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Study techniques for kinesthetic learners

We're finishing our series on different learning styles and study habits by focusing on kinesthetic learners. Not sure if you're an kinesthetic learner? Take this quiz to find out! Also check out our strategies for visual learners and auditory learners, or our podcast with lots more tips for kinesthetic learners in law school Are you one of those people who cannot sit still in lectures and being forced to sit and read will make you feel as if your head will explode? Did you get the best grades in drama or science labs? If this describes you, chances are you are a kinesthetic learner. This type of learning style comprehends information best through hands-on studying and doing things. Challenges for Kinesthetic Learners in Law School The law school class environment caters more to the visual and auditory learning styles because of its emphasis on reading case law and outlining information. However there are different study techniques you can use to comprehend information in a hands-on way. Let's look at five ways to study that compliment your strength as a kinesthetic learner. Assemble Charts and Diagrams Building a structure for your notes will help your mind comprehend the information and recognize patterns easily. Create flowcharts and graphs in a visual way when you re-write your notes and outline cases. For example, use different color Post-it notes to create flowcharts on whiteboards and empty walls. The act of creating the flowchart will help you retain the information. Take Breaks When Studying Kinesthetic learners often have a hard time sitting still for long periods of time. If that's you, make sure you take frequent (but not too lengthy) breaks while studying. These quick study breaks will give your mind a chance to renew itself and refocus when you sit down to study again. Combine an Activity with Studying Kinesthetic learners retain information best when they are doing activities. Try going for a walk or run while listening to audio recordings of lectures and notes. If you're a work out at a gym, review your stack of flashcards and outlines while you use the elliptical machine. Use Tools Such as Flashcards and Mnemonics Flashcards are great study tool for kinesthetic learners. There's something about the act of writing out the cards, and the act of physically flipping them over, that engages lots of different parts of the brain. Mnemonic devices, such as songs or rhymes, are also great to pair with case law and your outlines. Keep Your Fingers Busy While Studying One way to engage a kinesthetic learner while studying is to engage your fingers in the studying. For example, trace words and re-write sentences to learn key facts. Typing your notes and using the computer is another great way to reinforce learning through sense of touch. If you're a kinesthetic learner, try a few of the study tips above to see which works best for you. Perfecting these techniques now will not only help you understand the material, but also get you ready come exam time. Want more? Sign up for our free mailing list today. And check out this podcast with lots more tips for kinesthetic learners in law school! Here are some other helpful posts: Looking for some help to do your best in law school? Find out about our law school tutoring options. Kinesthetic learners thrive with physical movement. That's the way they learn best. So when it comes to studying, the most effective study tips for kinesthetic learners involve getting them moving. Here are 8 things that you can do while studying if you're a kinesthetic learner. Take Notes If you need to read through study material, try taking notes. Not only will it be easier to remember what you read, but the act of writing down the material will help you remember the information. Teach Others Find a study group or enlist a family member or friend to teach. To teach them the information on the exam, you need to know and understand the material. It's a great way to ensure that you know the material. And as you teach, you can get up and move. Schedule Frequent Breaks Kinesthetic learners struggle to sit still for long periods of time. Therefore, don't forget to schedule frequent breaks. Determine how long you can sit and focus while studying. Then, be sure to have a short break so you can move around. Doing so will help you focus when you're studying, so your study sessions will be more effective. Get Active You don't have to sit at a table to have an effective study session. In fact, sitting still is hard for most kinesthetic learners anyway. Instead, stand up or participate in repetitive movement while you study. You could walk around, tap your pencil, or bounce a ball. Chew Gum Chewing gum is a great way to increase alertness. It can help you stay focused, especially since it's a repetitive motion. To mix things up, try purchasing several flavors that you love. Then, assign a different flavor for different subjects. Create Flashcards Flashcards are a great way to quickly test yourself on terms you need to know for the exam. This is an effective study method for kinesthetic learners, because it requires moving one's hands to create the flashcards and flip through them. Listen to Music If you enjoy listening to music while you study, this is a great way to remove distractions. Choose music that you enjoy and will help you stay focused. Make Mnemonic Devices A mnemonic device is a method used to better remember information. Some common ones include ROY G BIV (red, orange, yellow, green, blue, indigo, and violet) to remember the order of colors