



UNIVERSITY OF
PORTSMOUTH
ASK - ACADEMIC
SKILLS UNIT

Revision Timetables.

Many people find it useful to create a revision timetable. This handout has four sections: [Benefits of Timetables](#); [Designing Timetables](#); [Recapping, Summarising and Reducing Your Notes](#), and [examples of timetables](#). Please also see our handout: "Revision Techniques and Memory".

Benefits of Timetables.

1. They help you to focus on exactly what you need to revise.
2. They help you to think about the time available in the period leading up to the exam.
3. They help to reduce exam anxiety, because you can see your planning and preparation.
4. They help to discourage cramming. Trying to revise everything in the few weeks or days before the exam is, for most people, ineffective and stressful.
5. They can help you include time for recapping your notes.

Recapping, Summarising and Reducing Notes.

Revisiting material is essential for moving information from your short-term memory to your long-term memory. If this doesn't happen, you will find it difficult or even impossible to remember information. Ideally, you should recap and summarise it periodically during a revision session and at the end of a revision session. Recap and summarise again when you have completed revising a topic. You should then recap periodically, reviewing the material several times more as the exam approaches.

One key to this process is reducing your notes: reduce, reduce, reduce. You should move from your full notes, down to shortened versions, then shorten them again. You should end up with a diagram, chart, image, mindmap or brief bullet notes. If you have engaged with the material when reducing and recapping it, then just a few minutes going over the shorter notes can make a big difference.

Designing Timetables.

It's important to be flexible. Design them to suit how you work best and your preferences, but be realistic about what you can do **effectively** in the time available. You may, for example, prefer to do a lot in a short period of time, but consider how well you will remember the material, and understand it well enough to apply it, especially if the question is not exactly what you expected and revised for.

1. Think about what time of day you concentrate best. Most people are either morning people, or 'larks', or evening people, or 'owls'. Focus on the most difficult material during the best time of day for you.
2. Consider how long each revision period should last. Some subjects may require more, while others may require less, for you to absorb the information.
3. Consider how much time *in total* you should spend on each topic. It may be better to revise over a day or several days before moving on to a different topic; you

might split it into parts of a day, such as morning for one and afternoon for another; or you might move quickly through several topics, one after the other.

4. If you want longer revision sessions, break them down into identifiable 'sections' of, for example, specific points, themes, topics, or sub-points. For example, you might focus on knowledge, then recap and then take a break before working on its application.

Remember to take time off. This helps the brain processes which are involved in understanding and memory. Give yourself some relaxation time between revision sessions and, if it's a long session, during it. A whole day without revising can help recharge your batteries.

Examples of Timetables.

It is important to keep track of what you are revising for each topic. Keeping this together can help you see how much you need to do, and organise your time accordingly. It can also help ensure you don't miss out key subjects and information.

| Course | Unit | Modules/topics for revision | Dates |
|--------|------|-----------------------------|-------|
| | | | |
| | | | |
| | | | |

The following completed table shows how colour can help. It also demonstrates how you *could* keep track of what you have and haven't revised, and being flexible to make up for anything which wasn't done as planned. It can also help you identify if it would be wise to reconsider your revision plans.

So, if you are not keeping up, or something changes, adjust your plans.

| Date. | Session 1. Time: | Done. | Session 2. Time: | Done. | Session 3. Time: | Done. |
|--------------|---|-------------|---|-------------|---|--------|
| Sun 24/4 | Review: Industrialisation - General. Eur. Asia. | ✓ ✓ ✓ | Main: Globalisation 1. | ✓ | Time Out. | |
| Mon 25/4 | Rev: Glob. 1. Main: Glob. 2. | ✓ ✓ | Main: Select/use eggs: G1 G2 | ✓ ✓ | Rev: Glob. 1. Glob. 2. | ✓ ✓ |
| Mon 25/4 | Main: Trade Agr. General T.A. USA | ✓ X | Time Out. | | Main: Trade Agr. EU USA. | X ✓ |
| Tues 26/4 | Rev: Trade Agr. USA. Main: T.A. EU. | ✓ ✓ | Rev: Indust. Glob. 1. Glob. 2. | ✓ ✓ ✓ | Rev: T.A. EU. T.A. USA. | ✓ X |

The following example could be used weekly or monthly. This can help you to see if something needs more, or perhaps even less, time.

| SUNDAY | MONDAY | TUESDAY | WEDNESDAY | THURSDAY | FRIDAY | SATURDAY |
|--------|--------|---------|-----------|----------|--------|----------|
| | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | |

Topics Covered:

Please note that there are many more options. The times on this last example are on the left, but some people prefer them along the top. Also, some people like just a.m., p.m. and evening. Others like every half-hour to be accounted for. Make it suit you.

| | Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday | Saturday | Sunday |
|------------|--------|---------|-----------|----------|--------|----------|--------|
| am | | | | | | | |
| am | | | | | | | |
| Lunch hour | | | | | | | |
| pm | | | | | | | |
| pm | | | | | | | |
| Evening | | | | | | | |

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