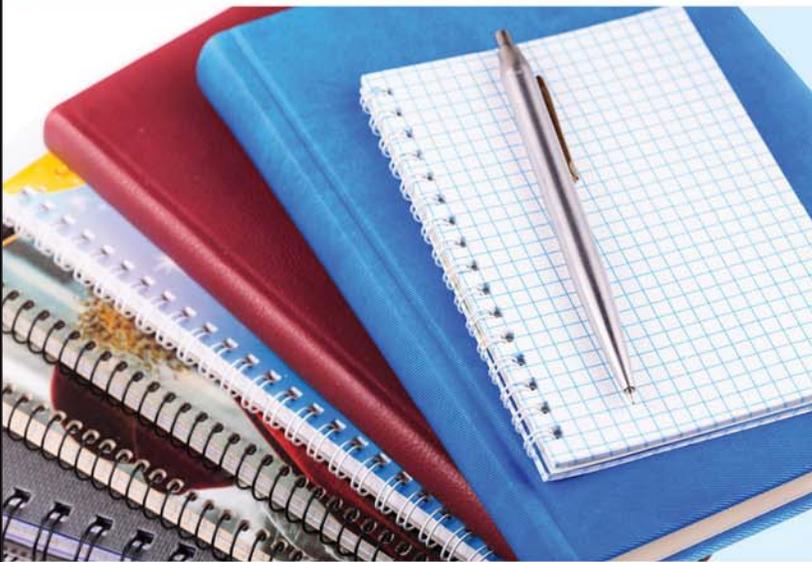


# Study Skills



# Preface

Study skills are the strategies a student applies to learning that helps facilitate understanding and retention of knowledge. These are the skills that become good habits and enable an individual to become efficient, solve problems, and apply critical-thinking skills. In today's competitive academic environment, possession of well-developed study skills can be the competitive edge a student needs for college and career success.

*Study Skills* presents essential study strategies in an easy to understand format. Fourteen short, concise lessons provide information that will prepare students to become active learners. A chapter-opening pretest sets the stage for the content that follows. End-of-chapter activities provide opportunities for self-assessment as well as additional practice activities on the G-W Learning Companion Website.

Learning how to become an active learner and focused student is the first step toward personal success. Presented in a brief, concise, and easy-to-use text, students will learn the basic study skills needed for classroom success. Suitable for any class or discipline, each chapter can be used as a supplemental discussion tool about the development of study habits or as an independent assignment. When the course has concluded, the text can serve as a personal reference for personal, academic, and career success.

## Additional Resources

The G-W Learning Companion Website is a free student resource that provides additional study materials in an interactive electronic format. Activity files for the skills practice activities at the end of each chapter may be downloaded and completed for additional practice. Also included on the website are pretests and vocabulary activities that complement selected chapters. The website is located at [www.g-wlearning.com/careereducation/](http://www.g-wlearning.com/careereducation/)

G-W's instructor resources include everything you need to utilize *Study Skills* in your classroom. A variety of materials are provided on the Instructor's Resource CD to help you make the most of information needed to teach each chapter, such as lesson plans, answer keys, and instructional strategies.

# Acknowledgments

Goodheart-Willcox Publisher would like to thank the following individuals for their honest and valuable input in the development of the first edition of *Study Skills*.

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# Contents

## CHAPTER 1

Developing Study Skills .....	1
<b>Study Skills</b> .....	2
<b>Developing Study Skills</b> .....	2
Attitude .....	3
Self-Confidence .....	3
Focus .....	3
<b>Decision-Making Process</b> .....	3
<b>Pre-Study Tips</b> .....	4
<b>Academic Integrity</b> .....	5

## CHAPTER 2

Identifying Your Learning Style .....	9
<b>Learning Styles</b> .....	10
Visual Learners .....	10
Auditory Learners .....	11
Kinesthetic-Tactile Learners .....	12
<b>Identify Your Learning Style</b> .....	13

