



# Learning to Learn eCourse

## Module 4: Learning Strategies

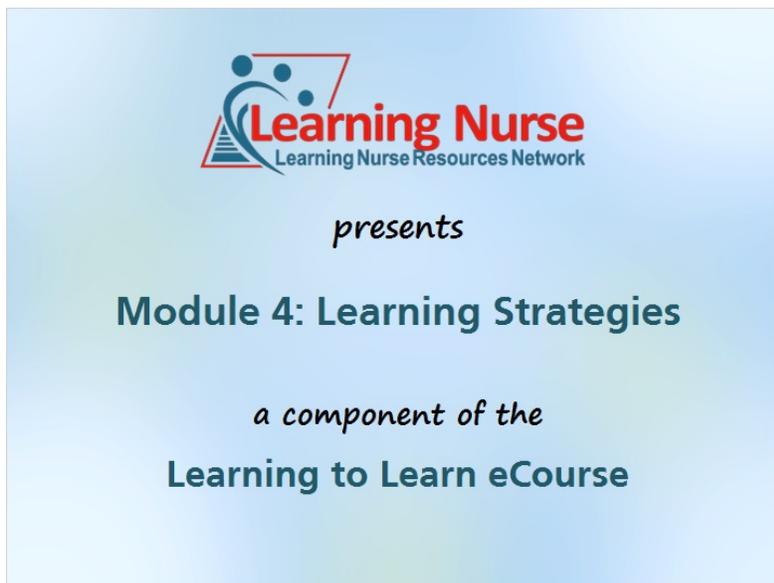
### Handout

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# Learning to Learn eCourse – Module 4: Learning Strategies

## 1. Module 4: Learning Strategies

### 1.1 Welcome



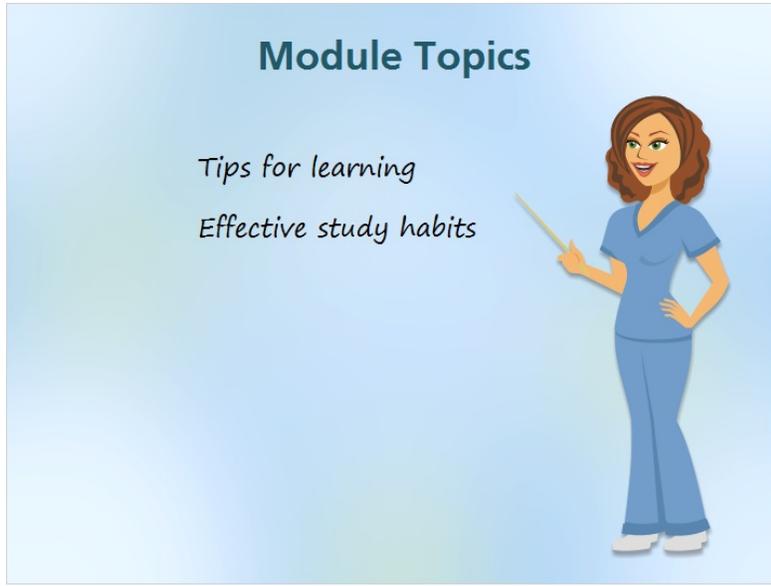
#### MENU

- Module Topics
- Tips for Learning
- Learning Tips
- More Learning Tips
- Still More Tips
- Effective Study Habits
- Learning Style
- Micro Goals
- Spaced Repetition
- Pomodoro Method
- Work Reviews
- Varied Learning
- Writing Notes
- Self-Testing
- Background Sounds
- Distractions
- Multi-Tasking
- Wellness
- Just Do It
- Summary

#### Narration

No narration, only music.

## 1.2 Module topics



### MENU

- Module Topics
- Tips for Learning
- Learning Tips
- More Learning Tips
- Still More Tips
- Effective Study Habits
- Learning Style
- Micro Goals
- Spaced Repetition
- Pomodoro Method
- Work Reviews
- Varied Learning
- Writing Notes
- Self-Testing
- Background Sounds
- Distractions
- Multi-Tasking
- Wellness
- Just Do It
- Summary

