

# GCSE Survival Guide SOS

By Show My Homework



Tips and tricks to get students, teachers and parents through the  
GCSE journey in one piece!

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Get the grades you want with these tips and tricks. How to make it through your material, give yourself the best start, and outperform on the day!

- Get set
- Comprehend
- Simmer Down
- Exam Time

## Get Set

1. Be prepared for some hard work, and get into good working habits early. You'll never regret working 'too hard', after all.
2. Create an exam timetable so you are aware of how much time you have to cover each topic. Just make sure to leave enough cushioning in case you run over.
3. Plan your revision tactics. Are you going to make one really good set of visual, accurate notes, or condense your information each time you revise the topic? Make sure you are not spending too long on note-taking if you don't use them again. [Click here for our top ten note-taking strategies.](#)
4. Plan to take a 30-minute break every 2 hours. It's important to recharge in order for you to process this much information. *Did you know sleep is needed to consolidate memories?*
5. You've heard it before, and you'll hear it again - eat healthy! You may crave junk food right now, but your body won't thank you for it. Try to get yourself into a healthy exercise and sleep pattern. **"Healthy body = Healthy mind"**
6. Establish a routine. It may seem like an eternity, but this period will only last a few weeks out of the rest of your life! Stay focused and factor in some down-time each day. This way you will be able to stay on top of your work load.

## Comprehend

1. Make sure that you understand the work before you learn it. Would you be able to explain this to a friend? That's usually a good test to check you haven't just memorised the information!
2. Use the best technique for you! Here are some of our favourites:
  - *Cue cards* - Make concise notes that cover all topics
  - *Chunking* - Break down big topics into manageable chunks
  - *Mnemonics* - Use a short group of words to help you remember more details
  - *Flowcharts and Diagrams* - Great for the visual learners
  - *Associations* - Link an idea or concept with another one
3. Study with a friend. It's a great way to relieve you of the boredom and work through any tough problems together. Try doing this when you have both covered all of the material once already so you can both benefit from the session.

## Comprehend (Continued)

4. Keep getting a topic wrong? Spend a bit more time on that one, rather than repeating the notes you know off by heart. This way you will have the best chance to answer everything come exam day.
5. If you don't understand a concept, and a textbook isn't helping, why not try watching a short clip - Videos are great ways for visual learners to consolidate their knowledge (just don't get distracted!).
6. And finally, past papers, past papers and more past papers! We can't emphasise this enough - It's a great way to become familiar with the format and marking criteria of an exam so that it is much less daunting on the day.

## Simmer Down

1. The evening before the exam, read through your notes one final time (to refresh your memory, not to cram!) and then make sure you relax.
2. Make sure you know where the exam is, and what time you will need to set off in the morning.
3. Know your school's guidelines on what you can/ cannot take into the exam with you (e.g Food, drink, calculator). You don't want to forget something that can help you, or rely on something that will be confiscated!
4. Get an early night!

## Exam Time

1. Wake up with enough time to eat a sensible breakfast, and to arrive at the exam location with plenty of time to spare. This way, you won't be flustered or stressed.
2. Avoid any friends who are overly stressed. Just wait until after the exam to speak to them - take a deep breath and walk in with confidence, don't let their worries affect you too!
3. Make sure that you are wearing a watch or can see a clock. It's vital to be aware of how much time you have left, so you can pace yourself accordingly, cover all sections and get the maximum marks.
4. Read the questions carefully. You may only have to answer some questions in each section; you may have to answer them all. Don't risk your hard work counting for nothing.
5. Use the space provided. Cross out any rough notes, and get an idea of how much detail you need to give. If they provide you with one line for a one mark answer, you won't need to write out a whole paragraph.
6. Spend longer on the questions that are worth more marks - they will require extra working out time.
7. If you don't know the first question, stay calm. You don't need to work in any particular order. Find the ones you do know, and then use your remaining time to revisit the ones you don't.
8. If you have time left over, re-read all of your responses to make sure you've answered everything correctly.

Help the students through the trenches with these top tips for school and home.

- Show My Homework
- Organised Study Time
- Strategies for Home-Learning

## Show My Homework

### 1. Use past papers on SMHW

- Upload past papers to the homework task each week, so students have access to them from home.
- Set quizzes with the correct answers, and multiple incorrect answers. This is a great way to consolidate learning, and for students to recognise the correct answers come exam time. With three chances to take the quiz, they'll be able to highlight their problem areas too!

### 2. Create Announcements for your class

- When homework has already been set, you can use these announcements to remind students what they should have covered by the end of the week, and to keep students on track and avoid cramming.
- Let students know about After-School Revision sessions, and which topics you will be covering. *Practice makes perfect!*
- [Click here to learn how to create an announcement.](#)

### 3. Set Test Reminders

- Break down your subject into manageable chunks. With weekly tests, you can ensure that students have covered this section prior to the mock, and prior to any revision sessions that you have in place for them.

### 4. Set Exam Reminders

- Ensure students know the date, time, location and instructions for their exams.
- Add useful information such as if they are allowed a calculator, if they need their ID.

## Organised Study Time

1. Set up After - School Revision Sessions. This will give students the chance to revise in smaller sections with the chance to review.

2. Let the students set the teachers a homework! What do they need further explanation on?

3. Familiarise students with the exam boards' marking criteria, and your top tips on what to look out for.

## Strategies for Home-Learning

1. Get parents involved in their child's GCSE prep in the run up to exams by holding a Parents' Evening Revision Session.

2. Offer parents your key revision tips and advice on what standards are expected. They can play a huge role in the outcome of Home-Learning.

How to prepare your troops for battle.

- Support
- Organise
- Structure

## Support

1. Help your child deal with and alleviate stress - Even if they don't show it, they'll appreciate your support right now.
2. Lend your ear. Sometimes all they need is someone to talk or moan to. Remember to praise them for their effort! [Article: The Power of Praise.](#)
3. Never force them to revise. There is a difference between suggesting, but you don't want to end up in an argument, and you have to remember that they need to be in the right frame of mind to revise.

## Organise

1. Help to create an optimal home learning environment. You can do this by creating a calm and quiet space for your child.
2. Make sure that the TV/radio is turned off or down if they are working nearby.
3. If your child is in mid-revision and concentrating well, try not to distract them. They'll resurface when they are ready for a break!

## Structure

1. Check that their revision timetable is realistic, and that they have factored in some relaxation time too. Revise the timetable if necessary.
2. Encourage your child to complete past papers once they have revised all of the material. This will help them to build their confidence as they come across similar questions.
3. If your child is struggling to get started, see if they can manage 10 or 15 minutes, then slowly build upon this. As long as they have a small goal they wish to achieve, this is still useful revision.

We wish you the best of luck!