## CHAPTER 3

Developing Time-Management Skills .....	17
<b>Time-Management Strategies</b> .....	18
Use a Calendar or Planner .....	18
Prioritize .....	19
Evaluate Personal Progress .....	20
<b>Goal Setting</b> .....	20
Specific .....	21
Measurable .....	21
Attainable .....	21
Realistic .....	21
Timely .....	21
<b>Being Flexible</b> .....	21

## CHAPTER 4

Defining Study Time .....	25
<b>Define Your Study Time</b> .....	26
Class Load .....	26
Length of Study Time .....	26
Time of Day .....	26
<b>Study Techniques</b> .....	27
Prioritize Subjects .....	27
Group Study .....	28
Practice Testing .....	28
<b>Cramming</b> .....	28

## CHAPTER 5

Creating a Study Environment .....	32
<b>Creating Your Study Environment</b> .....	33
Space .....	33
Supplies .....	33
Lighting .....	33
Temperature .....	33
Ergonomics .....	34
<b>Avoiding Distractions</b> .....	35
Friends .....	35
Music .....	35
Digital Devices .....	35

## CHAPTER 6

Improving Reading Comprehension .....	39
<b>Reading Comprehension</b> .....	40
Etymology .....	40
Context Clues .....	41
<b>Improve Your Vocabulary</b> .....	41
Read, Read, Read .....	42
Download a Vocabulary App .....	42
Learn a Word of the Day .....	42
Work on Crossword Puzzles .....	42
<b>Develop a Routine</b> .....	43

## CHAPTER 7

Becoming an Active Reader .....	47
<b>Active Reading</b> .....	48
<b>Reading Skillfully</b> .....	48
Skim to Get an Overview .....	48
Scan for Specific Information .....	49
Read for Detail .....	49
<b>SQ3R</b> .....	50
<b>General Reading Techniques</b> .....	50
Use Prior Knowledge .....	51
Read Phrases, Not Words .....	51
Mark Reading Materials .....	51
<b>Improving Your Reading Skills</b> .....	51

## CHAPTER 8

Becoming an Active Listener .....	56
<b>Active Listening</b> .....	57
<b>Listening with Purpose</b> .....	57
<b>Listening Techniques</b> .....	58

Contents

Sit in the Front.....	58
Show Attention.....	58
Fight Barriers.....	59
Provide Feedback.....	59
Summarize.....	59

## CHAPTER 9

Improving Your Note Taking.....	63
<b>Note Taking</b> .....	64
<b>Taking Notes in Class</b> .....	65
<b>Reviewing Your Notes</b> .....	66
<b>Taking Notes from Print Sources</b> .....	66

## CHAPTER 10

Improving Your Memory.....	71
<b>Memory</b> .....	72
<b>Improving Memory</b> .....	72
Rote learning.....	72
Mnemonics.....	73
Chunking.....	74
<b>Memory Retrieval</b> .....	74

## CHAPTER 11

Test-Taking Strategies.....	78
<b>Preparing for a Test</b> .....	79
<b>Question Types</b> .....	80
Multiple-Choice.....	80
Essay.....	80
<b>Take-Home and Open-Book Exams</b> .....	81
<b>Oral Exams</b> .....	82
<b>Test Day</b> .....	82
During the Test.....	83
After the Test.....	83

## CHAPTER 12

Researching for College Papers.....	87
<b>College Papers</b> .....	88
<b>Research</b> .....	88
Secondary Research.....	88
Primary Research.....	89
<b>Intellectual Property</b> .....	90
Copyright.....	91
Creative Commons.....	91
Public Domain.....	91
<b>Crediting Sources</b> .....	92

## CHAPTER 13

Writing a College Paper.....	96
<b>Preparing to Write</b> .....	97
Decide Type of Paper.....	97
Select the Topic.....	97
Identify the Audience.....	97
Perform Research.....	98
<b>Presenting the Information</b> .....	98
Approach.....	98
Outline.....	99
<b>Parts of a Formal Paper</b> .....	99
Title Page.....	99
Table of Contents.....	99
Introduction.....	100
Body.....	100
Conclusions and Recommendations.....	101
Citations.....	101
Optional Elements.....	101
<b>Parts of an Informal Paper</b> .....	101
Introduction.....	102
Body.....	102
Conclusion.....	102
<b>Formatting a Paper</b> .....	102

