

Chapter 14

Pass Your Exams in 90 minutes

I am serious! You can pass all your exams by studying for 90 minutes!

OK, OK... I'm not talking about one single round revision for 90 minutes, but what about 226 sets of 90 minutes spread over a year.

Why 226?...Let us do some maths...

- There are 365 days in the year.
- Let's ditch the weekends and lose 104 days. That leaves 261 days.
- Next, lets ditch 6 weeks for the summer holidays, as well as 5 days for Christmas and New Year. That is a total of 35 days.
- 35 from 261 leaves us with 226.
- That's 226 days, studying for 90 minutes each day.

Could you master or at least get a far better understanding of your subjects if you did 226 sessions studying them.

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I bet you could.

It is such a simple concept. But it requires some discipline. 90 minutes every day for at least 5 days a week, including all the school holidays (except the 6 weeks and 5 days over Christmas and New Year of course.).

What's that I hear you say.... You don't have time? I'm going to be blunt here.... But I smell BS!

Any one that says they don't have time is a total liar, liar pants on fire! Just think about your day at the moment. Where could you fit 90 minutes in?

Let's say you get home at 4:30pm and go to bed around 10pm, you've got 5 ½ hours to kill! Doing 90 minutes of work still leaves you 4 hours to do what you want. Go to your sports club, play computer games, go on social media, Netflix and chill....

I also heard you say "Tom, you forgot about taking off the other school holidays!"

Errrrrr, no I didn't

Listen, if you want to be successful and get the results you need to get your dream job there are some sacrifices you have to make.

And to be honest it is not a big sacrifice.

Let's do the maths.... again....

We ditched the summer hols and 5 days at Christmas so that leaves:

- October half term - 5 days
- Christmas – 5 days
- Feb half term – 5 days
- Easter – 10 days
- May half term – 5 days

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- So, that is 30 days in total.
- Let's say you were awake for 16 hours of each day (getting your 8 hours sleep!)
- $16 \text{ hours} \times 30 \text{ days} = 480 \text{ hours}$
- $480 \text{ hours} \times 60 \text{ minutes} = 28,800 \text{ minutes}$ that you're awake.
- If we look at our 90 minutes as a percentage of this....
- $90 \text{ minutes} \times 30 \text{ days} = 2,700 \text{ minutes}$
- $2,700 / 28,800 = 0.093$
- $0.093 \times 100 = 9.3\%$

9.3% of your holidays on studying.

9.3% of your time awake in the holidays taking small but significant steps towards your dream job.

It's not much to ask, is it?

Now, would you like an extra 15 days in the year?

I'm not talking 15 normal days. I'm talking about 15 solid days of extra work & revision, 24/7, no breaks.

You can do it! Honestly you can.

Do ya wanna know how?

Get up one hour early every day for 365 days of the year. This totals 365 hours or 15 days ($365 / 24$ if you want to do the maths) of extra time to do what you want.

Revise, do your 90 minutes, play sport, play video games... whatever it is... it is making room in your day to do your 90 minutes either straight away or in the evening.

Admittedly, this is a bit hard-core, so let's say you did this for half of the year. That's 182.5 days, which is just shy of a school year... funny that, eh?

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You could look at this the other way around and get up 1 hour early in the... dare I say it.... School holidays!!!!

Imagine that... getting up at 6am every day of the school holidays, doing your 90 minutes of school work done and dusted by 8am each day.

Trust me... you will feel so satisfied (and a little bit smug!).

Plus, you've got the rest of the day to do what you want! Go back to bed, hang out, Netflix and chill.

Plus, by doing it first thing you have a better chance of not being distracted by friends on social media or family barging in. It is surprisingly quiet at 6 in the morning. Plus, your brain is in the most optimal state for learning first thing in the morning.

I know what you're also thinking... Why 90 minutes, Tom?

Good question. It is the perfect amount of time where your brain can cope with prolonged concentration before it starts to drift and nothing else goes in.

You need it to be undisturbed time too.

Did you know that when you're deep in concentration on a piece of work and you're disturbed, it takes a full 15 minutes for you to get back to the same state of mind as you were in before.

Not good.

So, here are my Golden Rules for your 90 minutes.

- 1. Tell your family what you're doing.**
- 2. Plan it out.**
- 3. Get into a routine.**
- 4. No phones.**
- 5. No Music or TV.**

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Here are some finer details.

1. **Tell your family what you are doing.** Tell them that when you are working you're not to be disturbed in ANY circumstances!

No, “do you want a drink”

No, “I’ve bought you a snack”

No, “how are you getting on”

No, “Can you take the rubbish out”

NO NOTHING!!!!

The only time you should be disturbed is if it is a life or death situation.

