



ACHIEVE EXCELLENCE PROGRAMME · PRACTICE MAKES PERMANENT

Making Effective Revision Notes

Short, clear notes you can actually test yourself from

Good revision notes should help you:

- **Understand** the topic
- **Remember** key information
- **Use** knowledge in tests and exams

If your notes are too long or just copied, they won't help memory.

Revision notes should be short, clear, and easy to test yourself from.

Step-by-step: making effective revision notes

Step 1 — Start from the right source

Use:

- Exercise books
- Knowledge organisers
- Teacher slides or textbooks
- Mark schemes (for exams)

Avoid copying random websites or writing everything down.

Step 2 — Pick only the most important information

Include:

- Key words and definitions
- Formulas, dates, quotations, processes
- Diagrams or examples
- Typical exam questions

Leave out:

- ✗ Long paragraphs
- ✗ Extra stories or descriptions
- ✗ Anything you already know easily

Rule: If it won't help in an exam, don't include it.

Step 3 — Keep notes short and organised

Good formats:

- Bullet points
- Tables

- Mind maps
- One-page summaries
- Flashcards

Best rule: one topic = one page if possible.

Step 4 — Add visuals (dual coding)

Memory improves when words and pictures are combined.

Try:

- Diagrams with labels
- Timelines
- Flowcharts
- Symbols or colour coding

But keep it clear, not messy.

Step 5 — Write in your own words

Do not copy. Instead:

- Read a section
- Close the book
- Write what you remember in simple language

This helps understanding and memory.

Step 6 — Make notes easy to test from

Your notes should include:

- Questions in the margin
- Covered answers
- Key words hidden for recall

So you can self-quiz, not just read.

Step 7 — Improve notes using feedback

After a quiz or test:

- Add missing facts
- Correct mistakes
- Highlight weak areas

Revision notes should change as you learn.

What good revision notes look like in subjects

Maths

- Steps of methods
- Worked examples
- Key formulas
- Common mistakes to avoid

English

- Key quotations
- Themes and ideas

- Vocabulary for analysis
- Paragraph structures

Science

- Definitions and key words
- Diagrams of processes
- Equations and units
- Required practical methods

Common mistakes to avoid

- ✗ Copying the textbook
- ✗ Writing too much
- ✗ Making notes but never testing yourself
- ✗ Leaving notes until just before exams

The key rule to remember: revision notes only work if they are short, clear, and used for self-testing over time.