

Breaking your study goals down into smaller, more achievable ones is essential for maintaining focus and motivation.

Step 1: Determine your main long-term goal

Example: "I want to finish all my study for a particular subject two days before the actual exam, so that I have the day before the exam 'off' to focus, calm my nerves and review notes."

Now ask yourself:

- ✓ How would you approach achieving this challenging long-term goal?
- ✓ How would you know where/when to start?
- ✓ How do you assess your progress along the way and monitor whether you're on track to achieve this goal?

Write down your answers.

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Step 2: Break your goals down

Creating short-term goals helps you to focus and immediately begin working towards the main goal. Make sure:

- ✓ Goals are realistic, practical and achievable
- ✓ Achieving short-term goals will get you closer to achieving your main long-term goal

Examples of short-term goals:

- ✓ Study and complete a certain amount of coursework every day
- ✓ Answer one question from the previous related exam every day
- ✓ Complete one previous exam paper every day
- ✓ Get into the rhythm of daily study

Step 3: Create an action plan

Creating short-term goals is likely to require a more specific, detailed list of actions than long-term goals.

Once you have an action plan, discuss it with your teacher or parents to see if your study plan is realistic, or if you need to adapt it.

Examples of action plan aspects:

- ✓ Create a study timetable to plan your time and break your coursework down into manageable daily chunks
- ✓ Plan a weekly schedule for study, exercising and relaxing to help you get into a organised rhythm
- ✓ Set deadlines for specific smaller study goals, such as finishing a big chapter or completing an old exam paper
- ✓ Get up at the same time every morning to create routine in your day
- ✓ Find a friend who you can check in with daily for a quick chat or pick me up, just to keep each other going

Goal	To be achieved by	How I'm going to do it
Get up at the same time every day	From Day 1	 ✓ Set two alarm clocks – keep them away from bed so that I have to get up to put them off ✓ Go to bed at a decent time and get enough sleep ✓ Eat healthy foods every day to sustain my energy levels ✓ Ask my parents to make sure I wake up ✓ Organise my desk and study materials the night before so that there aren't reasons to procrastinate in the morning
Finish the coursework I set myself and test myself on it at the end of the each day	End of each day	 ✓ Make sure you have all your study material and coursework done and available before you start studying ✓ Ask yourself questions as you go and make notes of important bits ✓ If needed, meet with a friend to quiz each other on the day's study section ✓ Follow my study timetable closely to keep on track ✓ If I feel any anxiety or stress, take a short break to walk outside, breathe deeply and reset your mind ✓ Talk to a parent, teacher or friend if I suddenly feel completely overwhelmed

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Step 4: Hold yourself accountable

Without accountability, you might lose sight of your grand plan.

Decide on ways you could use to hold yourself accountable, such as:

- ✓ Create daily To-Do lists and cross them off at the end of the day.
- ✓ Take stock of your goals regularly: make it a point to relook your action plan and update it as needed.
- ✓ Work with a friend, parent or teacher to keep you accountable to your goals: you could end each day of study with a quick pop quiz on the section, for example. Create a set of questions you need to know the answers for by the end of the day, and give them to your friend/parent to hold on to and ask you when you're done.
- ✓ Identify your personal mission statement, for example: "Discipline is Freedom."
- ✓ Reward yourself for every accomplishment and goal reached.

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