

THE ULTIMATE AP[®] PREP PLANNER



WHY MAKE AN AP[®] EXAM STUDY PLAN?

There are times in life when it’s best to wing it—karaoke night, for example—but your AP[®] exam prep is not one of those times. Although these exams might have a relatively small role to play in college admissions, if you hope to earn college credit for your AP[®] coursework, you’ll need a top AP[®] exam score. Unlike the SAT[®] or ACT[®], AP[®] exams only come around once a year, so if you miss the mark, it’s not like you get a do-over in a month or two.

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STEP 1:

Which AP[®] exams will you take?

Take a look at the 2023 AP[®] exam schedule below. **Circle the AP[®] exams you will take.**

	MORNING (8 AM)	AFTERNOON (12 PM)	AFTERNOON (2 PM)
MONDAY, MAY 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> United States Government and Politics 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chemistry Spanish Literature and Culture 	
TUESDAY, MAY 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chinese Language and Culture Environmental Science 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Psychology 	
WEDNESDAY, MAY 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> English Literature and Composition 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Comparative Government and Politics Computer Science A 	
THURSDAY, MAY 4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Human Geography Macroeconomics 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Seminar Statistics 	
FRIDAY, MAY 5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> European History United States History 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Art History Microeconomics 	
MONDAY, MAY 8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Calculus AB Calculus BC 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Computer Science Principles Italian Language and Culture 	
TUESDAY, MAY 9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> English Language and Composition Japanese Language and Culture 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Physics C: Mechanics 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Physics C: Electricity and Magnetism
WEDNESDAY, MAY 10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Spanish Language and Culture 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Biology 	
THURSDAY, MAY 11	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> French Language and Culture World History: Modern 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Physics 1: Algebra-Based 	
FRIDAY, MAY 12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> German Language and Culture Music Theory 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Latin Physics 2: Algebra-Based 	

STEP 2:

What do you need to study & how will you study it?

To create a detailed study plan, you need to know what you need to study and how you intend to study it. The study plan on the next page offers a template for you to plan how you'll study for each AP[®] subject. Follow the tips below as you create a study plan for each subject.

HOW TO USE THE SUBJECT STUDY PLAN

Tip 1: Identify which topics you need to study.

List the topics that you know will appear on the AP[®] exam. Refer to your teacher's syllabus or check out the [College Board's website](#) to find a list of exam topics. You'll probably need several plan pages for each course, so be sure to print extra copies!

Tip 2: Know your level of comfort with each topic.

Be honest with yourself! On a scale of 1 to 5, how confident are you in your knowledge of the topic? Fill in the circle that indicates your level of comfort with each topic.

Tip 3: Decide how you will study each topic.

We've provided some options for you, but every student has study methods that work for them, so feel free to add your own! Choose however many tasks you think you might want to use for each topic.

- **Take/Organize Notes:** Many students find that the act of writing something down helps them to better remember it. Use your textbook or an AP[®] exam prep book to take notes on a topic. Better yet, consider rewriting your class notes to organize them. We've got a great note-taking resource on page 13 of this guide.
- **Flash Cards:** Some topics lend themselves to flash cards. For example, biology terms or historical events are ideal for flash card review. Make your own flash cards using index cards or use a flash card app on your phone or tablet.
- **Vocabulary Practice:** Use a single sheet of paper with two columns to list every vocabulary word, term, date, event, formula, or other item you need to memorize. Fold the sheet in half so that you can only see the term and not the definition. This is a compact solution to flashcards—it's the same concept, but you won't drop a pile of cards if the bus hits a bump. We've included a blank template on page 14 of this guide.

- **Practice Multiple Choice or Free Response Questions:** Use a trustworthy Internet source or a good prep book to provide practice questions on specific topics. Practice makes perfect, after all!

Tip 4: Prioritize each topic

Group your priorities:

1. **Urgent**—important, shows up frequently, difficult to understand, low confidence
2. **Important but not urgent**—shows up fairly often, might be a little complex, medium confidence
3. **Low urgency**—doesn't show up often, pretty simple, high confidence

READY? LET'S GO!

