



the

Study Methods

Field Guide

A SHORT STARTING FRAMEWORK FOR DURABLE LEARNING

written by

Denis

PharmD Candidate · Ümari

BEFORE YOU BEGIN

Four habits, not four hundred.

There is a large literature on how people learn. Almost all of the benefit for a student sits in four habits: retrieve, space, mix, and explain. This guide covers those and stops.

What it cannot do is look at your actual course, your actual timetable, and tell you what to cut. That is the part students most often get wrong, and it is the part that needs a conversation.

Try one chapter this week. If it works, the method is not the bottleneck — the plan is.

Warmly,

Denis

SECOND-YEAR PHARMD CANDIDATE • ÜMARI



FOUR SHORT CHAPTERS

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Four habits. Pick one and start this week.

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— *four in all.*

CHAPTER I

close the book

Retrieval is the study.

Recognition feels like knowing. Recall is knowing.

Trying to produce an answer from memory — and then checking it — builds far more durable access than another pass through the notes.

Rereading is where most study time goes and where least learning happens.

PRACTICE

- Blank page: write everything you recall on one topic before opening anything.
- Check against the source the same day and note why each gap happened.



— FROM DENIS

Retrieval without correction preserves errors. Always close the loop.

CHAPTER II

spread it out

2

Space the encounters.

Same hours, different days, better retention.

Revisit a topic later the same day, again a few days later, then one to two weeks on. Stretch the interval after an effortful success; shorten it after a miss.

Match the spacing to how long you need to keep the knowledge.

PRACTICE

- Take this week's topics and write three future dates beside each.
- Keep a short list of items you missed and revisit it every Friday.

**— FROM DENIS**

Forgetting a little between sessions is the mechanism, not a failure.

CHAPTER III

mix what confuses

Interleave to *practise choosing.*

Exams ask which one. Blocked practice never does.

Alternate related problem types once you understand each one. It feels slower because you must decide which approach applies — that decision is the skill being tested.

Mix three things that look alike and demand different answers.

PRACTICE

- Build a set of ten mixed items from three related topics and shuffle it.
- After each item, say the cue that told you which approach to use.

**— FROM DENIS**

Learn the basics blocked. Mix only once you can do each one alone.

CHAPTER IV

say it plainly

4

Explain it to someone real.

If you cannot say why, you have stored a fact, not an idea.

Elaboration ties new material to what you already know. Ask why this happens, how it differs from the thing beside it, and what evidence would change your answer.

Draw the relationship from memory first, then check the diagram.

PRACTICE

- Teach one concept aloud in plain language for two minutes, no notes.
- Write one 'why' question per topic and answer it in three sentences.



— FROM DENIS

The questions you cannot answer out loud are your study plan for the week.

ÜMARI

Rx 008

*Rx*

PRESCRIBED

*One habit,
one week.*

Refill weekly. Add the next habit only once the first holds.

*Retrieve.
Space.
Explain.*

IF YOU WANT TO GO FURTHER

This guide gives you the methods. A tutoring session turns them into a timetable that fits your actual course load — book at umari.org.

umari.org • hello@umari.org

SIGNED

Denis

SECOND-YEAR PHARM D CANDIDATE

DATED

the first week of term