in the rainbow and Please Excuse My Dear Aunt Sally (parentheses, exponents, multiplication, division, addition, and subtraction) to remember the order of operations for math equations. Make up your own mnemonic devices to help you remember the information for the exam. To make your studying sessions as effective as possible, it's important to know the best ways to study for yourself. Use these study tips for kinesthetic learners to help you prepare for and pass the exam. Flickr user k4dordy Physical learners do best when they have a hands-on approach to learning. In grade school, they were the ones who probably found the attachable blocks most useful when learning addition and subtraction, or the students who remembered things from field trips and lab experiments the best. A physical learner—also called a kinesthetic learner because of the movement involved—do best when they can directly engage themselves with the material. Because of this, there might be some struggles early on in your college career. Here are some study tips and tricks to help get you started if you're a kinesthetic learner. Flashcards are very useful. Unlike simply staring at the information in your notes or textbook, you have to shuffle them, turn them over, and actively write down the details (I would highly suggest hand-writing them, as it helps with retention). That movement of the cards helps a physical learner to retain information. A physical learner is likely one who does not sit still for long periods of time well. It is therefore important for a physical learner to take breaks to move around. These breaks do not have to be long—just a few minutes to stretch after an hour or so of studying, or perhaps after completing a section or chapter. Figure out your limits; how long can you go without movement? From there, time your breaks accordingly. In addition, it might be better not to schedule our classes back to back all day long. Give yourself the mental and physical breaks you need to perform and focus. Much like the visual learner likes to see how information relates to other information, a kinesthetic learner generally like to make those connections. The act of drawing diagrams and charts will help the physical learner make connections. The movement of your hand helps the details stick better. This leads to more creative study tools, as you make it personal and therefore more relevant. Study With Movements The beauty of finding study techniques that work for you is that you get to decide what is necessary and fun. For physical learners, this might be that you ascribe a certain movement to your material. These movements can be small, such as drawing specific shapes when reviewing information. Or maybe something involves jiggling your leg or tapping your thigh. Small movements are good for lectures and classes so long as they are discreet. What this study technique can also include is larger movement. Pacing while reviewing information (you might need a partner for this), or laying facts down on the floor on separate sheets and giving each its own movement. You might remember details about Hamlet by hopping, or you skip when thinking about Ophelia. When testing on the information, remembering the physical movement can assist in bringing the details forward. Role Play Acting out a scene or process greatly increases the kinesthetic learner's ability to remember it later on. This way you can actually walk through the information. Get your friends together so you can all go through it. You can have a little study party and make it fun! Get Involved Depending on your field, there can be ample opportunities to be hands-on with the information. Classes with labs are the most obvious. Some of your professors might have projects or research that you can be involved in. Don't be afraid to ask your professors if there is something you can do. There might also be student groups and organizations on campus that are related to what you are learning. — Use College Raptor to discover personalized college matches, cost estimates, acceptance odds, and potential financial aid at schools around the country—for FREE! Tactile/Kinesthetic Learner Tactile/Kinesthetic learners learn best when they can use their sense of touch and can move about. If you are a tactile/kinesthetic learner, the suggestions that follow can help you to succeed in school to the best of your ability. Be physically active while you study. Rather than just sit at your desk, occasionally walk back and forth with your textbook or notes as you read the information out loud. To decrease your fidgeting as you study, listen to music, preferably baroque music. However, discontinue this if you find the music to be distracting. Make extensive use of a computer and the Internet. Actively touching the keyboard will keep your mind active. Take our free Learning Style Assessment Take extensive written notes in class. Edit and type them later. Study in short blocks of time with frequent but short breaks. Do something physical as you study such as tapping a pencil or squeezing a stress ball. Use your finger as a guide while reading. Act out things you have to learn whenever possible. Construct models of things you have to learn whenever possible. If you find it difficult to sit at a desk when studying, trying lying on your stomach or back. When trying to remember information, close your eyes and "write" the information in the air. Picture the information in your mind as you do so. Use concrete objects to help you understand math concepts. When trying to learn the spelling of a difficult word, arrange letter blocks to spell the word. Try these suggestions