

How to Get Better Grades at Centerville Junior High

PRIORITY

Calculate how much of your grade a project is worth. Prioritize. You won't get a high score if you don't aim for one. Davis School District has an online web site to check grades, scores, teacher e-mail and calendars and much more. Utilize this and make sure that you have a username and password. If you don't the Counseling Center will give it to you and instruct you and your parents how to use it.

Homework comes first over everything else: Set yourself goals and make sure you reach them before you go out and party. Social life is important too, but make sure your work comes first. But don't become a social outcast because that is as unhealthy as bad grades. Keep the grades up and have a social life. Try to do your best and most importantly **ask a teacher for help if you need it!** **Time management is essential.** If you're given an assignment that's due next week, don't procrastinate; get started the same day you get the assignment.

Always do your homework! This can't be stressed enough. It's so easy to forget or to just put it off. Get a calendar system to remind you a few days before the homework is due. If you have trouble remembering, use a notebook to write it down right after the teacher assigns it. Homework counts for a large portion of your grade. If your teacher has any extra credit assignments, do them! It won't hurt if you try it out. Even if you get some wrong, have confidence that your teachers will still give you some points back.



Get good sleep. You need sleep in order to stay focused. Without it you will have a hard time staying on task and will forget what you just learned. So get lots of sleep and always eat a good breakfast. The breakfast and sleep will help you stay focused.

Stay organized. A lot of people say this but it really does help. Organizing your locker helps you remember to bring supplies to class and to your house to do homework or studying. Organizing your notes will make them much easier to

understand later on. Also keep your desk/study space tidy. Make sure you have a clean, quiet place to study and do homework, withdrawn from the main part of the house and from noise



With homework, don't travel into unknown territory; use your notes to answer what the teacher is asking for: Do it correctly, checking to make sure you have no mistakes, and you can't mess up. Look over your homework in detail at least once before you turn it in and make sure your name, class and period is on it. If you're uncertain about your homework ask your teacher or e-mail them if you have too!

Take notes on everything, except novel study. For most courses in junior high school and high school, most of what is on the tests and homework will be discussed in the class. If your teacher draws a diagram on the board, copy that down - it can help you remember the information. Don't just copy what they write on the board, either: take extensive notes on everything. Although most of the time in junior high school, teachers will probably take it easy and ask you to copy it down or give you specific instructions. Still, if you want to get the best idea then copy it down. Notes should be short and if possible get pens with colored ink because it aids the memory. Also pencils that smell good aid memory. These are useful and fun tricks that help with note taking and studying. Plus they help in all around remembering as long as it is ok with the teacher.



Write good legible notes. Colored pens are fun to write with if you want to get more creative with your notes, but use those only for sections of your notes that you feel will be on a test or that are important. It makes them stand out. Use highlighters if there's something you need to find easily flipping through your notes, but don't highlight too much text or it destroys the point.

Making your notes fun to read will make them much easier to understand when you go back to look!

Review your notes every night, so when the big test comes, remembering what you learned is a snap.

With tests, take the notes and make a study guide. Look in the textbook and add anything not in your notes. Then make someone test you on the study guide, sing the question and answer, whatever. If you have math problems you don't understand or information you are not sure of write it down and give it to the teacher, If she hands it back before the test, you'll see your mistakes and be able to fix them before the test.



When taking tests, relax. If you're fidgety, or worried that you'll fail the test, you're sure to get a low score. If you studied for it long enough that you know the information, then you shouldn't be worried about getting a low grade.

Remember the most important advice to getting good grades is very simple; do well on tests and quizzes to get an A or an A-. Do your homework and do what your teacher says, and the chances are fairly good that you'll get an A+. Don't stress yourself. Act cool and calm.

Watch to determine how your teachers teach, use the same method to learn the information. If they write on the blackboard, take notes; if they lecture, listen hard or record the lecture to listen to multiple times. This sounds simple, but many will find it hard to stay focused for an entire class period. [Here is where the hard work comes in - staying focused.](#)

Ask your teacher if you don't understand something. It doesn't have to be a complex question, your teacher is always happy to help you. Ask after class or in an e-mail for assistance. If your teacher is unavailable (Example: on a vacation), ask another teacher that teaches the same subject, ask in homework lab, ask the substitute, your parents, friends, anyone. Asking questions will improve your grades and help your understanding.



Note that teachers want you to give them back what they gave you. So give it to them! By now you have learned how the teacher is giving you the information and you have had plenty of time for it to sink in. Give it back to the teacher. Do this by using the knowledge they've taught you and apply it to your homework, tests, and projects.

Invent a fun way to study. Don't study all in one night, study a bit each night. Your brain cannot take in so much information all at once. Make flash cards, have a friend over, or join an after-school homework club if you can, for help from a teacher or a friend from the same class. A lot of people think studying is "lame" or "boring". You can make up a board game to make studying fun and easy, or you can just type up your notes if it makes it easier to read. Do as much as possible to make sure you **know the material**.

Eat a good healthy breakfast every day. It is known that if students eat a good and healthy breakfast every morning they are known to get good grades in school and are able to focus better in school.