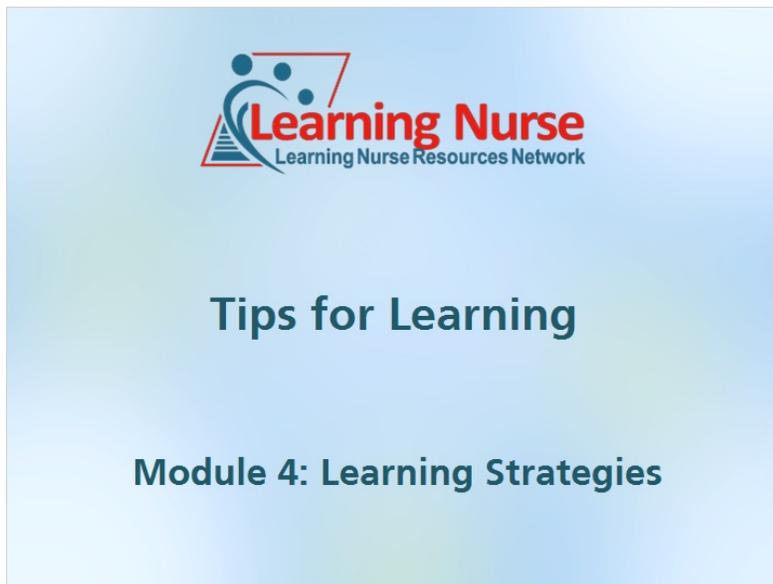
### Narration

**JILL:** Hi ... I'm Jill and with me is Carlos. Welcome to this module in our *Learning to Learn* course – Module 4.

**CARLOS:** So in this module, we are going to talk about some general tips to enhance our learning effectiveness, and also explore some ways to improve our study habits. Is that correct?

**JILL:** Yes it is. So let's start.

## 1.3 Tips for learning



### Narration

No narration, only music.

### MENU

- Module Topics
- Tips for Learning
- Learning Tips
- More Learning Tips
- Still More Tips
- Effective Study Habits
- Learning Style
- Micro Goals
- Spaced Repetition
- Pomodoro Method
- Work Reviews
- Varied Learning
- Writing Notes
- Self-Testing
- Background Sounds
- Distractions
- Multi-Tasking
- Wellness
- Just Do It
- Summary

## 1.4 Learning tips

### Learning Tips

Some tips to improve your learning:

- Get organized*
- Get input from other learners*
- Check out course design*
- Be realistic*
- Set and follow a schedule*



MENU
<a href="#">Module Topics</a>
<a href="#">Tips for Learning</a>
<a href="#">Learning Tips</a>
<a href="#">More Learning Tips</a>
<a href="#">Still More Tips</a>
<a href="#">Effective Study Habits</a>
<a href="#">Learning Style</a>
<a href="#">Micro Goals</a>
<a href="#">Spaced Repetition</a>
<a href="#">Pomodoro Method</a>
<a href="#">Work Reviews</a>
<a href="#">Varied Learning</a>
<a href="#">Writing Notes</a>
<a href="#">Self-Testing</a>
<a href="#">Background Sounds</a>
<a href="#">Distractions</a>
<a href="#">Multi-Tasking</a>
<a href="#">Wellness</a>
<a href="#">Just Do It</a>
<a href="#">Summary</a>

### Narration

**JILL:** Depending on how recently you completed your education, the ease of returning to a formal learning process will vary. The following tips will help you learn better. Some of the suggestions focus on learning in a self-paced format. However, most apply to any form of learning. Carlos, why don't you begin?

**CARLOS:** Okay! The first tip is to get organized. Use the self-assessment tools and your learning plan to organize your learning activities and record progress in achieving your goals.

**JILL:** Get input from former students about courses you may be interested in. Find out where the easy spots and hard spots are. Ask previous learners where they thought "if only I had known that ..." Discussion forums, e-mail and texting are an excellent ways to get in touch with other health professionals. Find out about their experiences with particular courses or learning activities.

**CARLOS:** Familiarize yourself with the course design. Spend time looking at the course outline and description before you register. Decide if you can be a successful self-directed learner with this particular study content.

**JILL:** Be realistic. If there is insufficient time in your personal schedule to do the work of the course, you will be frustrated. You may not have to attend a class, but you will have to do regular academic work.

**CARLOS:** Set a study schedule. Remember you should be spending at least two study hours each week for every credit you are taking. Identify study times when you are fresh and attentive and stick to those times every week.

## 1.5 More tips

### More Learning Tips

More tips to improve your learning:

*Stay in touch with instructor*

*Evaluate your progress regularly*

*Be aware of materials*

*Time your tests wisely*

*Set deadlines for yourself*

*Find some study buddies*

### MENU

- [Module Topics](#)
- [Tips for Learning](#)
- [Learning Tips](#)
- [More Learning Tips](#)
- [Still More Tips](#)
- [Effective Study Habits](#)
- [Learning Style](#)
- [Micro Goals](#)
- [Spaced Repetition](#)
- [Pomodoro Method](#)
- [Work Reviews](#)
- [Varied Learning](#)
- [Writing Notes](#)
- [Self-Testing](#)
- [Background Sounds](#)
- [Distractions](#)
- [Multi-Tasking](#)
- [Wellness](#)
- [Just Do It](#)
- [Summary](#)

## Narration

**JILL:** Stay in touch with your instructor or tutor. Visit, e-mail or call your assigned instructor regularly. Sometimes you may think you are not even sure about how to ask a question about your work. That is when the instructor can help most!