## CHAPTER 14

Managing Stress.....	106
<b>Stress-Management Skills</b> .....	107
<b>Focus on Self-Health</b> .....	107
Avoid Substance Abuse.....	108
Get More Sleep.....	108
Get More Exercise.....	108
Practice Good Eating Habits.....	108
<b>Relaxation Techniques</b> .....	108
Deep Breathing.....	109
Progressive Muscle Relaxation.....	109
Meditation.....	109
Positive Attitude.....	110
<b>Seek Help</b> .....	110

## APPENDIX A

Portfolio Development.....	115
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## APPENDIX B

Punctuation, Capitalization, and Number Expression.....	124
Glossary.....	130
Index.....	133

# Focus on Study Habits

*Study Skills* will help your students apply strategies to learning that will help them facilitate understanding and retention of knowledge. In order to become successful in college and career, it is necessary to develop study habits that will help them become efficient, learn to solve problems, and apply critical-thinking skills. Possession of well-developed study skills can be the competitive edge a student needs for academic success.

The unique approach to this text presents content in a format that is condensed, to the point, and can be completed in a brief amount of time. The easy-to-read style and meaningful applications introduce behaviors for successful interactions with instructors as well as classmates.

## Just the Basics

Each chapter introduces basic study skills as recommended by instructors. The topics covered are some of the most requested essential study skills that can help students become active learners and develop habits that will last a lifetime.

## Learning Outcomes

At the beginning of each chapter, learning outcomes define the goals that will be accomplished while reading the chapter. Each goal is aligned with the content headings, as well as with the summary at the end of the chapter. The alignment of learning outcomes provides a logical flow through each page of the content so that students may build on individual knowledge as they progress through the chapters.

## Before You Read

Each chapter begins with a pretest for an opportunity for students to evaluate their prior knowledge of the study skill that will be introduced. This sets the stage for content to come in each chapter.

CHAPTER  
**1**

## Developing Study Skills



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**BEFORE YOU READ**

Before you begin reading this chapter, see what you already know about study skills by taking a pretest. The pretest is available at [www.g-wlearning.com/careereducation/](http://www.g-wlearning.com/careereducation/)

**LEARNING OUTCOMES**

On completion of this chapter, prepare to:

**1-1** Explain the concept of study skills.

**1-2** Identify three personal behaviors that can help a person develop study skills.

2

Self-confidence is being certain and secure about one's own abilities and judgment.



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**Study Skills**

In order to be successful in your academic career and your personal life, it will be necessary for you to develop study skills. A **skill** is something an individual does well. **Study skills** are the strategies a person applies to effective learning. They are how you approach learning, select processes that work for you, and eliminate distractions that hinder you from achieving your goals.

Study skills become good habits that help you become efficient, solve problems, and apply critical-thinking skills. They can make you a more attentive listener, better reader, and more efficient note taker. Practicing and developing these skills will help you become a better student. If your grades are suffering, developing good study skills can help you improve them. If your grades are average, improving your study skills can bring your grades up a notch. Examples of study skills are listed in Figure 1-1.

Study skills are classified as *soft skills*. **Soft skills** are the skills used to communicate and work well with others. They are considered essential **transferable skills**, which are skills that help an individual find a job, perform well in the workplace, and gain success in a job or career.

Once you master study skills, you will apply them in your day-to-day life because they are not subject specific. For example, you will apply study skills as you prepare for the test to get your driver's license. You will also apply them to learn how to use a computer or your smartphone. Many study skills also transfer into employability skills you will need when you finish school and start a career.

**Developing Study Skills**

As you progress through school, you will value possessing the knowledge of how to get the most out of your study time. Every person studies differently, and strategies that work well for one person might not be effective for another.

