Preparing to Study: A Good Study Place

You need a good study place to be prepared to study. You should be able to answer YES to all of the following questions:

**Is my Study Place available to me whenever I need it?**
Your Study Place does you little good if you cannot use it when you need it. If you are using a Study Place that you must share with others for any reason, work out a schedule so that you know when you can use it.

**Is my Study Place free from interruptions?** It is important to have uninterrupted study time. You may have to hang a DO NOT DISTURB sign on the door or take the phone off the hook.

**Is my Study Place free from distractions?** Research shows that most students study best in a quiet environment. If you find that playing a stereo or TV improves your mood, keep the volume low.

**Does my Study Place contain all the study materials I need?** Be sure your Study Place includes reference sources and supplies such as pens and pencils, paper, ruler, calculator, and whatever else you might need. If you use a computer for your schoolwork, it should be in your Study Place.

**Does my Study Space contain a large enough desk or table?** While working on an assignment or studying for a test, use a desk or table that is large enough to hold everything you need. Allow enough room for writing and try to avoid clutter.
Does my Study Place have enough storage space? You need enough room to store your study materials. Be sure you have enough storage space to allow you to keep your desktop or other work surface clear of unnecessary materials that can get in the way.

Does my Study Place have a comfortable chair? A chair that is not comfortable can cause discomfort or pain that will interfere with your studying. A chair that is too comfortable might make you sleepy. Select a chair in which you can sit for long periods while maintaining your attention.

Does my Study Place have enough light? The amount of light you need depends on what you are doing. The important thing is that you can clearly see what you need to see without any strain or discomfort.

Does my Study Place have a comfortable temperature? If your Study Place is too warm, you might become sleepy. If it is too cold, your thinking may slow down and become unclear. Select a temperature at which your mind and body function best.

Having a good Study Place is important for good studying.
The Ten Study Habits of Successful Students

Successful students have good study habits. They apply these habits to all of their classes. Read about each study habit. Work to develop any study habit you do not have.

Successful students:

**Try not to do too much studying at one time.** If you try to do too much studying at one time, you will tire and your studying will not be very effective. Space the work you have to do over shorter periods of time. Taking short breaks will restore your mental energy.

**Plan specific times for studying.** Study time is any time you are doing something related to schoolwork. It can be completing assigned reading, working on a paper or project, or studying for a test. Schedule specific times throughout the week for your study time.

**Try to study at the same times each day.** Studying at the same times each day establishes a routine that becomes a regular part of your life, just like sleeping and eating. When a scheduled study time comes up during the day, you will be mentally prepared to begin studying.

**Set specific goals for their study times.** Goals will help you stay focused and monitor your progress. Simply sitting down to study has little value. You must be very clear about what you want to accomplish during your study times.

**Start studying when planned.** You may delay starting your studying because you don't like an assignment or think it is too hard. A delay in studying is called "procrastination." If you procrastinate for any reason, you will find it difficult to get everything done when you need to. You may rush to make up the time you wasted getting started, resulting in careless work and errors.
**Work on the assignment they find most difficult first.** Your most difficult assignment will require the most effort. Start with your most difficult assignment since this is when you have the most mental energy.

**Review their notes before beginning an assignment.** Reviewing your notes can help you make sure you are doing an assignment correctly. Also, your notes may include information that will help you complete an assignment.

**Tell their friends not to call them during their study times.** Two study problems can occur if your friends call you during your study times. First, your work is interrupted. It is not that easy to get back to what you were doing. Second, your friends may talk about things that will distract you from what you need to do. Here's a simple idea - turn off your cell phone during your study times.

**Call another student when they have difficulty with an assignment.** This is a case where "two heads may be better than one."

**Review their schoolwork over the weekend.** Yes, weekends should be fun time. But there is also time to do some review. This will help you be ready to go on Monday morning when another school week begins.

**These ten study habits can help you throughout your education. Make sure they are your study habits.**
The DETER Strategy for Taking Tests

To do well on a test, you must have good knowledge of the information that is being tested. But you must also have a strategy for taking the test that allows you to show what you know. The DETER strategy can help you do your best on any test. Each letter in DETER reminds you what to do.

D = Directions

- Read the test directions very carefully.

- Ask your teacher to explain anything about the test directions you do not understand.

- Only by following the directions can you achieve a good score on the test.

- If you do not follow the directions, you will not be able to demonstrate what you know.

E = Examine

- Examine the entire test to see how much you have to do.

- Only by knowing the entire task can you break it down into parts that become manageable for you.

T = Time

- Once you have examined the entire test, decide how much time you will spend on each item.

- If there are different points for items, plan to spend the most time on the items that count for the most points.

- Planning your time is especially important for essay tests where you must avoid spending so much time on one item that you have little time left for other test items.
**E = Easiest**

The second E in DETER reminds you to answer the items you find easiest first.

If you get stuck on a difficult item that comes up early in the test, you may not get to answer items that test things you know.

**R = Review**

If you have planned your time correctly, you will have time to review your answers and make them as complete and accurate as possible.

Also make sure to review the test directions to be certain you have answered all items required.

Using the DETER strategy will help you do better on tests and get better grades.