**CARLOS:** Evaluate your progress regularly. Re-read the course objectives and standards often to see how you are progressing with them.

**JILL:** Keep aware of your materials. Distance learning courses have many different materials. Remember you are not just watching or listening. You are learning from those various materials. Take notes. Imagine questions that might be on a test from your study guide, from your textbook, and so on.

**CARLOS:** Time your tests wisely. Be sure you have mastered the material that will be the basis for a particular test before you take it. Don't be in too much of a rush; that can lead to sloppy and ineffective test taking.

**JILL:** Set deadlines for yourself, and stick to them. Keep a calendar showing the number of weeks in the session. Mark it with the amount of work you need to do each week. Write in the days when you expect to take tests, submit projects or contact the instructor.

**CARLOS:** Find some study buddies. If you need the companionship of other learners for academic success, ask your instructor for help in identifying other students who may want to work with you. With today's technologies, you can have study buddies without having to get together physically.

## 1.6 Still more tips

### Still More Learning Tips

Still more tips to improve your learning:

*Discuss your progress*

*Find your most effective motivators*

*Use support resources*

*Contact professional resources*

*Reward yourself*

### MENU

- Module Topics
- Tips for Learning
- Learning Tips
- More Learning Tips
- Still More Tips
- Effective Study Habits
- Learning Style
- Micro Goals
- Spaced Repetition
- Pomodoro Method
- Work Reviews
- Varied Learning
- Writing Notes
- Self-Testing
- Background Sounds
- Distractions
- Multi-Tasking
- Wellness
- Just Do It
- Summary

## Narration

**JILL:** Discuss your progress. Ask your instructor at various points in the course how your progress is going. Point out areas that you think are difficult or unclear. Ask for help. You are in charge here. The instructor is your coach but you have to execute the plays.

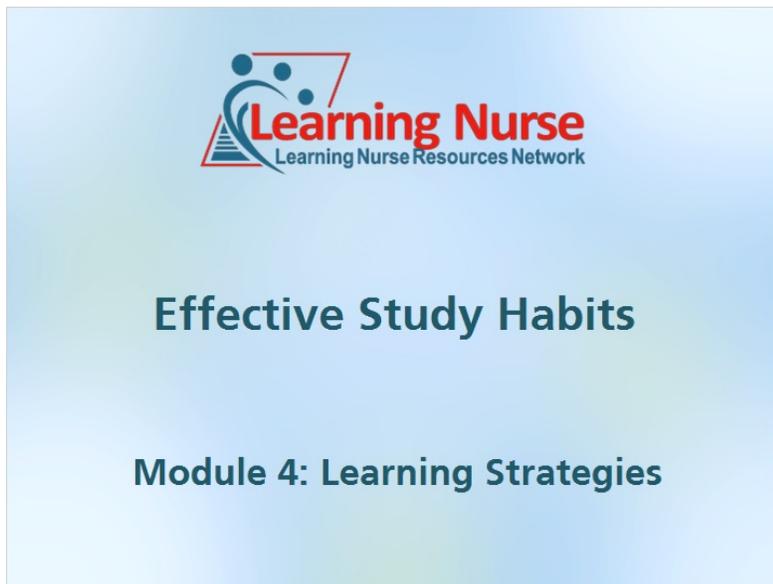
**CARLOS:** Find your most effective motivators. What makes you persevere at a task? Do you get excited when you master a skill? Do you need a reward? Will promising yourself a pleasant diversion increase your concentration? Remember the importance of sticking to a schedule. Pretend you really are in class when you are scheduled to do your course work.

**JILL:** Use support resources. Have a designated workspace that is free from distraction and interruption. Get your family members on board. Commit time to them after you have met a goal. Follow through and enjoy your time together. Arrange work commitments to facilitate your success. Taking a vacation day at set intervals to allow for a concentrated period of study and preparing for exams is a useful strategy.

**CARLOS:** Use professional resources. Contact your professional nursing college or association to get some help and assistance as you need it.

**JILL:** And finally, as you achieve your goals, reward yourself. Celebrate your accomplishments and achievements in becoming a better and more competent nurse.

## 1.7 Effective study habits



### Narration

No narration, only music.

