



# Reading College Textbooks

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1. **Reading is one of the foundations of your college education**, often operating behind the scenes of the rest of your academic work, and you must do it to learn the material you are assigned. Your professors expect it and require it.
2. Remind yourself that **you can be good at something without loving to do it**. While many people do love reading, many others do not. And that's okay.
3. **Add "reading time" to your homework schedule**. List it in your planner or daily to-do list.
4. **Think about your ideal reading atmosphere**. Consider your personal preferences for location, temperature, lighting, background noise (or silence), snacks, caffeinated beverages, writing utensils, etc.
5. **Take frequent breaks while reading**. Don't try to struggle through a 3-hour block of constant reading. Set a timer for, say, 20 to 30 minutes of reading, and then take a 5- or 10-minute break for a walk, stretch, and quick phone check.
6. **Too much highlighting defeats the purpose of highlighting**. Experts say to limit your highlighting to about 10% of the text. It's best to use a pen or pencil to take notes through the whole text and then go back with your highlighter, marking what truly needs to be emphasized.
7. **Use a dictionary while reading**. Find a free dictionary app or use Google. Jot down the definitions for unfamiliar words.

## The 3-Step Reading Process

1. The first step in the reading process is to **Preview** the text. Skim the text and look at the headings, text in bold or italic, visual aids, review questions, and anything else that stands out.
2. The second step is to **Read + Take Notes**. Taking notes while reading helps you with comprehension, retention, and focus. Handwritten notes are best because you utilize more than just one of your senses (sight and touch), which helps you retain and retrieve information.
3. The final step in the reading process is to **Review**. Within 24 hours and then periodically after that, review the textbook and your notes. The repetition will help move the information from your short-term memory to long-term memory. Do not wait until the night before an exam to go back to the textbook and notes.