Through experience, you will learn how to develop the study skills that work best for you. Just as importantly, you will learn to disregard the less effective ones. The sooner you begin the process, the sooner you will experience success. The journey begins with having a positive attitude, self-confidence, and focus.

**Figure 1-1** Study skills are the various strategies a person applies to learning.

**Study Skills**

- decision-making
- vocabulary building
- time management
- active listening
- organization
- note taking
- study environment
- active learning
- avoid distractions
- test taking
- comprehension
- research
- active reading
- stress management

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## APPENDIX

# A

## Portfolio Development

*Portfolio Development* activities provide guidance for creating a personal portfolio to use when explaining volunteer, education and training, and career opportunities. This process requires that you self-reflect on personal accomplishments and skills as you create documentation for final presentation. Completing these activities will help you prepare a professional product for the job-application process, giving you a head start on your career search in an increasingly competitive workforce.

### Lesson 1: Overview

When applying for a job, a volunteer position, or entry into an educational institution, one way to demonstrate your qualifications is to present a portfolio to the interviewer. A *portfolio* is a selection of related materials that you collect and organize to demonstrate your job qualifications, skills, and talents. For example, a certification showing you have completed Microsoft Office Specialist training could help you get a job at a local newspaper. A portfolio is a *dynamic document*, which means it should be reviewed and updated on a regular basis.

Visual artists and communication professionals have historically presented portfolios of their creative work when seeking jobs or admission to educational institutions. However, portfolios are now used in many professions. It is helpful to research and identify which type is appropriate for the industry in which you are applying for a position.

Commonly used formats for a portfolio are print and electronic. Job seekers will need copies of a print portfolio, as well as an electronic version, when applying for a position.

A *print portfolio* is a hard-copy version that can be carried to an interview. It can be presented in a three-ring binder with divider tabs or any other method that works for you.

An *electronic portfolio* is a digital version of a print portfolio. It can be saved to cloud-based storage services, flash drives, or CDs. There are many creative ways to present a digital portfolio. One option is to create an electronic presentation with slides for each item. Another option is to place the files on a CD. Websites also work well for presenting an electronic portfolio. The method you choose should allow the viewer to navigate and find items easily.

As you collect materials for your portfolio, you will need an effective strategy to keep the items clean, safe, and organized for assembly at the appropriate time. Structure and organization are important when working on an on-going project that includes multiple pieces. Never include an original document in a portfolio. Photocopy each document that you want to include and file the original in a safe place for future reference.

A large manila envelope works well to keep hard copies of documents, photos, awards, and other items safe. File folders also work well.

1. Research *Types of Portfolios* and select the one that is most appropriate for you and your career goals.
2. Consider and plan for the technology that might be needed for creating and scanning documents for an electronic portfolio. You may need access to desktop-publishing software, scan-

6

Study Skills

### SUMMARY

- **(LO 1-1) Explain the concept of study skills.**  
Study skills are the strategies a person applies to learning. They are how you approach learning, select processes that work for you, and eliminate distractions that hinder you from your goals.
- **(LO 1-2) Identify three personal behaviors that can help a person develop study skills.**  
Examples of personal behaviors that help an individual develop study skills are having a positive attitude, self-confidence, and focus.
- **(LO 1-3) Cite the steps of the decision-making process.**  
The decision-making process involves five steps: define the problem, gather information, choose the best alternative, act on the decision, and evaluate the solution or decision.
- **(LO 1-4) List examples of pre-study tips.**  
Examples of pre-study tips are to avoid multitasking, turn off digital devices, and take care of your personal well-being.
- **(LO 1-5) Summarize academic integrity.**  
Academic integrity is the demonstration of honesty and responsibility in completion of academic work and performance as a student. Being unprepared or copying answers on a test is unacceptable behavior. In addition, presenting information in a report as yours when you really copied material that belongs to another person is plagiarism and will not contribute to you earning an education needed for future employment. From the first day of class, realize that your job is to learn, make good grades, and get a well-rounded education. Communicate with your instructor, attend class, and be an ethical individual.