### MENU

- Module Topics
- Tips for Learning
- Learning Tips
- More Learning Tips
- Still More Tips
- Effective Study Habits
- Learning Style
- Micro Goals
- Spaced Repetition
- Pomodoro Method
- Work Reviews
- Varied Learning
- Writing Notes
- Self-Testing
- Background Sounds
- Distractions
- Multi-Tasking
- Wellness
- Just Do It
- Summary

## 1.8 Learning style

**Learning Style**

*What is your preferred learning style?  
Take this self-assessment test to find out!*



**Visual**



**Auditory**



**Kinesthetic**

*Click on an image for suggested learning strategies*

**Click NEXT to continue ...**

**MENU**

- [Module Topics](#)
- [Tips for Learning](#)
- [Learning Tips](#)
- [More Learning Tips](#)
- [Still More Tips](#)
- [Effective Study Habits](#)
- [Learning Style](#)
- [Micro Goals](#)
- [Spaced Repetition](#)
- [Pomodoro Method](#)
- [Work Reviews](#)
- [Varied Learning](#)
- [Writing Notes](#)
- [Self-Testing](#)
- [Background Sounds](#)
- [Distractions](#)
- [Multi-Tasking](#)
- [Wellness](#)
- [Just Do It](#)
- [Summary](#)

### Narration

**JILL:** In the second part of this module, we are going to examine ways to improve our study habits. Let's start with preferred learning styles. Although there is general agreement these days that most people can learn using different approaches, most of us still have a preferred style of learning. Some people are mostly visual learners, others are audio learners and still others are kinesthetic or hands-on learners.

**CARLOS:** Use the link to take the Preferred Learning Style self-administered test on the Learning Nurse website to find out what type of learner you are. Once you know your preferred learning style, click on the appropriate image for the most effective and successful learning strategies to use with your learning style.

**JILL:** When you are done with this slide, click NEXT to continue with the presentation.

## 1.9 Micro goals

### Micro Goals

*To-do lists*

*Avoid large vague goals*

*Small, specific, doable tasks*

*Ticking off small tasks rewarding*



### MENU

- Module Topics
- Tips for Learning
- Learning Tips
- More Learning Tips
- Still More Tips
- Effective Study Habits
- Learning Style
- Micro Goals
- Spaced Repetition
- Pomodoro Method
- Work Reviews
- Varied Learning
- Writing Notes
- Self-Testing
- Background Sounds
- Distractions
- Multi-Tasking
- Wellness
- Just Do It
- Summary

### Narration

**JILL:** Keeping a to-do list is very helpful when studying. But large, vague goals are demotivating and almost impossible to meet. When goal setting, avoid big goals such as “research and write the assignment paper” or “read the entire textbook”.

**CARLOS:** Instead, choose smaller, specific tasks for your to-do list. For example, “create the outline for my paper” or “read Chapter 2 in the textbook” are better options.

**JILL:** Being able to check off many smaller tasks from the to-do list is much more satisfying since each tick is a micro-reward. These help you stay motivated to keep on studying.

## 1.10 Spaced repetition

### Spaced Repetition

*Best way to learn / memorize*

*Cramming less effective*

*Remember more and longer*

*Overlearning leads to best results*

#### MENU

- Module Topics
- Tips for Learning
- Learning Tips
- More Learning Tips
- Still More Tips
- Effective Study Habits
- Learning Style
- Micro Goals
- Spaced Repetition
- Pomodoro Method
- Work Reviews
- Varied Learning
- Writing Notes
- Self-Testing
- Background Sounds
- Distractions
- Multi-Tasking
- Wellness
- Just Do It
- Summary

### Narration

**JILL:** Repetition is the best way to learn and memorize new information. But “cramming” or repeating the same information over and over again within a short period of time is going to be less successful.

**CARLOS:** Going through a topic several times on several days will lead to the knowledge being retained as a stronger and longer lasting memory.

**JILL:** When you can regurgitate all of the required information correctly without consulting your notes, go through the topic at least one more time. This is called over-learning and leads to the best results in memory formation and retention.

**CARLOS:** When I was taking my nursing program, I often heard from other students that you could be over-prepared for a test. Is there any truth to that notion?

**JILL:** The idea that you can be over-prepared for a test is NOT supported at all by the research studies. So over-learning is a good thing.

## 1.11 Pomodoro method

### Pomodoro Method

*25 minutes of concentrated, timed work*

*Break for a few minutes*

*Longer breaks after four Pomodoro cycles*

*Get up and do something during breaks*

*Watch this video on the Pomodoro method*

[Click NEXT to continue ...](#)

### MENU

- Module Topics
- Tips for Learning
- Learning Tips
- More Learning Tips
- Still More Tips
- Effective Study Habits
- Learning Style
- Micro Goals
- Spaced Repetition
- Pomodoro Method
- Work Reviews
- Varied Learning
- Writing Notes
- Self-Testing
- Background Sounds
- Distractions
- Multi-Tasking
- Wellness
- Just Do It
- Summary

