

# Index study system

Here is a method of studying that gives you an accurate perception of how well you know the material, and forces you to think about it, rather than just look over it.

**Review your notes and readings frequently, so the material is "fresh"**

**As you're reading your text or reviewing your notes,** write down questions about the material.

Imagine you're teaching the course. What questions would you ask on the exam?

**Keep track of any terms you need to know**

*Try the index card system:*

1. **Write each question or term on the back of an index card**
2. On the front of each index card, **write an answer** or an explanation for the question or term on the back.  
Use your notes and text for a reference, but put the answer or explanation in your own words whenever possible
3. **Shuffle the index cards**  
so you can't figure out any answers based on their location in the deck
4. **Look at the card on the top of the deck:**  
Try to answer the question or explain the term.  
If you know it, great! Put it on the bottom of the deck.  
If you don't know it, look at the answer, and put it a few cards down in the deck (so you'll come back to it soon)
5. **Proceed through the deck of cards until you know all of the information**

*Some Tips:*

- **Carry your cards with you everywhere.**  
Take advantage of little pockets of time.  
Test yourself while you're waiting on line, riding the bus, etc.
- **If you think you know an answer,**  
but can't put it into words, you probably don't know it well enough.  
Explaining the information is a good way to be sure that you know it.  
It's also a good way to prevent test anxiety
- **Test yourself someplace where nobody can see you**  
and recite the answers out loud.  
That's the best way to be sure that you can explain them
- **Study with a friend from your class.**  
You can share ideas and help each other out with concepts.  
You can use each other to make sure that you're explaining your answers