

# STUDYING FOR MATHS OR STATS EXAMS

Like most uni assessments, maths exams require you to understand a question, formulate a solution and then express your answer as clearly as possible.

Here is a quick summary of a broad framework you may find useful when studying for your maths or stats exam. (For the full version, visit the STUDYSmarter website and search “prepare for your maths/stats exam”.)

## 0. Preliminaries

The crucial exam preparation is to have attempted the practice exercises, assignments, etc during semester. Don't worry if you didn't get good marks, engaging with the content is the key.

### 1. Organise

Group together, organise and index your worksheets, lecture notes, past tests, solutions, etc.

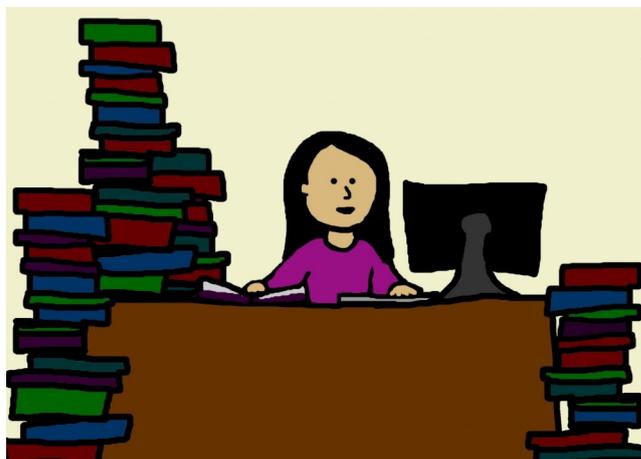
### 2. The “Big Picture”

Read over the main points of your lecture notes from the beginning. Start a **“Summary Notebook”** and for each topic/section write notes of

- the main theory,
- key definitions, formulas, etc.
- Leave space to add more information for each topic.

Look for the **connections** between topics and **threads** of related topics.

This overview of the unit will help you target your revision time better.



#### TIP

Sketch out a “topic map” as you go, drawing in the *connections* between topics.

### 3. The “Small Picture”

If you are confident about a topic, try doing a past/practice exam question.

If you aren't confident yet (or the exam question approach fails), revise the exercises for that topic.

If you are still stuck, review the lecture notes, etc.

Where you get stuck, work through the problem again and identify your mistakes. If you can't do this on your own, **ask somebody for help!**

Each time you learn something new, add it to the “Summary Notebook”.

#### TIP

Make sure you revisit topics after you have become confident with them to ensure that the knowledge has “stuck”.

### **TIP**

When you think you are ready for the exam, have a practice run under exam conditions with the most recent exam paper you can find.

This is a great way to find out whether you

- really do know the content (without looking at your notes),
- can answer questions quickly enough &
- can avoid too many “silly mistakes”.



## **4. Planning Your Study Break**

During the semester your study timetable is set for you by lectures, tutes, etc, so it's a good idea to devise your own pre-exam study timetable.

- Be realistic (eg. making each study session as long as your lectures might be good because you're used to concentrating for that long).
- Study at times of day when you work well. (Are you a morning or evening person?)
- Arrange a study group meeting (or two) and include any times your lecturer is available to see students.
- Schedule decent breaks for your other commitments and personal time.

### **TIP**

Eat and sleep properly! You don't concentrate well when tired/hungry and a sleep debt has to be paid off eventually ...

### **TIP**

You will concentrate (and study) better if you are **confident** in your ability.

Your confidence improves when you make progress (even a little bit).

And the way to make progress in maths/ stats **is to write out answers to exercises!** The more you write, the more confident you will become.

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