

Ten useful study tips for achieving 80%+ on papers

With any project or paper:

1. **Schedule your time.** This will reduce anxiety and you will likely find that you can fit in all that you want to do including TV, talking on the phone, visiting friends. But, work hard before you party hard! Such planning will also help you earn top marks since, from here on in, you will be expected to be critical and thoughtful in all papers.
2. **Start a project as soon as it is assigned,** giving time for you to become familiar with the nuances of the project. This will allow you to passively dig up resources that will allow you to make the project strong and unique, e.g. magazine articles, statistics, facts, etc. **Do not build a paper on rhetoric and remembered facts, always find a reference.**
3. **Read assignment parameters carefully.** Don't lose marks by getting off task or for simple things, e.g. **double spaces, page numbers, title page, referencing, spelling, etc.**
4. **DRAFT, DRAFT ... EDIT, EDIT!!!** Proofreading, rewriting sentences for clarity, moving paragraphs around for better flow and connectivity of concepts, looking for the right words, spell and grammar checking... all of which are important tasks in writing any good paper or executing any project.
5. **Have one main idea which is supported by *three* clearly written and defended sub-ideas.** If you are repeating an idea more than once, don't.
6. **Remember that reflection takes more than a few seconds.** If you think there might be something beneath the surface that you do not yet see, take time to reflect. Leave your desk, grab a glass of water, and think about how this idea might connect to other ideas.
7. **Look for a way to make your paper rich and truly insightful.** Look for items to make direct comparisons with. If writing about a spoof ad, for example, make a direct comparison with the original ad which is being parodied
8. **Write in 3rd person.** It is your paper and your audience knows it, so you do not need to make direct reference to yourself. Just state the statement.
9. **Write in PAST TENSE.** And, proof read your paper looking for consistency in tense.
10. **Get a rigorous peer to critically proof-read** your paper and let them make any constructive comment they want. Listen to them and argue if need be, but take the criticism seriously. Do this with all best drafts and be prepared to return to the paper for a rewrite.