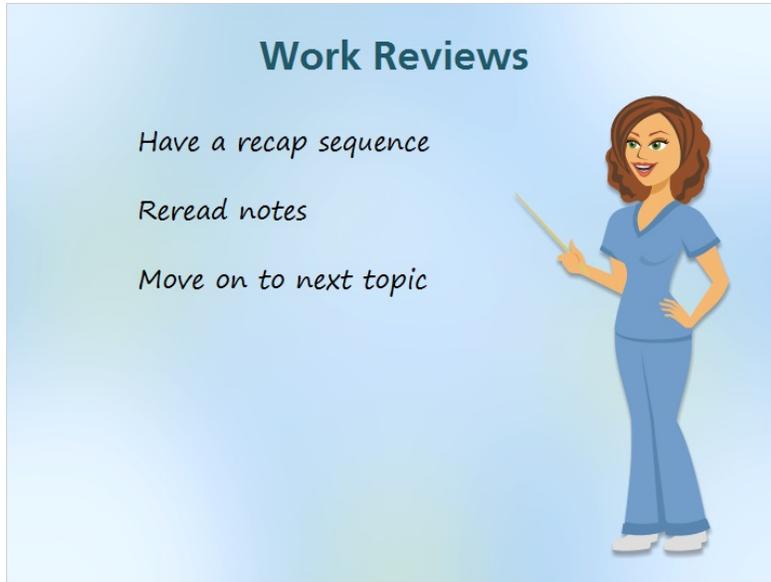
### Narration

**JILL:** Another good habit to acquire for studying is the Pomodoro Method. This study method involves a patterns of 25 minutes of concentrated, timed work, followed by a short break of a few minutes. Repeat the process with a longer break after four Pomodoro cycles.

**CARLOS:** There are numerous free apps that can track this for you. A timer on your phone will also work. Use the break to get up and stretch, get a cup of tea, or go to the bathroom. Eat lunch or a snack during the longer break.

**JILL:** We have a video on the Pomodoro method. Click on the link to watch the video. When done, click NEXT to continue with our presentation.

## 1.12 Work reviews



MENU
<a href="#">Module Topics</a>
<a href="#">Tips for Learning</a>
<a href="#">Learning Tips</a>
<a href="#">More Learning Tips</a>
<a href="#">Still More Tips</a>
<a href="#">Effective Study Habits</a>
<a href="#">Learning Style</a>
<a href="#">Micro Goals</a>
<a href="#">Spaced Repetition</a>
<a href="#">Pomodoro Method</a>
<a href="#">Work Reviews</a>
<a href="#">Varied Learning</a>
<a href="#">Writing Notes</a>
<a href="#">Self-Testing</a>
<a href="#">Background Sounds</a>
<a href="#">Distractions</a>
<a href="#">Multi-Tasking</a>
<a href="#">Wellness</a>
<a href="#">Just Do It</a>
<a href="#">Summary</a>

### Narration

**JILL:** Another useful study habit to get into is to start every study session with a recap sequence. Reread the notes you made from the last lecture, or from the previous topic. Then put it down, and move on to the next topic.

## 1.13 Varied learning

### Varied Learning

*Use different methods to learn same info*

*Best way to create lasting memory*

*Try these techniques:*

Flashcards	Color code notes
Post-it notes	Highlight important words
Mind maps	Key word association
Study partner	Create a mnemonic
Practice quizzes	Record lecture and listen to it
Teach content	Record your own notes and listen to them

### MENU

[Module Topics](#)  
[Tips for Learning](#)  
[Learning Tips](#)  
[More Learning Tips](#)  
[Still More Tips](#)  
[Effective Study Habits](#)  
[Learning Style](#)  
[Micro Goals](#)  
[Spaced Repetition](#)  
[Pomodoro Method](#)  
[Work Reviews](#)  
[Varied Learning](#)  
[Writing Notes](#)  
[Self-Testing](#)  
[Background Sounds](#)  
[Distractions](#)  
[Multi-Tasking](#)  
[Wellness](#)  
[Just Do It](#)  
[Summary](#)

### Narration

**CARLOS:** Use different methods to learn the same information. Studying the same information in different ways and numerous times is the best way to create a strong memory that will last for years.

**JILL:** Try some or all of these techniques ... flashcards ... post-it notes ... mind maps ... study partner ... practice quizzes ... teach the content to someone else ... color code your notes ... highlight important sections and keywords ... key word association ... create a mnemonic ... record a lecture and listen to it ... record your notes and listen to them.

