

## Revision Timetables: DOs and DON'Ts

A revision timetable is essential for success.

You need to start as soon as possible. Spreading out your revision over time is the only way you will get information to stick in your long-term memory.

Here is a short guide which shows you how to make revision timetables which actually work.

### A bad example

Time	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri
15:00-16:00	English	English	English	English	English
16:00-17:00	Maths	Maths	Maths	Maths	Maths
17:00-18:00	Chemistry	Biology	Physics	Chemistry	Biology
18:00-19:00	German	History	German	History	History
19:00-20:00	Business	Business	Business	Business	Business
20:00-21:00	Maths	Maths	Maths	Maths	Maths
21:00-22:00	Maths	English	Maths	English	Maths
22:00-23:00	History	History	German	German	History

DON'T just revise one subject in a huge block. You only transfer things to your long-term memory if you allow some time for forgetting. If you revise in big chunks your brain gets overloaded quickly.

DON'T revise too late into the night. Sleep is essential for storing memories.

DON'T just revise. Plan your fun time too. You may start off with the best intentions, but you will lose motivation very quickly if you're not rewarding yourself with something you enjoy.

DON'T give yourself breaks which are too long. Having the whole weekend off is unwise. Occasionally, you might have something which takes up the whole weekend and this is fine – occasionally. Just don't let it become a habit.

## A good example

Time	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat	Sun
15:30	English	Maths	Rugby	Bio	English	Maths	Rugby
16:00							
16:30	Maths	Bio		English	Phys	History	
17:00	Dinner	Dinner		Dinner	Dinner		Dinner
17:30			German				
18:00							
18:30	Chem	English	Dinner	History	Maths	Dinner	
19:00							
19:30	German	Business	Chem	Business			Business
20:00							
20:30	History		English	Maths			Phys

DO spread out your subjects. This will allow your brain time to forget some information. When you retrieve what you can and fill in the things you forgot (using your notes, revision guides, etc), this is when memories are formed. Most information will stick in your long-term memory when you have retrieved it four times.

DO take short breaks. When your working memory gets full (usually after around 30 minutes) you need to allow some time for information to sink in. Just don't allow breaks to go on too long (e.g. spending an hour making a cup of tea).

DO give yourself a cut off time. Your brain makes memories in the first four hours of your sleep cycle, which for people your age usually starts around 10.30/11.00pm. Give yourself at least an hour of doing something you enjoy before bed.

DO remember to schedule things you enjoy doing, whatever they are: sport, trips to the cinema, visiting relatives, etc. Yes, you will need to make some sacrifices and cut down on your leisure time, but cutting all fun out completely is unrealistic and counterproductive.

DO make time to eat properly and give yourself half an hour so for your food to start digesting so your brain is back to maximum capacity.

DO have a night or two off. In this example, this is Friday and Saturday (and Tuesday is a relatively early finish). The odd revision-free day here or there is OK – just don't let this become a habit.