



Study Smarter Not Harder

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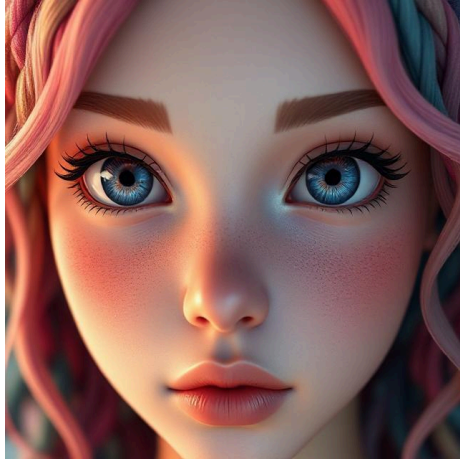
Study Smarter, Not Harder:

A 9-Week Course for Academic Success

Course Overview

This dynamic 9-week course empowers freshmen with practical study skills that transform academic performance. By the end of this course, you won't just know

how to study—you'll actually *want* to study because you'll see real results in your grades and confidence.



Why This Course Matters

- Students who master effective study techniques see average improvements of 1-2 letter grades.
- The skills learned here will serve you throughout high school, college, and beyond
- Learning how to learn is the ultimate academic superpower



Weekly Schedule

Week 1:

Mindset Matters

Learning Objective:

Develop the growth mindset necessary for academic improvement

Activities:

- Interactive quiz: ["What's Your Learning Style?"](#) (Google Forms)
- Watch: ["The Power of Yet" - Carol Dweck TED Talk](#) (10 min)
- Game: ["Brain Plasticity Challenge" - a team competition testing belief barriers](#)
- Create [personal academic goals using SMART](#) method (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, Time-bound)

Tech Tools:

- [Mindset App](#) - Daily motivation prompts
- [Google Jamboard](#) for collaborative mindset mapping

Home Practice: Record three academic "failures" and [reframe](#) them as learning opportunities

Week 2: Environment Engineering

Learning Objective:

Create optimal
study
environments for
maximum focus

Activities:



- Study space assessment (photograph your study space)
- Watch: ["How Environment Shapes Focus"](#)
- [Digital vs. physical organization showdown](#) (team challenge)
- Design your ideal study space (sketch or digital design)

Tech Tools:

- [Forest App](#) - Stay focused and plant real trees
- [myNoise](#) - Customized background sounds for studying

Home Practice: Implement three environmental changes and document impact

Week 3: Time Mastery

Learning Objective: Develop time management systems that actually work

Activities:

- [Time audit challenge](#): Where does your time really go?
- Watch: "[The Pomodoro Technique Explained](#)" (5 min)
- Time blocking race ([competitive scheduling activity](#))
- Create personalized weekly schedule template

Tech Tools:

- [Todoist](#) - Task management system
- Google Calendar - [Time blocking demonstration](#)

Home Practice: Use Pomodoro technique for three study sessions and report results



Week 4: Memory Enhancement

Learning Objective: Learn memory techniques that make information stick

Activities:

- [Memory baseline test](#) (fun, not stressful!)
- Watch: "[Memory Palace Technique](#)" demonstration (6 min)
- Memory competition: Spaced [repetition vs. cramming](#)
- Create subject-specific memory aids

Tech Tools:

- [Quizlet](#) - Digital flashcards with spaced repetition
- [Memrise](#) - Memory enhancement games

Home Practice: Create a memory palace for an upcoming quiz topic



Week 5: Active Reading Strategies

Learning Objective:

Transform passive reading into active learning



Activities:

- [Reading speed and comprehension baseline test](#)
- [Try another reading test.](#)
- Watch: "[How to Read Actively. Not Passively](#)"
- [SQ3R method competition](#) (Survey, Question, Read, Recite, Review)
- [Digital annotation](#) practice session

Tech Tools:

- [Readwise](#) - Digital highlighting and review system
- [Notion](#) - Note organization demonstration

Home Practice: Apply SQ3R to one textbook chapter and document results

Week 6: Note-Taking Revolution

Learning Objective:
Upgrade from passive copying to strategic note-taking



Activities:

- [Note-taking styles](#) assessment (find your match)
- [BEST note-taking method](#)
- Watch: "[The Cornell & Outlined Method Explained](#)" (5 min)
- [Mind mapping](#) challenge (team competition)
- [Making a Mind Map](#)
- Create [personalized note templates](#) for different subjects

Tech Tools:

- [Microsoft OneNote](#) - Digital note organization
- [MindMeister](#) - Collaborative mind mapping

Home Practice: Take notes using three different methods and identify your preferred style

Week 7: Test Preparation Revolution

Learning Objective: Master strategies that eliminate test anxiety

Activities:

- [Test anxiety self-assessment](#)
- Watch: "[How to Study for Tests - Evidence-Based Tips](#)" (9 min)
- [Mock test creation challenge](#) (students create questions)
- [Anxiety reduction techniques](#) practice

Tech Tools:

- [Kahoot!](#) - Gamified test prep
- [AI study assistant demonstration](#) (Claude or similar)

Home Practice: Create a personalized pre-test routine and test it



Week 8: Digital Learning Tools

Learning Objective:

Leverage
technology for
academic
advantage



Activities:

- [Digital learning style assessment](#)
- Watch: "[How to Use AI as Your Study Partner](#)" (8 min)
- [An AI Prompt Engineer Shares His Secrets](#)
- Create a [personalized digital learning toolkit](#)
- [Magic Student Tools](#) (Ask your teacher for help in joining.)

Tech Tools:

- Claude AI writing assistant demonstration
- [Grammarly](#) - Writing improvement tool
- [Wolfram Alpha](#) - Problem-solving engine

Home Practice: Use an AI tool to help understand a difficult concept and report findings

Week 9: Putting It All Together

Learning Objective: Create a personalized, sustainable study system

Activities:

- Progress assessment (compare to week 1 baseline)
- Watch: "[Maintaining Motivation for the Long-Term](#)"
- Create [personal study playbook](#)
- Celebration of skills gained and goals set

Tech Tools:

- Google Sites - [Create a personal study resources webpage](#) (Sign up for the FREE plan.)
- [Habit tracker app](#)

Final Project: Present your custom study system, including environment, schedule, and tools



Course Evaluation

Success in this course is measured by:

1. Completion of weekly home practice assignments
2. Development of personalized study system
3. Self-reported changes in study habits and attitudes
4. Academic performance improvements in other courses

Parent Collaboration

- Mid-course check-in with parent/guardian signature
- End-of-course celebration with parent/guardian participation
- Take-home resources for family support of new study habits

Google Classroom Integration

- All videos and resources will be posted to our Google Classroom page
- Weekly reflection submissions through Google Forms
- Digital tracking of progress through Google Sheets dashboard

Remember:

The goal isn't to study more—it's to study smarter. I hope these nine weeks have transformed not just how you learn, but how you think about learning itself!



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