

1. Find Your Reading Corner

The right reading environment should fit with your learning style. The right spot will increase your focus and concentration. Consider four factors:

- **Atmosphere:** Is there sufficient lighting? Do you have a comfortable chair?
- **Distractions:** Is there enough quiet? Have you muted or turned off your phone?
- **Location:** Is this spot convenient to things you need?
- **Schedule:** Have you given yourself enough time to complete the reading and assignments?

2. Preview the Text

Survey the material and ask some questions before you start reading. What's the topic? What do you already know? What can you learn from the text from any table of contents, glossary, or introduction? What do titles, subheadings, charts, and graphs tell you?

3. Use Smart Starting Strategies

When you start reading, don't let the text overwhelm you. Use these strategies to keep your reading assignment under control.

- **Break up the reading:** If an assignment seems daunting, break it into bite-sized sections.

- **Pace yourself:** Dense material, such as that in textbooks, can be tough to read. Manage your time well and schedule regular breaks.
- **Check for understanding:** As you read, occasionally ask yourself if you understand what is being communicated. If not, you may need to go back and reread a paragraph or section.

4. Highlight or Annotate the Text

Watch for important terms, definitions, facts, and phrases and highlight them or add annotations within the document—digitally if you're on a computer. However, don't get carried away with the highlighting.

If you would rather not use a highlighter, try to annotate the text with notes in the margins or in comment mode, or underline key phrases. Also, look for and mark the main idea or thesis.

5. Take Notes on Main Points

This is different from highlighting because you can take your own notes separately. Here are a few note-taking strategies:

- **Have your own style:** Try bullet points, mind mapping, outlines, or whatever method works for you.
- **Turn subtitles into questions:** By making section headers into questions, that can help you find the answers.
- **Summarize as you read:** After reading a paragraph, write a sentence to summarize the paragraph's main

points. Is the author's thesis supported? Is an opposing view introduced?

6. Write Questions as You Read

Asking questions can help your comprehension. The tactic also works when reading. Ask questions in your notes—who, what, when, where, how—and then look for answers as you continue. That helps you understand what you read.

7. Look Up Words You Don't Know

Don't let unfamiliar words derail you. Look them up in a dictionary before you go any further. It can be hard to recover if you miss the main point because of new words. You may want to bookmark an online dictionary, like [Merriam-Webster](#), so you can easily find word definitions.

8. Make Connections

Look for links and connections between the text and your experiences, thoughts, ideas, and other texts.

9. Review and Summarize

After you finish reading, summarize the text in your own words. This will help you understand main ideas and take better notes. If you don't understand what you've read, reread carefully.

10. Discuss What You've Read

Describe what you have learned to someone else. Talk to your professor or another classmate. Join discussion groups. This will move the information (or content) from short-term to long-term memory.