

Active learners can retain much more information than passive learning because active learners understand and apply information. Here are some characteristics of an active learner...

Collects the tools:

- ✓ Is present in class to receive and process the information
- ✓ Gathers all class and other notes, texts and readings
- ✓ Finds out testing format and chooses appropriate study methods

Creates relationships:

- ✓ Links new information with previously-learned information
- ✓ Makes a connection between learned information and something that is important to him/her
- ✓ Works problems in similar sets, from easy to hard

Organizes information:

- ✓ Finds methods of study that work well with each subject
- ✓ Gathers a group or finds a study partner so work can be divided
- ✓ Studies for tests on a daily basis

Rehearses information:

- ✓ Studies for incremental, short periods of time at most alert times during the day
- ✓ 'Practices' material out loud; explains/teaches it to a friend or study partner
- ✓ Avoids need for cramming sessions by reviewing daily

Active Learning Skills in Various Contexts

Large class settings:

Make active notes, jot down questions to follow up on later, make sure you follow up on any readings or activities recommended in class, establish or link up with a smaller group within the large class so that you can discuss the issues before or after the large class lecture.

Course assignments:

Be very clear about the criteria for marking and the nature, structure, size and shape of the assignment. Try to get access to similar assignments that have already been completed. Develop an assignment plan which clearly sets out the time required for preparation, composition and submission.

Subjects that you are already good at:

Volunteer to help others who are struggling with the subject. One of the best ways of becoming more competent in an area is to help others to learn about it by teaching them and discussing the topic with them.

Subjects that you find difficult:

Commit to seeking out help and assistance. Make sure that you work to gain a foothold in the subject. Be prepared to admit when you feel completely lost and develop a strategy for tackling your worries and fears. Do not avoid tackling challenges that you don't feel good at. Try to learn from your mistakes, and make sure that tutors or lecturers know that you are struggling and that you explain the nature of your struggles to them.



"I expect you all to be independent, innovative, critical thinkers who will do exactly as I say!"