, your weekly, monthly planner.
- This is not designed to make you feel bad but to keep you on track.
- Accept that there will be days when you will meet your goals and other days you won't.
- However the importance it you review and reflect and establish new goals.

# Study Schedule Weekend

	Friday
2:30-3:15	
3:15-3:30	Break
3:30-4:15	
4.15-5:00	Dinner
5:00-5:45	
5.45-6.00	Break
6.00-6.45	
6.45-7:00	Break
7:00-7.45	
7.45-8:00	Break
8.00-8.45	
8.45-9:00	Break
9:00- 9:30	Review and Planning
9:30-10:00	Personal Time/Relaxation

For those of you who finish early it is important to make the most of your early finish

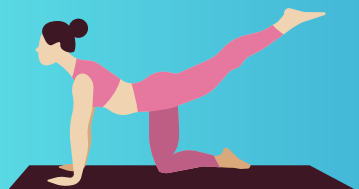




# Study Schedule Weekend



	Saturday	Sunday
8:00-8:45		
8:45-9:00	Break	Break
9:00-9:45		
9:45-10:00	Break	Break
10:00-10:45		
10:45-11:15	Extended Break	Extended Break
11:15-12:00		
12:00-12.15	Break	Break
12:15-13:00		
13:00-14:00	Lunch/Exercise	Lunch/Exercise
14:00-14:45		
14:45-15:00	Break	Break
15:00-15:45		
15:45-16:15	Review & Planning	Review & Planning



# Step 4: Understand your Learning Style!

## Understanding Your Learning Style

It is important to understand your unique studying style. What works for one may not work for you. Make sure you know what helps you learn best and adapt your studying goals and methods accordingly.

## Why it Matters?

1. Everyone has different learning preferences
2. Study methods that work for others may not work for you
3. Investing time to discover your learning style now pays off later
4. Knowing your style helps you prepare more effectively for exams
5. Personalized study techniques lead to better academic performance



# Types of Learners

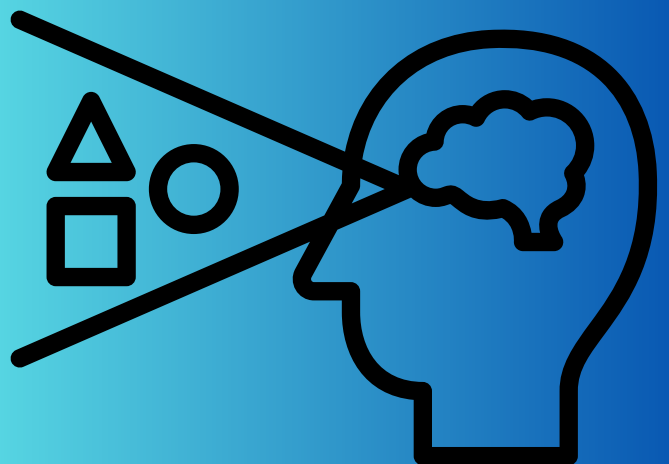
## Verbal

- Excel when reading texts and key points aloud
- Learn effectively by discussing material with others
- Benefit from recording notes for later review
- Improve retention through memory techniques like mnemonics

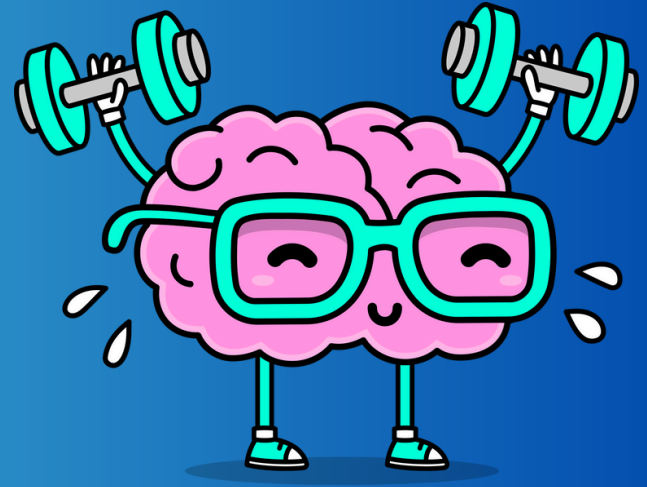


## Visual

- Learn best through visual aids and representations
- Benefit from diagrams and clearly laid out notes
- Thrive with visual organizers and color-coded bullet points
- Find success with idea-mapping and flashcards



# Step 5: Become an Active Learner



Studying isn't just about memorising—it's about understanding. Here are some key strategies to help you become an active learner. In essence this means you learn by doing. Here are some ways to do this.

**Be less passive and more active!**

1. **Test Your Understanding:** Use flashcards and quizzes to spot knowledge gaps.
2. **Summarise Key Points:** Try to explain main ideas and create your own examples.
3. **Think Critically:** Go beyond reading—ask yourself “why” and analyze the material
4. **Create Summary Sheets:** Use one A4 sheet per topic with bullet points and diagrams.
5. Taking **Good Notes** While You Study.

# Step 6: Create your Own Study Notes!

## 1. **Organise Information:**

Break topics into chunks for easier review.

