

# Active Recall Starter Kit

Most study time goes into re-reading and highlighting — the two methods with the weakest evidence behind them. Active recall (closing the book and pulling the answer out of your head) is the single highest-return change most learners can make.

This six-page kit shows you how to switch, with templates you can use in your next study session.

## How the recall loop works

- Read a section once, with attention, and then close it.
- Write or say everything you remember — no peeking.
- Open the source and check. Mark what you missed or got wrong.
- Re-test only the marked items. Repeat until nothing is marked.
- Add the missed items to your question bank for review later in the week.

## Turning a page into questions

- Headings become 'Explain ...' or 'What is ...' prompts.
- Bold terms become 'Define ... and give one example'.
- Lists become 'Name the N ... and say why each matters'.
- Diagrams become 'Draw and label ... from memory'.
- Worked examples become 'Solve a similar problem without looking'.

## Brain-dump template

- Topic: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_
- Everything I remember (3 minutes, no notes):
  - 
  - 
  -
- Checked against source — gaps found:
  -
- Re-test result (tick when correct from memory): [ ] [ ] [ ]

## Question-bank template

- # | Question | Answer (short) | Last tested | Result
- 1 | | | |
- 2 | | | |
- 3 | | | |
- Rule: a question leaves the bank after three correct answers spaced at least a week apart.

## Five recall mistakes and fixes

- Checking too early → set a timer; do not open the source before it rings.
- Recalling only what is easy → start each session with last week's marked items.
- Writing questions with the answer in them → hide the key term from the prompt.
- Giving up when it hurts → the effort is the signal it is working; stay 30 more seconds.

- Doing it once → schedule the re-test for 2 days later before you finish the session.

## **Your first 20-minute session**

- 0–5 min: read one section once.
- 5–10 min: brain-dump from memory.
- 10–13 min: check and mark gaps.
- 13–18 min: re-test the gaps only.
- 18–20 min: write 5 questions into your bank and schedule a re-test in two days.

Go further: **Learn How to Learn — Complete System —**

<https://skillstacksuite.com/learn-how-to-learn-complete-system/>

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