## 1.14 Writing notes

### Writing Notes

*Rewrite notes after lecture*

*Clarify and make readable*

*Times Roman font easiest to read*

*Better recall when taking notes by hand  
compared to by laptop*

### MENU

[Module Topics](#)

[Tips for Learning](#)

[Learning Tips](#)

[More Learning Tips](#)

[Still More Tips](#)

[Effective Study Habits](#)

[Learning Style](#)

[Micro Goals](#)

[Spaced Repetition](#)

[Pomodoro Method](#)

[Work Reviews](#)

[Varied Learning](#)

[Writing Notes](#)

[Self-Testing](#)

[Background Sounds](#)

[Distractions](#)

[Multi-Tasking](#)

[Wellness](#)

[Just Do It](#)

[Summary](#)

### Narration

**JILL:** Rewrite your notes immediately after a lecture – in the next day or so – to help cement the information, to clarify and expand upon quickly-taken notes. Make sure your notes are readable. You will appreciate it when you are reviewing them for an exam several months later.

**CARLOS:** If you want to type up your notes, Times New Roman is the easiest and fastest font to read. Comic Sans is the best font for anyone with dyslexia. However, rewriting your notes by hand is a memory exercise in itself. Studies show that the students' recall is better after taking notes by hand rather than by using a laptop computer.

## 1.15 Self-testing

### Self-Testing

*Learning is not just storing information*

*Learning is also about retrieving information  
when needed*

*Answer questions without notes*

*See what you got wrong and what you forgot*

*Write down everything you know about a topic*

### MENU

- Module Topics
- Tips for Learning
- Learning Tips
- More Learning Tips
- Still More Tips
- Effective Study Habits
- Learning Style
- Micro Goals
- Spaced Repetition
- Pomodoro Method
- Work Reviews
- Varied Learning
- Writing Notes
- Self-Testing
- Background Sounds
- Distractions
- Multi-Tasking
- Wellness
- Just Do It
- Summary

### Narration

**CARLOS:** Learning is not just about storing information in your memory; it is also about the ability to retrieve the appropriate information when needed.

**JILL:** Putting away your existing notes and testing yourself is the best way to discover what you really remember. By retrieving the information, and forming new connections between the different snippets that you know, you make the information easier to recall.

**CARLOS:** Get a list of sample questions, or old test papers and put yourself in a test scenario. Answer the question without notes, and then compare it to your existing notes. See what you got wrong, and what you forgot, to identify your weaknesses.

**JILL:** Another good way to do self-testing is to set a timer and write down everything you know about a specific topic as fast as you can.

## 1.16 Background sounds

### Background Sounds

*Learning in silence is best!*

*Avoid music with lyrics*

*Put on album or playlist*

*Ambient noise machine or app*



MENU
<a href="#">Module Topics</a>
<a href="#">Tips for Learning</a>
<a href="#">Learning Tips</a>
<a href="#">More Learning Tips</a>
<a href="#">Still More Tips</a>
<a href="#">Effective Study Habits</a>
<a href="#">Learning Style</a>
<a href="#">Micro Goals</a>
<a href="#">Spaced Repetition</a>
<a href="#">Pomodoro Method</a>
<a href="#">Work Reviews</a>
<a href="#">Varied Learning</a>
<a href="#">Writing Notes</a>
<a href="#">Self-Testing</a>
<a href="#">Background Sounds</a>
<a href="#">Distractions</a>
<a href="#">Multi-Tasking</a>
<a href="#">Wellness</a>
<a href="#">Just Do It</a>
<a href="#">Summary</a>

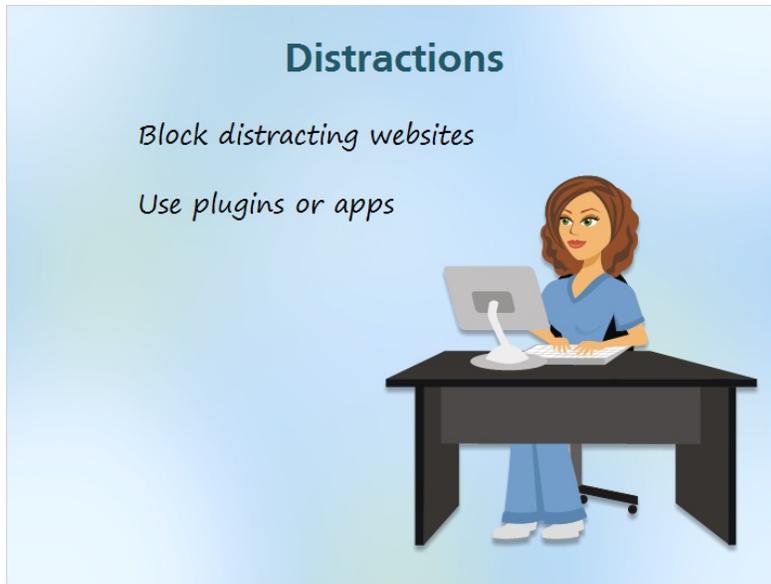
### Narration

**JILL:** Studies suggest that learning in silence is ultimately the best. Unfortunately, it can often be difficult to find a completely silent environment to work in.

