



YOUNG PROFESSIONAL
PRE-EXAM TIPS TO
MANAGE STRESS



INTRODUCTION

We understand that preparing for exams can be a stressful time for young people. This handy guide is going to give you tips and techniques to help support you during this busy period, and equip you with the tools you need to help manage your emotions effectively.

It's so important to look after yourself, especially when times are stressful - you can't pour from an empty cup! So, we hope you find these tips and techniques useful, and find that they support you on your journey.



ORGANISING REVISION TIME



Create a revision timetable, so you can allocate time to revising for each subject - choose times that suit you best (e.g. do you focus best in the morning, afternoon or evening?)

Prioritise your exam revision - look at your exam timetable and think about what exams you have and in what order, to help you organise how best to revise. Are there any subjects you find particularly tricky? Think about organising extra time to look over these subjects.

Make sure you take regular breaks - it can be difficult to focus fully for long periods of time! The most effective way to revise is to break your revision time into chunks, taking regular breaks away from the books/the screen/the exam papers, so then you feel more refreshed and focused when you return.

Try and choose a quiet place to lessen distractions - for e.g., the library.

Minimise distractions - Put your phone on "do not disturb"/take breaks from social media.

Remember to reward yourself at the end - do something you enjoy, e.g. a hobby you enjoy, a social event, something to treat yourself with.

Practice makes a big difference - practise answering exam questions with mock exam papers

- [Past Papers for GCSE Exams: Where to Find Them](#)
- [Past Papers for A Level Exams: Where to Find Them](#)
- [Scottish Qualifications Association Past Papers](#)

You may find you can focus better with relaxing music in the background - e.g. sounds of nature.



SELF-CARE



For a healthy mind, we need a healthy body - what we eat makes a big difference to how well we can focus. There are some foods that are known to keep your brain working well and help with memory and focus.

List of foods good for exam preparation:

- **Eggs** (cooked however you like)
- **Peanut butter** (straight out of the jar with a spoon? We won't judge you)
- **Fruit** (try freezing a peeled and chopped banana in the freezer – it's like little slices of banana ice cream. Also, cherries contain melatonin which helps regulate sleep. So if exam nerves are affecting your sleep, try eating a few fresh or dried cherries an hour before bed).
- **Nuts** (not if you have a nut allergy though...)
- **Dark leafy greens** (you know the drill. If it's dark and green, it's probably good for you. In fact, dark greens like spinach and broccoli contain vitamin K which helps build pathways in the brain and a fair bit of vitamins B6 and B12 which improve alertness).

Drink - Drink plenty of water, stay hydrated. Avoid too much caffeinated and sugary drinks, as these can cause you to “crash” after a short period of time!

Exercise - A great way to alleviate stress - what kind of exercise or physical activity do you enjoy? This could include going for a walk/run, playing tennis/basketball at courts, playing football, going swimming etc.

Get plenty of sleep to make sure you feel rested - Create a good sleeping routine, going to bed/waking up at the same time. Avoid blue light before bed.

Try breathing exercises to calm your nerves - why not explore different breathing exercises here:
[Breathing exercises for stress - NHS \(www.nhs.uk\)](https://www.nhs.uk)

ASK FOR HELP

Don't be scared to ask for help/support from a teacher/member of school staff - they are there to support you with your exams.

Talk to friends or people close to you. You may even find it helpful to revise in a group if this suits you and them.

Remember that it's okay to feel stressed - talk to someone you trust about how you are feeling.



ON EXAM DAY

Be prepared -Set your alarm, ensure you give yourself plenty of time to get ready in the morning, have breakfast, get to school in plenty of time, organise what you need in advance (e.g. equipment, pens etc.), have clothes ready the night before.

Take your time reading the questions - don't rush.

Keep an eye on the clock - set yourself time to answer questions to make the best use of exam time.



RESULTS DAY

If you're disappointed with your results, the best person to talk to is your teachers who can support you with next steps.

If you'd like further advice, you can speak to trained Careers Advisors:

- In England, you can contact [The National Careers Service](#) on 0800 100 900.
- In Wales, you can contact [Careers Wales](#) on 0800 028 4844.
- In Scotland, you can contact [Skills Development Scotland](#) on 0808 100 8000.
- In Northern Ireland, you can visit [NI Direct](#) and speak with an advisor online via their chat function.

RESOURCES TO HELP

Preparing for exams requires a lot of skills - organisational skills, time management, problem-solving skills, as well as confidence and motivation. Our free online skills and careers resources can help you develop these skills - why not complete our [Young Professional Training](#), which will also outline potential next steps and options for you after your exams.

For support with next steps, check out our [CV Advice](#) and [Interview Tips](#) so you feel ready and confident to show off your skills to employers!

Create a Summer of Opportunities for yourself - check out our [Opportunity Finder](#) to explore local opportunities available to you, including apprenticeships, vacancies, voluntary opportunities and more!

Check out our [Virtual Work Experience](#) resources to build your confidence and understanding of options you may be interested in in the future.

REMEMBER...

Have perspective - exams are not the be all and end all, and no matter what the outcome, it will all be okay.

Exams don't happen very often and they don't last long.

Revising for exams is a great way to save money.

Once exams are over, celebrate!





STAY IN TOUCH

Sign up to the website

www.youthemployment.org.uk/young-professional-training