Have good relationships with the teachers. If you don't they may give you an A- instead of an A. If you are always argue, don't pay attention, or don't listen to their advice, it will affect your grade.

Plan Ahead! Most students hear about a project or big homework assignment and always rush through it the night before it is due. Always plan the assignment beforehand. Always get the assignment finished at least 1 whole day before it is due.

Top Tips to Being a Better Student

- *Always* do extra credit. It can save your grade if you fall short on homework or tests, and even if you did well it will help your GPA later.
- Ask lots of questions in class! This will clear up anything you're unsure on and possibly give you new information to spice up a paper, and participating actively in class can actually raise your grade!
- In math, if you see a problem you don't know how to do, or didn't understand, write it down and look it up when you get home. When the test comes around those problems will be very useful.
- Organize your work area. Make sure everything is neat and you can find it easily. As any college student will tell you, working in an untidy environment will only lead to distraction. Make sure you have all of the supplies you need for class.
- Don't be ashamed of being smart or needing a tutor. Tons of smart kids get picked on, but being smart always pays off in the end. Also, don't be afraid to get a tutor because it doesn't mean you aren't smart. It just means you need a little help and that you are learning at a right pace for you, which is perfectly okay. Some teachers will even recommend tutors and add to your grade for getting tutoring; if they do this, be sure to get the tutoring! A couple extra points to your grade can never hurt.
- It's not about how long you study; it's about how well you study. Skimming a book for five hours doesn't help as much as reading your notes and the book for two hours.
- Stay focused on the goal.

- When taking tests, you have to relax. Easier said than done? Remember - you have all of the answers in your head already! The only challenge is getting them out! Your first instinct is nearly always correct. Don't go back and change answers. If you are really not sure, skip it and come back later.
- If you're uncertain about the wording of a test question, go and ask the teacher what they mean! As long as you don't flat out ask for the answer to a question, just what they meant by the question, they will usually answer.
- Use your time wisely. If you are given an hour to complete a 120 question test, that's 30 seconds per question. 30 seconds can be made into a lot of time. Many of the questions will take far less than 30 seconds, so apply the balance to a tougher question. Don't think too deeply on the time, and don't let yourself get distracted by the ticking of the clock.
- If you have any questions, don't be afraid to ask the teacher! You have the right to learn. Plus, they'll be happy to help you. Also remember that you're smart if you ask questions.
- Do not procrastinate. Don't do a project the night before or on the morning of. If it seems like a huge project, then break it into little steps and do a couple per day. Or, find a partner to work with, if your teacher allows it, and split the work between you two.
- Don't cram right before a test. Study well in advance. This will allow you the luxury of breaks between study sessions and to study with friends once in a while.
- Study with a friend as much as possible. Plan a weekend study session, or weekday sessions and help each other. This tends to work best when you are in the same class and not just with the same teacher - one class can be further ahead than the other.
- Look to the future, and make sure you see what the benefits of actually studying are.
- Sometimes it helps if you reward yourself. If you've gotten good grades, take a day off of studying. Just don't slacken too much.
- Having small goals also helps. Your goals should try to improve slowly and finally earning an "A". Aiming for an "A" right away leaves you feeling unrewarded and makes your goal seem unreachable.
- Read from the text book (if you have one). There are sometimes things in there that the teacher didn't mention or you didn't hear.
- Always follow instructions on assignments, tests, math problems, etc.! It may not seem necessary sometimes, but reading the instructions beforehand is crucial.
- Set a study schedule. It may seem overrated but it actually works. Give yourself 15-20 minutes to unwind if you feel stressed from school, unless you can stay in *school mode* right after you get home. Do not save your homework for 9 p.m.
- Remove all distractions. Although it may be okay to listen to music or leave the TV on while doing simple work, it is best to be in a quiet environment, preferably alone. Make sure you have plenty of space and good lighting.
- For new college students coming out of high school, it helps to not become overwhelmed. The work is not any more difficult, there's just more of it. Break large assignments down into sub components, divide and conquer.

- Keep a small notepad or even loose paper will do. Write down any and all assignments, due dates, and have a check box next to each one. If it helps, break things down into as many smaller components as possible. Instead of taking on large tasks, the more things you can accomplish and check off, the more refreshed you will be and you will maintain a better outlook toward the assignments.
- Study for one subject at a time, you'll get better grades that way. It's better to make sure you know one subject really well and then move onto the next when you study. You will then go into an exam with a basic knowledge of all of your subjects.
- Rely on good sources. A bad source might give you inappropriate information and the information might be wrong, DON'T rely on Wikipedia all the time, since you could get some false information (it isn't always right.)
- Study even if you do not have a test for a week or so. If you study the night before you will be nervous and not do good. Study your notes and vocabulary also because you never know what will be on the test.
- Don't feel bad if you didn't get the grade that you wanted. There will likely be more opportunities in the future. Just persevere and believe that you can do it! Don't let anyone bring you down!
- Don't be afraid to look up extra information about anything you're studying. Your teachers will be impressed if you can add information that you didn't learn in class into the essay or test.
- And most importantly have fun when doing it! If you enjoy something you can learn more easily; just think of this more as your future, to your benefit and everything will go according to plan. Just believe in yourself and anything can happen!