

Seven Habits of Highly Effective Students

1. **Show up.**
2. **Complete** the assigned reading before each class.
3. **Read actively, asking questions.** Mark the text or take notes. In literary works, evaluate the characters; try to explain their motives; try to identify the main themes and questions at issue. In analytical works, try to restate the argument; note any fallacies, jumps, or significant silences. Do the examples bear out the assertions? What are the premises, stated or unstated? What alternative positions is the author arguing against? What's missing? How do the different arguments fit together? **Above all, let yourself be puzzled and formulate your perplexity into questions.**
4. **Draw connections:** If this author is right about human nature, what follows about how we ought to live our lives? What would Machiavelli think of Stalin? What would Plato say about this argument of Nietzsche's?
5. **Integrate** your studies with your friendships: ask your classmates out for lunch or coffee; form study groups and reading groups; discuss questions that come up in your classes with your roommates.
6. **Build a library.** Read widely, browse bookstores, and splurge on books. Buy new or unmarked used books, mark important passages, and make them your own.
7. **Connect** with your professors: don't leave class with any questions still unaddressed, or with anything left unclear. Go to each professor's office hours at least twice during the semester.

adapted from Seven Habits of Highly Effective People, by Stephen R. Covey