Make a sign for your door.... Or even download our one from www.medicalmavericks.co.uk/book

2. **Plan out when you're doing your 90 minutes and what you're going to do.**

It could just be as simple as looking at a different subject each day. Mondays is Chemistry, Tuesdays – Biology etc. etc.

Or be more specific on a particular area you're struggling with. The important thing is plan what you're doing and when you're doing it. Do this last thing on Friday, Saturday morning or Sunday night. It doesn't matter when, just as long as it is **before the start of the next week.**

You can download our weekly planning template here: www.medicalmavericks.co.uk/book

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3. **Get into a routine.** Try to stick to the same time each day, that way everyone knows what you're doing.
4. **Your mobile phone.** Yes, I am going there...

I know you'll probably get this all the time but I am deadly serious about this one.

TURN IT OFF.

One of the biggest things about your 90 minutes is that it is concentrated time and effort on your work. Surely you can survive without messaging someone, sending a snapchat, posting a selfie or just checking out the Internet in whatever way you do.

I know it is a habit. We all have this amazing device that can tell us anything we want and is such a powerful tool, but we spend our time looking at cat videos or sending silly pictures to each other.

I'm not perfect. I do it, put my hand in my pocket and just start tapping away.

Have you ever just thought, "WTF was I doing there? How has seeing what Jane in class 10C is moaning about or what Dan is 11D got up to on his hols, or seeing that kid get smacked in the head by a flying football (even though it was funny as hell!) helped me anyway?"

I have to tell myself to stop. You have to tell yourself to stop.

Turn it off. Not mute, not silence.

TURN

IT

OFF !!!

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5. Silence is golden.

No music, no study groups with friends, no background distractions. You'll only spend the first 10 minutes picking your tunes or start chatting about random shizzle.

Again, I can hear you saying.... "But Tom I need music to concentrate" or "I like studying with my friends!"

Sniff Sniff, what's that smell?... I smell BS again....

I am going to be **extremely** blunt here.

You don't like studying with your friends... you like being with your friends because it creates some kind of distraction from this 'evil' studying task in front of you!

On the music side of things many people have been brainwashed into thinking they need some kind of background music to concentrate.

It is utter rubbish.

In your exams, are you going to be listening to some bangin' tune whilst describing the functions of the heart?

How can you learn those chemistry formulas, or what $E=MC^2$ is all about or how the liver works when you're singing the lyrics to Justin Bieber or Little Mix?

When you qualify as a doctor, nurse, paramedic or healthcare scientist and you're treating a patient, you're not going to stop what you're doing and shout across the ward **"This is a TUUUUNNE!! Turn it up!"** and then start throwing some shapes around.

Your brain just can't cope with distractions when it needs to concentrate!!!!

It can only concentrate on a small number of things at a time, so don't add to what it has to do in your 90 minutes!!

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In my opinion, this has all come from the society ‘needing’ to be constantly entertained or stimulated. How often in your day are you in a place of silence? I would bet my house on it that it is never.

Walking to school – got your headphones on.

In school – always with your friends

Get home – TV is on, family are talking to you.

Everyone, including me, gets very little time when they are truly in silence.

And this is a big problem.

To be truly successful you need to be comfortable with your own thoughts and be happy in silence without distraction.

Don’t worry I am not going all Buddhist Monk on you, but their principles are bang on.

You need to get used to being on your own, in silence, for 90 minutes where there is just you, your desk, your books, paper and pens. Nothing else.

After about a week of doing this I can guarantee you’ll be a different person and you’ll crave those short periods of time.

You can thank me when you pass your exams.

Even though doing your 90-minute study sessions is a small ask each day, you probably will need a bit of motivation and reward.

So, each week pick something as a reward... it might be a film on Netflix (I like Netflix, can you tell?), that chocolate bar in the cupboard that has been calling to you, spending a tenner on yourself at Pri-marni....

It doesn’t have to be big. But when you do 5 out of 5 sessions give yourself a reward.

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Anything less.... No reward. Nothing... Nada.... Zilch.

Obviously, there are the little rewards you can give yourself in your head for each 90 minute session.

I can guarantee you will feel a little smug each time you complete a session, as you know some, if not all of your friends won't have done it.

((That is unless you pass on this book or tell your friends to get one and tell them to read this chapter, then you'll all be doing it!... Thanks in advance!))

And when times get tough and you really don't want to do it just remember you are taking tiny steps towards your dream job.

Small concentrated periods of effort each day will result in massive progress.

Try it... I dare you!

- **Plan it out on a Sunday.**
- **Get into a routine.**
- **Get up early.**
- **Get it done.**
- **Reward yourself.**
- **Pass your exams.**
- **Get a great job!**