**CARLOS:** If you do like to study with music in the background, try and avoid music with lyrics as these can be distracting. Also, if you are listening to music, put on an album or playlist, NOT individual songs. If you choose each and every song individually, then you are constantly being distracted and wasting time.

**JILL:** If music is not your thing, and you can't find a quiet enough workspace, then trying an ambient noise machine or an app. YouTube and the web offer many different ambient noises and sounds.

## 1.17 Distractions



MENU
<a href="#">Module Topics</a>
<a href="#">Tips for Learning</a>
<a href="#">Learning Tips</a>
<a href="#">More Learning Tips</a>
<a href="#">Still More Tips</a>
<a href="#">Effective Study Habits</a>
<a href="#">Learning Style</a>
<a href="#">Micro Goals</a>
<a href="#">Spaced Repetition</a>
<a href="#">Pomodoro Method</a>
<a href="#">Work Reviews</a>
<a href="#">Varied Learning</a>
<a href="#">Writing Notes</a>
<a href="#">Self-Testing</a>
<a href="#">Background Sounds</a>
<a href="#">Distractions</a>
<a href="#">Multi-Tasking</a>
<a href="#">Wellness</a>
<a href="#">Just Do It</a>
<a href="#">Summary</a>

### Narration

**CARLOS:** The Internet provides a wealth of useful information and tools, but it also features many distractions that can hinder the most determined student's writing or studying attempts! What's a person to do?

**JILL:** You need to block the web distractions such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and so on. There are numerous free web browser plugins that can temporarily block distracting websites. Install one and use it!

**CARLOS:** I'll have to try that.

## 1.18 Multi-tasking

**Multi-Tasking**

*No one is really good at multi-tasking  
Takes longer to complete multiple tasks  
Lower quality and more errors*



**MENU**

- [Module Topics](#)
- [Tips for Learning](#)
- [Learning Tips](#)
- [More Learning Tips](#)
- [Still More Tips](#)
- [Effective Study Habits](#)
- [Learning Style](#)
- [Micro Goals](#)
- [Spaced Repetition](#)
- [Pomodoro Method](#)
- [Work Reviews](#)
- [Varied Learning](#)
- [Writing Notes](#)
- [Self-Testing](#)
- [Background Sounds](#)
- [Distractions](#)
- [Multi-Tasking](#)
- [Wellness](#)
- [Just Do It](#)
- [Summary](#)

### Narration

**JILL:** Unlike computer chips, the human brain has not yet evolved to point where it is capable of effective multitasking. Being able to multitask is one of the biggest myths around, especially with the younger generations. Studies have repeatedly shown that no one is really good at multitasking! In fact, the people who claim that they are good at multitasking perform the worst in studies measuring that capability.

**CARLOS:** When a person regularly switches focus between two or more activities, it takes longer overall to complete the combined tasks as compared to doing one after another. This lost time and productivity simply cannot be reclaimed. Studies also suggest that work done whilst multitasking is generally to a lower standard, and is more likely to contain errors.

**JILL:** The message is clear – focus your attention and energy on ONE task at a time!

## 1.19 Wellness

### Wellness

*Sleep deprivation makes learning impossible*

*Long-term memory cemented during sleep*

*Brain does more work during sleep*

*Junk food leads to sugar highs and crashes*

*Brain needs water to function well*

### MENU

- [Module Topics](#)
- [Tips for Learning](#)
- [Learning Tips](#)
- [More Learning Tips](#)
- [Still More Tips](#)
- [Effective Study Habits](#)
- [Learning Style](#)
- [Micro Goals](#)
- [Spaced Repetition](#)
- [Pomodoro Method](#)
- [Work Reviews](#)
- [Varied Learning](#)
- [Writing Notes](#)
- [Self-Testing](#)
- [Background Sounds](#)
- [Distractions](#)
- [Multi-Tasking](#)
- [Wellness](#)
- [Just Do It](#)
- [Summary](#)

### Narration

**CARLOS:** I had student friends pull all-nighters before important exams. Was that was a good idea?

**JILL:** The short answer is NO! Sleep deprivation makes it much harder to focus your attention on the topic at hand, making effective learning or revision near impossible. Your body and brain need sleep to function at full capacity. New memories are also cemented into long-term memory while we sleep in a process called consolidation. No matter how hard you work, your brain does a lot more work whilst you sleep.

**CARLOS:** These same students used to eat a lot of junk food and drank high energy drinks to stay awake.

**JILL:** Another bad idea! Poor food choices, especially snacks high in simple sugars, lead to sugar highs and crashes. Neither of which are good for studying effectively.