### GLOSSARY TERMS

Visit the G-W Learning companion website at [www.g-wlearning.com/careereducation/](http://www.g-wlearning.com/careereducation/) to review the following glossary terms.

skill	decision-making
study skills	critical-thinking skills
soft skills	academic integrity
transferable skills	plagiarism
attitude	ethics
self-confidence	morals
self-talk	integrity
focus	

### REVIEW

1. Discuss study skills.
2. List three examples of study skills.
3. Identify examples of personal behaviors that are needed to develop good study skills.

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## Appendices

Appendix A, Portfolio Development, provides detailed information for creating a career portfolio for academic and professional use. An appendix is also included for punctuation, capitalization, and number usage. Appendix B highlights grammar mechanics and examples for reference as students complete writing assignments.

## End-of-Chapter Content

End-of-chapter material provides opportunity for review and application of concepts.

- A concise **Summary** reiterates the learning outcomes and provides a brief review of the content for student reference.
- **Glossary Terms** identifies important study skills terms covered in the chapter and listed in the end-of-text glossary.
- **Review** questions highlight basic concepts presented in the chapter so students can evaluate understanding of the material.
- **Critical Thinking** activities provide an opportunity for self-reflection so students can relate the topics to their personal lives.
- **Internet** exercises provide additional research opportunities for greater understanding of selected concepts discussed in the chapter.
- **Skills Practice** activities provide an opportunity for students to engage in hands-on application of the content to perfect their study skills.

## G-W Learning Companion Website

The G-W Learning Companion Website is a free resource that provides additional study materials in an interactive electronic format. Activity files for the skills practice activities at the end of each chapter may be downloaded and completed for additional practice. Also included on the website are pretests, post-tests, and vocabulary activities that complement selected chapters. The website is located at [www.g-wlearning.com/careereducation/](http://www.g-wlearning.com/careereducation/)

# CHAPTER 1

# Developing Study Skills



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## BEFORE YOU READ

Before you begin reading this chapter, see what you already know about study skills by taking a pretest. The pretest is available at [www.g-wlearning.com/careereducation/](http://www.g-wlearning.com/careereducation/)

## LEARNING OUTCOMES

On completion of this chapter, prepare to:

- 1-1** Explain the concept of study skills.
- 1-2** Identify three personal behaviors that can help a person develop study skills.
- 1-3** Cite the steps of the decision-making process.
- 1-4** List examples of pre-study tips.
- 1-5** Summarize academic integrity.

Self-confidence is being certain and secure about one's own abilities and judgment.



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## Study Skills

In order to be successful in your academic career and your personal life, it will be necessary for you to develop study skills. A **skill** is something an individual does well. **Study skills** are the strategies a person applies to effective learning. They are how you approach learning, select processes that work for you, and eliminate distractions that hinder you from achieving your goals.

Study skills become good habits that help you become efficient, solve problems, and apply critical-thinking skills. They can make you a more attentive listener, better reader, and more efficient note taker. Practicing and developing these skills will help you become a better student. If your grades are suffering, developing good study skills can help you improve them. If your grades are average, improving your study skills can bring your grades up a notch. Examples of study skills are listed in Figure 1-1.

Study skills are classified as *soft skills*. **Soft skills** are the skills used to communicate and work well with others. They are considered essential **transferable skills**, which are skills that help an individual find a job, perform well in the workplace, and gain success in a job or career.

Once you master study skills, you will apply them in your day-to-day life because they are not subject specific. For example, you will apply study skills as you prepare for the test to get your driver's license. You will also apply them to learn how to use a computer or your smart-

phone. Many study skills also transfer into employability skills you will need when you finish school and start a career.

## Developing Study Skills

As you progress through school, you will value possessing the knowledge of how to get the most out of your study time. Every person studies differently, and strategies that work well for one person might not be effective for another.

Through experience, you will learn how to develop the study skills that work best for you. Just as importantly, you will learn to disregard the less effective ones. The sooner you begin the process, the sooner you will experience success. The journey begins with having a positive attitude, self-confidence, and focus.