## 2. **Use Shortcuts:** Develop your own symbols and abbreviations.

## 3. **Keep Notes Clear:** Make them neat and easy to read.

## 4. **Build from Class Notes:** Use them to refresh and deepen your understanding.

## 5. **Start Now:** Creating good notes early makes exam prep much easier.

## Tips for Creating Good Study Notes



# Effective Ways to Study



Study Method	What It Looks Like
Past Exam Questions	Practising with real papers, timing answers.
Mind Maps/Diagrams	Visualising connections between ideas.
Teaching Others	Explaining a topic to you or a friend.
Note Summarising	Condensing notes into bullet points. Using small whiteboards Reviewing material over increasing intervals.



# Recommended Study Times

Year Group	Weekday Study	Weekend Study Per Day
1st Year	30–45 mins	1–1.5 hours
2 <sup>nd</sup> Year	1–1.5 hours	1.5–2 hours
3 <sup>rd</sup> Year	2–2.5 hours	2.5–3 hours
5 <sup>th</sup> Year	1.5-2 Hours	4-6 hours
6 <sup>th</sup> Year	2-3 Hours	6-8 hours

## Note:

- These hours do not include homework.
- However it is worth noting that some homework can be in the form of revision and may be included
- It is also worth noting what your goals are. It is important to establish realistic goals and align this with your SMART study goals.
- Encourage short breaks every 45–60 minutes to avoid burnout.
- Times may vary depending on assessment and exam schedules.

# Healthy Eating

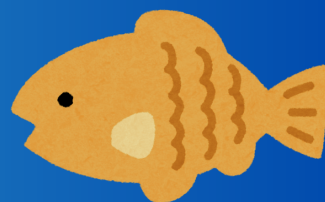
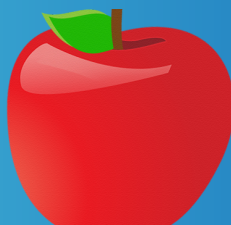
## A Recipe for Exam Success!

Healthy eating, drinking, and relaxation are essential for effective exam preparation. Here are some helpful hints to stay healthy and focused during your study period.



### Helpful Hints for Healthy Eating

- Eat small, regular meals with a focus on protein to maintain energy and concentration. It is recommended to take fish oils or eat oily fish like tuna, salmon, or mackerel to support brain function.
- Choose healthy, high-protein snacks such as peanut butter, tuna salads, or nuts over sugary treats.
- Avoid snacking at your study desk—take snack breaks in another room.
- Great snack ideas: yogurt, cheese sticks, raisins, fresh fruit, veggies with dip, oatmeal, and popcorn.
- Stay Hydrated. Cut back on caffeine gradually if you usually consume a lot. Replace excess coffee with water to stay hydrated and alert.



# REST AND REFRESH

## 01 Enough and Regular Sleep

Make sure to get 7-9 hours of sleep every night and maintain a consistent sleep schedule, even on weekends. Getting enough and regular sleep helps the body recover and wake up feeling refreshed.



## 02 Avoid Screens Before Bed

Reduce exposure to gadget screens at least one hour before bed. Blue light from screens can interfere with the production of melatonin, a hormone that regulates sleep. Instead, try doing calming activities such as reading a book or listening to relaxing music.



## 03

## Refreshing Morning Routine

Start the morning with an uplifting activity such as light stretching or short exercise. Drinking a glass of water immediately after waking up can also help hydrate the body and increase energy.

# Top Tips for Parents

## **Create a Supportive Environment**

- Set up a quiet, distraction-free study space.
- Avoid background TV/phones during study time.
- Stock up on stationery, past papers, snacks, etc.

## **Encourage Planning & Routine**

- Use a study timetable (daily + weekly).
- Support a balance of school, study, rest and social life.
- In the run-up to exams, simulate exam conditions (timed questions, quiet space).

## **Keep Communication Open**

- Ask: “What subjects do you feel strong/weak in?”
- open-ended questions build trust.
- Celebrate effort, not just results. Avoid Comparison.
- Watch for signs of stress or burnout, especially in 6th Year.

## **Promote Healthy Habits**

- 8+ hours of sleep is essential for memory and focus.
- Encourage exercise and downtime (sports, walks, hobbies).
- Healthy snacks > sugary or high-caffeine drinks for focus.





# Goes without saying...

## Phones off



## Learning on

# Tips for Phone Use



1. 🔔 Put your phone on "**Do Not Disturb**" mode to block notifications that can interrupt your focus
2. 📅 Use your phone only for **study-related purposes** (like timers, calculators, or reference apps)
3. 👁 Keep your phone **out of sight** when not actively using it for studying
4. ⌚ Schedule specific **5-10 minute** breaks to check messages/social media rather than allowing constant interruptions
5. 🌳 Consider using **apps designed to boost productivity** (like Forest or Focus Timer) that reward you for not touching your phone.

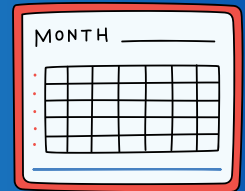


# Key Takeaways



## Study smarter, not harder

Don't study for hours without stopping. Take short breaks to rest your brain. It helps you focus better.



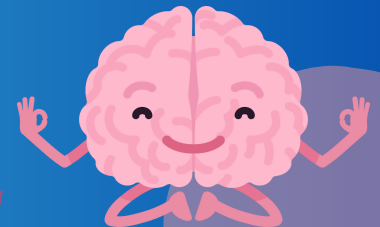
## Make a study schedule

Decide what you need to study and how much time you have. Create a schedule so you know what to do.



## Remember your goals

Create SMART goals.



Make sure to eat well, drink plenty of water and get adequate sleep. Also include some relaxation and exercise where possible.