And while we are on this topic, remember when studying to stay hydrated! The brain needs water to function well. Dehydration can cause brain fog, focus problems, fatigue and headaches. Studies show that only 1 percent dehydration will likely cause a 5 percent DECREASE in cognitive function.

**CARLOS:** And therefore in conclusion, in order to study effectively and efficiently, be sure to get adequate sleep, eat healthy, non-sugary food, and drink lots of water!

**JILL:** This is a very important point! If your mind and body are in poor shape, all of the other study habits we have mentioned become irrelevant!

## 1.20 Just do it



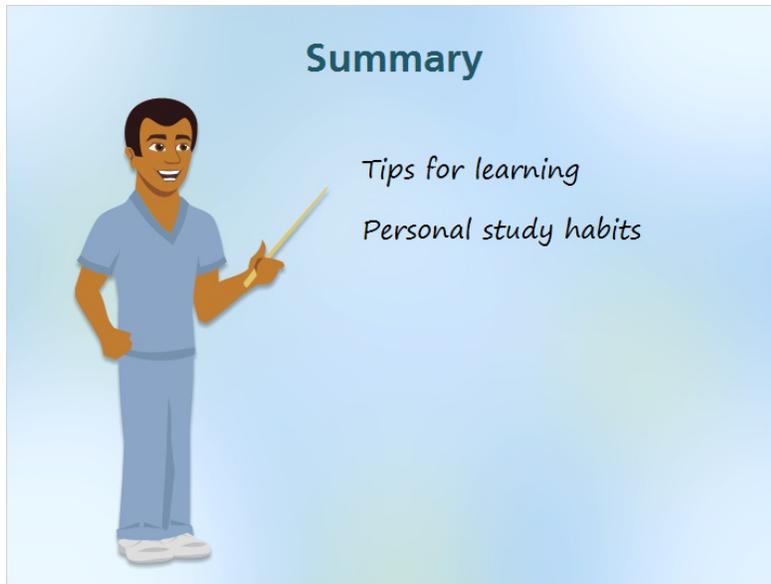
MENU
<a href="#">Module Topics</a>
<a href="#">Tips for Learning</a>
<a href="#">Learning Tips</a>
<a href="#">More Learning Tips</a>
<a href="#">Still More Tips</a>
<a href="#">Effective Study Habits</a>
<a href="#">Learning Style</a>
<a href="#">Micro Goals</a>
<a href="#">Spaced Repetition</a>
<a href="#">Pomodoro Method</a>
<a href="#">Work Reviews</a>
<a href="#">Varied Learning</a>
<a href="#">Writing Notes</a>
<a href="#">Self-Testing</a>
<a href="#">Background Sounds</a>
<a href="#">Distractions</a>
<a href="#">Multi-Tasking</a>
<a href="#">Wellness</a>
<a href="#">Just Do It</a>
<a href="#">Summary</a>

### Narration

**JILL:** And our last study habit recommendation is ... sometimes it is best to stop preparing and just start studying! There are so many different way to get ready to study that it is very easy to spend several hours trying to create the perfect study environment. These hours can probably be better spent actually opening a book, taking some notes, writing an essay or creating a mind map.

**CARLOS:** Great point Jill! Just do it!

## 1.21 Summary



MENU
<a href="#">Module Topics</a>
<a href="#">Tips for Learning</a>
<a href="#">Learning Tips</a>
<a href="#">More Learning Tips</a>
<a href="#">Still More Tips</a>
<a href="#">Effective Study Habits</a>
<a href="#">Learning Style</a>
<a href="#">Micro Goals</a>
<a href="#">Spaced Repetition</a>
<a href="#">Pomodoro Method</a>
<a href="#">Work Reviews</a>
<a href="#">Varied Learning</a>
<a href="#">Writing Notes</a>
<a href="#">Self-Testing</a>
<a href="#">Background Sounds</a>
<a href="#">Distractions</a>
<a href="#">Multi-Tasking</a>
<a href="#">Wellness</a>
<a href="#">Just Do It</a>
<a href="#">Summary</a>

### Narration

**JILL:** Well, that brings us to the end of this Module 4 on Learning Strategies. Would you please summarize what we covered?

**CARLOS:** Sure thing. This module has two parts. In the first part we provided 16 different tips on how to improve your learning. These included such things as: getting organized, being realistic, using a schedule, being aware of materials, getting support, rewarding yourself and several more tips.

In the second part, our focus was more on improving your personal study habits. Some of the suggestions we made included knowing and using your preferred learning styles, spaced repetition, varied learning methods, self-testing, managing distractions, multitasking, personal wellness and several others. Did I miss anything?

**JILL:** I think you covered the main points, Carlos. Goodbye and we'll see you in the next module.

**CARLOS:** Goodbye.

## 1.22 The End



### Narration

No narration, only music.

