Active recall and spaced review

Subject _____

Spec code _____

Active recall: test yourself before you reread

1. Close your notes and book.
2. Write down, say aloud or sketch everything you can remember about the topic, or answer a few questions on it.
3. Open your notes and check. Correct mistakes in a different pen, so the gaps stand out.
4. Turn the gaps into flashcards or questions for next time.

Spaced review: come back at widening gaps

Rather than revising a topic once for a long time, return to it several times with longer gaps in between. One pattern to start from: the next day, after 3 days, after a week, after 2 weeks, then after a month. It is a suggestion, not a rule: shorten the gap if a review went badly, and lengthen it if it went well.

Each review can be short: ten minutes of active recall is enough.

Review schedule

TOPIC	FIRST LEARNED	REVIEW 1 next day	REVIEW 2 3 days	REVIEW 3 1 week	REVIEW 4 2 weeks	REVIEW 5 1 month

In each review box, write the date planned. When you have done it, add a tick and a word for how it went: "easy", "OK" or "hard".

Flashcard template

Subject _____

Topic _____

Write a question on the left and its answer on the right. Cut along the dashed lines, then fold each card along the dotted line so the answer is on the back. Sort your cards into three piles as you use them: "again tomorrow", "in a few days" and "next week". One idea per card works best.

Cut along dashed lines — Fold along the dotted line

QUESTION	ANSWER
QUESTION	ANSWER
QUESTION	ANSWER
QUESTION	ANSWER