SUBJECT STUDY PLAN

AP® Course: _____

TOPIC	LEVEL OF COMFORT	POSSIBLE STUDY TASKS	PRIORITY
<p>EXAMPLE FOR AP U.S. GOVERNMENT</p> <p><i>Structure and development of the U.S. Constitution</i></p>	-○○○ ○ ○+	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Take/Organize Notes • Flash Cards • Vocabulary Practice • Practice Multiple Choice Questions • Practice Free Response Questions • Other: 	<p>1</p> <p>2</p> <p>3</p>
	-○○○○○+	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Take/Organize Notes • Flash Cards • Vocabulary Practice • Practice Multiple Choice Questions • Practice Free Response Questions • Other: 	<p>1</p> <p>2</p> <p>3</p>
	-○○○○○+	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Take/Organize Notes • Flash Cards • Vocabulary Practice • Practice Multiple Choice Questions • Practice Free Response Questions • Other: 	<p>1</p> <p>2</p> <p>3</p>
	-○○○○○+	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Take/Organize Notes • Flash Cards • Vocabulary Practice • Practice Multiple Choice Questions • Practice Free Response Questions • Other: 	<p>1</p> <p>2</p> <p>3</p>
	-○○○○○+	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Take/Organize Notes • Flash Cards • Vocabulary Practice • Practice Multiple Choice Questions • Practice Free Response Questions • Other: 	<p>1</p> <p>2</p> <p>3</p>
	-○○○○○+	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Take/Organize Notes • Flash Cards • Vocabulary Practice • Practice Multiple Choice Questions • Practice Free Response Questions • Other: 	<p>1</p> <p>2</p> <p>3</p>

STEP 3:

When will you study?

Now that you know what you need to study and how you plan to study it, you need to decide when you will study.

LONG-TERM PLANNING

Since AP[®] exam prep should be done over the long term, you should plan out the months before your exams. This gives you a general shape of how you'll fit all of the information you need to study into the time you have remaining.

We've included a blank study calendar for you to create a monthly study plan. Fill in the months and days first, then write down which subject(s) you'll review on which days.

Here are some tips for an effective long-term study plan:

Tip 1: Space out your sessions for each subject.

Studies show that spaced repetition promotes learning. When you let new information marinate in your mind for a few days, it becomes slightly more difficult for you to recall it during your next study session—and when you have to work slightly harder to recall the information, it becomes easier to recall later on! Think of it like weight-lifting: If you never challenge yourself, you won't improve your muscle mass.

Tip 2: Change it up frequently.

Consider scheduling more than one subject per study session. Research suggests that interleaving, switching frequently between related subjects or concepts, helps to build stronger connections between pieces of information, which helps you recall the information later on.

Tip 3: Don't overschedule.

If you know you have basketball practice every Wednesday, give yourself Wednesdays off. If you have family obligations on Saturdays, schedule a light study day on Saturdays. Creating an overly ambitious study plan will only set you up for failure—when you inevitably fall behind your demanding study schedule, it'll become easier and easier to skip intended study sessions.

WEEKLY PLANNING

Each week, take a few minutes to flesh out your study plan for the week. You'll already know which subjects you need to study on which days because you will have planned that on your monthly study calendar. This is the space to decide which specific topics you'll study and what times you'll block off for your study sessions.

Here are some tips for an effective weekly study plan:

Tip 1: Be realistic.

You have other obligations. You can't let your grades slip because you were too busy studying for AP[®] exams, and you still need to fulfill your extracurricular responsibilities. If you know you have a big Spanish test on Friday, give yourself a lighter AP[®] exam prep schedule this week so that you have time to study Spanish.

Tip 2: Consider your familiarity with each topic.

When deciding which topics to study, you'll need to consider how much time to dedicate to each topic. If you're reviewing topics you already know pretty well, you'll be able to touch on a lot more different topics than if you're reviewing topics that you don't feel confident about. Know your limits and plan accordingly.

Tip 3: Avoid marathon study sessions.

If your study sessions are too long, you'll start to see diminishing returns on your efforts. Keep your study sessions to a reasonable length and plan to take frequent breaks so that your mind stays sharp!

DAILY PLANNING

At the beginning of each study session, make an agenda to keep yourself on track.

Here are some tips for planning daily study sessions:

Tip 1: Build in breaks.

Consider adapting the Pomodoro[®] Technique, a time management method that helps maximize study sessions. See page 15 to learn how to make the Pomodoro[®] Technique work for you.

Tip 2: Reward yourself.

During each break, give yourself a reward. Maybe that reward is 5 minutes of mindless phone time, or a well-deserved soda. Maybe you set yourself up with a sticker chart like in elementary school and give yourself a bigger reward after a set number of stickers. Whatever works for you!

Tip 3: Create a task list.

Review your study plan to see which tasks you thought might be most helpful in reviewing the topic at hand. Now create a to do list of each task you will complete during this study session. As you finish the tasks, check them off—the sense of satisfaction at marking a task complete is a great reward in and of itself!

Tip 4: Track which tasks you completed and how you did.

When you complete a task, grade yourself. How did you do on those practice questions? How well do you remember the notes you reorganized? How many vocabulary flashcards did you get right? By tracking how you did, you can make note of the topics that you need to review again soon.

