

Brain Boosting Tips

Revision isn't just about sitting down at a desk and working hard. Preparing your body and mind for revision is as important as any other aspect of the process.

The Times Newspaper recently reported on various ways students can prepare for revision. Below are some of their better ideas.

Get Sweaty

One of the best ways to revise effectively is to stay active. Our brains need lots of oxygen to keep working at their optimum level. Physical exercise such as walking and jogging improve circulation to the brain. Studies have also shown that exercise can help sustain cells in the hippocampus, the part of the brain that is vital for memory and learning.

Feed Your Brain

Omega-3 fatty acids found in oily fish such as sardines and tuna and available as supplements are thought to improve cognitive abilities and mood. B vitamins may also have brain boosting properties and one good source is Marmite.

Take a Break

Pace your revision. According to a Cardiff University report, studying for more than 40 minutes at a time is counterproductive. The authors of the report say that “the number of facts that can be retained drops dramatically after 40 minutes. A 20 minute break will allow you to work effectively for another 40 minutes”.

Relax Your Body

According to Cornell University the more tense you are at the start of an exam the less well you will perform. By using basic relaxation techniques before the start of an exam your mind will work better and be able to access facts and solve problems more effectively.

Sleep on it

Not only does lack of sleep kill creativity and decision making skills but in a warm exam hall in June the urge to ‘nod off’ can be quite high. 7-8 hours sleep a night is essential for most people and it has also been found that learning facts just before you go to sleep helps cement what you have learnt. There is also evidence that having a 30 minute power nap in the

middle of the day increases afternoon brain performance and prevents information overload.

Drink Water

Our brains are 80% water so dehydration is bad news for your brain. It is recommended that you drink between 1.5l and 2.5l of fluids a day.

Lay off Technology

Physiologists claim that regularly tapping away on text messages and e-mails and constantly checking whether you have any new messages can lower IQ more than twice as much as marijuana. They said that the temporary loss in IQ is due to the brain juggling lots of tasks and losing its overall effectiveness.