and learn which ones work best for you. Kinesthetic learning is one of four types of learning styles defined by the VARK system, which stands for Visual, Auditory, Reading and Kinesthetic. New Zealander Neil Fleming developed the system in the early 1990s as a means of helping students and others learn more efficiently and productively as the categories classify learners according to their specific needs. With kinesthetic learning, individuals learn most effectively through physical movement. In this article, we define kinesthetic learning, list some characteristics of kinesthetic learners and detail some strategies for retaining information as a kinesthetic learner in the workplace.Related: Learning Styles for Career DevelopmentAccording to VARK, kinesthetic learning appeals most to people who like being active while they learn. The critical point to note in kinesthetic learning is that stimulation is crucial to the process. Kinesthetic learners engage better when their body is alert and moving. They manage input better and can process faster once their body is busy doing something besides focusing specifically on the material.In most cases, if a child is brought up learning in a certain way, they use the same methods as they go through life. The effectiveness of kinesthetic learning strategies depends on when the individual learns them. For example, it's much harder to relearn memorization techniques as an adult than it is to learn them as a child.The VARK system does have several shortcomings, one of which being the dependence on placing learners into a single category. Generally, individuals may fall into more than one of the VARK categorizations. However, trying different methods in the VARK system can help you find the best approach for your unique learning style.Determining your learning style usually requires a level of self-awareness. Among the key traits of a kinesthetic learner are:Excellent hand-eye coordinationGreat motor memoryGenerally good at sports and physical activityHigh energy levelsOther indications you might be a kinesthetic learner are if you:Do well in creative subjects, such as art or dramaEnjoy experimenting for the sake of knowledgeReact quickly to things around youAre excellent with tactical tasks, such as model-building Enjoy taking things apart to see how they workRecall the steps necessary for something you've previously accomplishedEnjoy escapes like adventure books or moviesRelated: Guide: How to Choose a CareerMany classrooms and work environments aren't ideal for kinesthetic learners. As a kinesthetic learner, you likely struggle to grasp new job functions or sit still in meetings. Whether you're finding it challenging to retain information or stay focused at work, you might be able to benefit from the following:Standing up allows you to flex your muscles, which affects the way your body internalizes information. If you're a kinesthetic learner, standing while working can translate to better comprehension, focus and retention.Small movements are ideal for working without having to commit yourself to strenuous physical activity. Something as simple as bouncing a ball on the ground and catching it may provide enough of a distraction to enable your brain to retain information and focus better.Breaking up your time into smaller units and taking short breaks for exercise between tasks may have a positive effect on your mental abilities. Kinesthetic learning requires physical activity to grasp concepts.If you're trying to retain new information, the physical aspect of preparing a flashcard or highlighting a sentence may be enough to spur your brain into action. Kinesthetic learners tend to like moving things, and flashcards can aid in developing a moving schematic that your brain might prefer to words on a page.Drawing out a diagram on a piece of paper or a whiteboard can aid your memory and understanding. Thanks to how easy it is to create your own content with mind-mapping software, storyboarding or even a short video could help you memorize and recall concepts effortlessly.In places where you don't have the luxury of space, you may have to resort to more limited activities to maintain your attention. Tensing a leg muscle, for example, and holding it there for five seconds, then letting it relax is a helpful, quiet way to keep focused. In meetings and work environments especially, you might find that your attention might start drifting after a few moments of inactivity. This technique gives your body something to do in a confined space.If you're having trouble communicating or understanding ideas, try utilizing role-play. Acting it out may prove easier for you to process the information and get your ideas across.Related: What Are the Different Types of Workplace Training?Mock-ups can be a powerful tool when learning new information. If you can, try creating or finding simulations to practice workplace tasks.Related: What is On-the-Job Training?If you're having trouble remembering something, try recalling a time when you've either performed the task previously or have seen someone else complete it. Try to recall every aspect of the task in detail if you can; the troubleshooting, any complications, the client and all of the facts.For kinesthetic learners, practice is perhaps the most important part of learning. Repeatedly practice the task, and allow trial and error to serve as a learning tool for yourself and others.Attempt to find videos that contain demonstrations of the tasks you're struggling with. Seeing it done can be extremely helpful, even if it is through a screen.

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