**Figure 1-1** Study skills are the various strategies a person applies to learning.

**Study Skills**

- decision-making
- time management
- organization
- study environment
- avoid distractions
- comprehension
- active reading
- vocabulary building
- active listening
- note taking
- active learning
- test taking
- research
- stress management

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## Attitude

**Attitude** is how personal thoughts or feelings affect a person's outward behavior. It is a combination of how a person feels, what he or she thinks, and what he or she does. Attitude is how an individual sees himself or herself, as well as how he or she perceives others.

Positive attitudes often play an important role in determining academic performance. An individual with a *positive attitude* is optimistic and looks at the upside of a situation rather than the downside. Optimists learn from experiences, accurately identify problems, and try to offer solutions rather than complaints. Having a positive attitude is the first step to learning how to study.

A good attitude about studying includes a sense of responsibility for your own learning. You will be a lifelong learner. As a *lifelong learner*, you will look for opportunities to learn information for personal and professional use. Some of your learning will come from formal schooling. Other learning will come from life experiences and your desire to improve your mind and your well-being.

## Self-Confidence

An important element of an individual's success is self-confidence. **Self-confidence** is being certain and secure about one's own abilities and judgment. People with self-confidence believe in their ability to perform or make something positive happen in a situation.

A person's self-confidence is affected by his or her self-talk. **Self-talk** is the practice of talking to oneself, either silently or aloud. This is how most individuals sort through information. It often includes reinforcement about one's appearance, personal qualities, and belief in one's self. The more you believe in yourself, the more others will believe in you. If you are confident you can develop study skills, you will be able to succeed.

## Focus

Most importantly, developing good study skills requires you to focus. To **focus** means to pay close attention to something. In order to pay attention, you have to recognize the importance of what you are doing so you fully understand the value of the task.

If you are learning how to study, the importance of the task is to help you be more productive as a student and person. When listening to your instructor lecture, the importance is to learn about the topic being discussed. When reading assigned texts or material, the importance is to learn the facts and details that are being presented. Recognizing the importance of the task adds value and clarity.

## Decision-Making Process

As a student, you will be challenged every day to make decisions to solve a situation that arises. These situations can range from deciding which class to take to narrowing down a topic for a research paper. It is important not to become overwhelmed especially if time is a factor.

**Decision-making** is the process of solving a problem or situation. The process includes choosing a course of action after evaluating available information and weighing the costs, benefits, and consequences of alternative actions.

Decision-making involves critical-thinking skills. **Critical-thinking skills** are skills that provide the ability to analyze and interpret a situation and make reasonable judgments and decisions. When you apply critical-thinking skills, you try to eliminate emotions and be open-minded about the possibilities. Then, a solution or process can be applied so that a productive action can be taken.

Applying systematic decision-making is a necessary study skill. There are five general steps to this process, as illustrated in Figure 1-2.

1. *Define the problem.* A clear idea of the problem must be formulated in order to find the best approach. If the problem is too broad, you will not be able to accurately address the issue and find a solution. If there is a specific goal in mind, make sure it's measurable and timely in order to know whether you've achieved it at the end of the process.
2. *Gather information.* Gather information in order to base your decision on data and facts. You need to know what information is relevant to solving the problem at hand.
3. *Choose the best alternative.* After considering all potential solutions, the one that best fits the situation can be selected. It may be a single alternative or some combination of alternatives.
4. *Act on the decision.* Once a decision is made, it should be executed. What steps must be done to make this happen?
5. *Evaluate the solution or decision.* After time has passed, the solution can be analyzed to determine if it was the correct course of action.