MONTHLY STUDY PLAN

Month: _____

Plan out your breaks and rewards and make a record of each study session so you know what to review again.

SUN	MON	TUES	WED	THURS	FRI	SAT
--- <i>Use this calendar to map out which subjects you'll study each day</i>	---	---	---	---	---	---
---	---	---	---	---	---	---
---	---	---	---	---	---	---
---	---	---	---	---	---	---
---	---	---	---	---	---	---

WEEKLY STUDY PLAN

List the specific topics and study methods you'll use.

MONDAY	
Study Session Times:	
Topics:	Tasks:
TUESDAY	
Study Session Times:	
Topics:	Tasks:
WEDNESDAY	
Study Session Times:	
Topics:	Tasks:
THURSDAY	
Study Session Times:	
Topics:	Tasks:
FRIDAY	
Study Session Times:	
Topics:	Tasks:
SATURDAY	
Study Session Times:	
Topics:	Tasks:
SUNDAY	
Study Session Times:	
Topics:	Tasks:
Notes for the Week:	

STUDY SESSION PLAN

Date: _____

BREAK TIMES CHECKLIST	
1	2
3	4
5	6
7	8

REWARDS
<i>Example: 5 minutes phone time</i>

ITEMS FOR FUTURE REVIEW

TASK	TIME STARTED	TIME FINISHED	HOW DID YOU DO?	NOTES
<i>Example: Civil War battle flashcards</i>	<i>3 p.m.</i>	<i>3:15 p.m.</i>	<i>8/15 right</i>	<i>Need to look back at notes and review again</i>

HITTING THE RIGHT NOTES

1

Taking good notes in class is your first act of studying — **rewriting** and **reorganizing** them is your second.

- **1987 study:** The act of note-taking results in the formation of internal memory storage.
- **1995 study:** The more actively you engage your notes, the better you learn the material.



RE-READING NOTES <



HIGHLIGHTING NOTES <



REWRITING NOTES

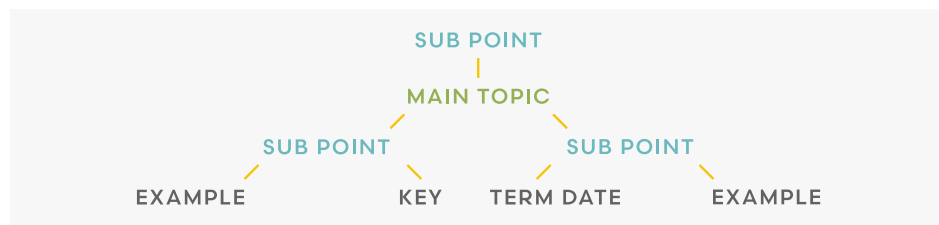
2

Give your notes **structure**

- Color code them.
- Draw tables/charts to show relationships
- Try an outline format:

- » MAIN IDEA: WHAT'S THE MAIN TOPIC?
- » SUB-POINTS: WHAT ARE THE IMPORTANT DETAILS?
 - » SUB-SUB POINTS: WHAT KEY TERMS, DATES, EXAMPLES OR DETAILS SHOULD YOU KNOW?

- Draw connections.



3

Don't type! Writing by hand is a complex cognitive process involving *feeling* the writing surface, *holding* the writing instrument, and *directing* precise movements.

Typing is a repetitive motion that involves less thought and so it doesn't improve memory recall the same way.

VOCABULARY STUDY SHEET

TERM	DEFINITION
fold here	

POMODORO® TECHNIQUE

WHAT IS IT?

During his first year in college, a guy named Francesco Cirillo was frustrated by the diminishing returns that came with long study sessions before college. He grabbed a tomato-shaped kitchen timer (thus the name pomodoro, which is Italian for tomato) and set it for 10 minutes. For those 10 minutes, he focused only on studying, and then he rewarded himself with a short break.

It worked!

After some experimenting, Cirillo settled on the final **Pomodoro® Technique**:

- Set a timer for 25 minutes
- Focus completely on the task at hand until the timer goes off
- Take a 5 minute break
- Repeat
- After 4 consecutive working time blocks, take a 20-30 minute break



HOW DOES IT HELP?

The technique forces you to focus on your work, making study sessions more efficient. The frequent breaks help keep your mind fresh, and the chunks of time offer a structure to help you break bigger tasks down into more manageable chunks.

CAN I CHANGE IT?

Absolutely! If 25 minutes is a challenge, start with 10 minute chunks and work your way up. If you know you're going to be working on something that will take a little longer than 25 minutes, give yourself a 30 or 35 minute chunk of time. Find what works for you! The key is to create bursts of productivity punctuated by short breaks and to remember to take longer breaks every hour or two.