**You're Not in High School Anymore**

**A few pointers to tweak your study habits**

*By Sally Wood*

For many college freshmen, [the difference between studying in high school and studying in college is shocking](http://www.collegeview.com/articles/CV/campuslife/transitioning.html). Even in honors high school classes, teachers remind students of upcoming tests, give daily assignments, and work with them individually.

But college involves large classes and few daily assignments; midterms and finals are a large percentage of the course grade; and the class syllabus may be the only reminder of due dates. Studying is a challenge. No matter what your reason for going to college, making decent grades and passing your classes are a must. So—from the beginning—you must approach your studies seriously.

* Find a quiet, distraction-free place where you can concentrate. Try the library. Your dorm room may be okay, especially during designated “quiet hours.”
* Use a daily planner. Keep track of due dates and exam dates.
* [Set a daily schedule](http://www.collegeview.com/articles/CV/campuslife/beat_the_clock.html). Devoting two hours of study for every hour spent in class will help you avoid waiting until too late to start researching for a major paper, reading the many chapters covered on the next test, or studying for a major exam.
* Choose a course schedule that allows an hour between classes. Reviewing prior notes or reading corresponding chapters just before class helps you understand the lecture or discussion. Or immediately after a class—with the material fresh on your mind—review lecture notes, revise notes that you jotted during class, and read corresponding text material.
* Don't get behind. You'll be expected to read over 100 pages weekly for each lecture course. Don't procrastinate, and read carefully when you read. Don't just highlight points in the book; writing notes will help you concentrate, and you'll be more likely to remember the information.
* Take good lecture and reading notes. Focus on important points that may be covered on the exam. Writing notes helps you remember the material.
* Consolidate text notes and lecture notes. Lectures and reading material usually supplement one another; on exams you must demonstrate your understanding of all the information.
* Ask for help. Getting to know your instructors and other students in your class makes it easier to ask questions. [Attend study groups; it's amazing how much students learn from one another](http://www.collegeview.com/articles/CV/campuslife/study_groups.html).
* Make flash cards out of index cards. Write the word or question on one side; write the definition or the answer on the other side. Look at the word or the question, trying to answer as if it were a test question. Turn the card over and check your answer. Those you answered correctly go in your “success” stack; if your answer was wrong, put the card in your “review” stack. Your notes will be more manageable and less overwhelming, especially right before a test, when you're concentrating on especially difficult material.
* Take time to relax. If you spend all your time studying, you'll burn out and maybe even drop out. [Find a balance between studying and having fun](http://www.collegeview.com/articles/CV/campuslife/academics_athletics.html).