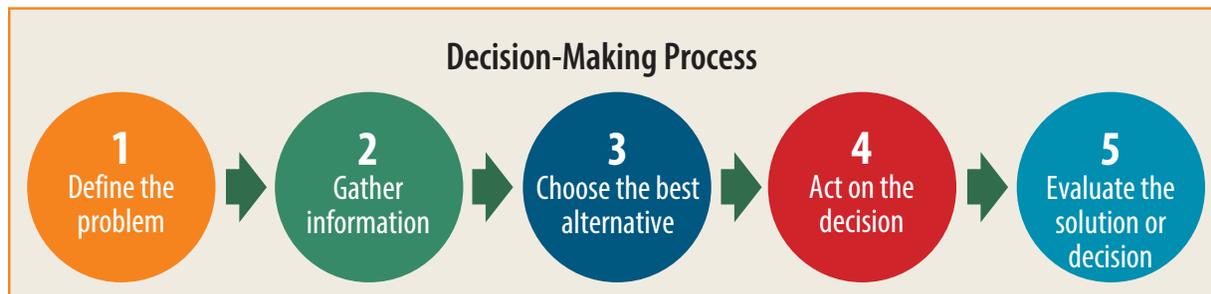
Applying systematic decision-making is a skill that can help you throughout your life. Learning to apply critical-thinking skills and problem solve can help you in most situations that you will encounter.

## Pre-Study Tips

Before you begin studying, there are several things you can do to prepare yourself to make the most out of your study time. Some general study tips include the following:

- Avoid multitasking when there is something important, such as studying, that needs your immediate and undivided attention. Multitasking can serve a purpose in the right situation. It is difficult to pay attention and do your best, however, if you are trying to do two things at once. Decide to focus exclusively on the task at hand.
- Turn off your digital devices when you need to give your full attention to a task. You will hear this advice frequently as you progress through this text. It is aimed to help you avoid distractions in all aspects of your school and personal life.

**Figure 1-2** Decision-making is the process of solving a problem or situation by choosing a course of action after evaluating the possible solutions.



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Above all, good study habits begin with your personal well-being. If your body is not healthy and alert, it will be difficult for you to pay attention. The following are some hints for keeping yourself well and ready to learn.

- Rest is crucial. On average, you should be getting between eight and ten hours of sleep each night. *Fatigue*, or sleepiness, can keep you from being productive at school, at your job, or in your personal life.
- Hydration is necessary and can be accomplished by drinking water and limiting sugar and caffeine.
- Balanced meals are important, and excessive snacking should be avoided. Eating right can keep your body healthy and your mind sharp, instead of feeling hyper, sluggish, or distracted.

There are multiple study tips you will learn as you progress through the lessons in this text that will help you have a positive attitude toward studying, have confidence in your ability to study effectively, and focus on tasks at hand.

## Academic Integrity

**Academic integrity** is the demonstration of honesty and responsibility in completion of academic work and performance as a student. As a student, you attend school to earn an education that will help you in your future personal life and career. Being unprepared or copying answers on a test is unacceptable behavior. In addition, presenting information in a report as yours when you really copied material that belongs to another person is plagiarism and will not contribute to you earning an education needed for future employment. **Plagiarism** is claiming another person's material as your own, which is both unethical and illegal.

Above all, demonstrate a sense of ethics at all times. **Ethics** are the moral principles that direct a person's behaviors. **Morals** are an individual's ideas of what is right and wrong. **Integrity** is the honesty of a person's actions. Educational institutions expect, and require, students to perform in an ethical manner when taking tests, writing reports, and completing assignments.

Strive to be a good student. From the first day of class, realize that your job is to learn, achieve good grades, and earn a well-rounded education. The following actions can help you be successful in your studies.

- Communicate with your instructor and be clear on what he or she expects from you as a student.
- Ask your instructor for contact information if you should need after class help. Your instructor may have office hours or prefer e-mail correspondence when you have questions.
- Read the course outline or syllabus that you are given. Request clarification on anything that you do not understand or is not clear.
- Confirm the name of the text and other materials that are needed for the class.
- Attend every class, and be on time. There will be times when you are ill or an emergency arises. When this happens be prepared to make up the time and meet with your instructor to find out what you missed.
- Be polite and use good manners with your fellow students.
- Raise your hand when you want to contribute in class. Avoid interrupting others when they are talking.

Be positive and learn to appreciate the privilege of earning an education. Attending school is one of the best times of your life. Enjoy it, and be the best you can be.

Cheating is a violation of academic integrity.



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## SUMMARY

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- **(LO 1-1) Explain the concept of study skills.**  
*Study skills* are the strategies a person applies to learning. They are how you approach learning, select processes that work for you, and eliminate distractions that hinder you from your goals.
- **(LO 1-2) Identify three personal behaviors that can help a person develop study skills.**  
Examples of personal behaviors that help an individual develop study skills are having a positive attitude, self-confidence, and focus.
- **(LO 1-3) Cite the steps of the decision-making process.**  
The decision-making process involves five steps: define the problem, gather information, choose the best alternative, act on the decision, and evaluate the solution or decision.
- **(LO 1-4) List examples of pre-study tips.**  
Examples of pre-study tips are to avoid multitasking, turn off digital devices, and take care of your personal well-being.
- **(LO 1-5) Summarize academic integrity.**  
Academic integrity is the demonstration of honesty and responsibility in completion of academic work and performance as a student. Being unprepared or copying answers on a test is unacceptable behavior. In addition, presenting information in a report as yours when you really copied material that belongs to another person is plagiarism and will not contribute to you earning an education needed for future employment. From the first day of class, realize that your job is to learn, make good grades, and get a well-rounded education. Communicate with your instructor, attend class, and be an ethical individual.

## GLOSSARY TERMS

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Visit the G-W Learning companion website at [www.g-wlearning.com/careereducation/](http://www.g-wlearning.com/careereducation/) to review the following glossary terms.

skill	decision-making
study skills	critical-thinking skills
soft skills	academic integrity
transferable skills	plagiarism
attitude	ethics
self-confidence	morals
self-talk	integrity
focus	

## REVIEW

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1. Discuss study skills.
2. List three examples of study skills.
3. Identify examples of personal behaviors that are needed to develop good study skills.

4. Explain how someone with a positive attitude views the world.
5. Describe self-talk and its role in a person's self-confidence.
6. In order to focus and pay attention, what must a person do?
7. What happens when critical-thinking skills are applied?
8. State the steps of the decision-making process.
9. Briefly state examples of general pre-study skills.
10. Summarize academic integrity.

## CRITICAL THINKING

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1. Define the importance of study skills for your academic success.
2. Why are you considered a lifelong learner?
3. In addition to the pre-study tips discussed in this chapter, how do you prepare yourself physically and mentally for studying?

4. Describe how others view you as a student. Would they say you are a good student or someone who needs improvement? Discuss your actions that influence their opinion.
5. Summarize what academic integrity means to you.

## INTERNET ACTIVITY

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**Habits of Highly Successful Students.** Students who have a successful educational experience learned early in their school career how to be a successful student. Conduct an Internet search for *habits of highly successful students*. Evaluate what you discovered and how you can apply the information to your personal life.

**Academic Integrity.** Many schools have a code of academic integrity that students are obligated to follow. Conduct an Internet search for *academic integrity definition*. Summarize what you learned and discuss why this behavior is important for your future career. If your school has a code of academic integrity, compare it to your Internet findings.

## SKILLS PRACTICE

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Visit the G-W Learning companion website at [www.g-wlearning.com/careereducation/](http://www.g-wlearning.com/careereducation/) to access and complete the following study skills practice activities:

**Study Skills Activity 1-1 Self-Assessment.** Assessing your personal study skills will help you determine your strengths and weaknesses. Open the 1-1 file, and complete the assessment to evaluate your current study skills.

**Study Skills Activity 1-2 The Decision-Making Process.** Applying systematic decision-making is a skill that can help you throughout your life. Identify a decision or problem that you need to solve in the near future. Open the 1-2 file, state your decision or problem, and apply the decision-making process to come to a solution.

**Study Skills Activity 1-3 First Day of Class Checklist.** Being prepared for the semester is an important first step to establishing good study skills. On the first day of class, start with a checklist of what will be required. Open the 1-3 file, and customize it to fit your needs. Use this list for the first day of each class in which you are enrolled.