

9/1/2025 – How to study 101

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Studying is a misleading word...

When you study, you do 3 different actions:



Learning



Working



Practicing

Most of you understand this, but don't think about it while you are studying and preparing for exams

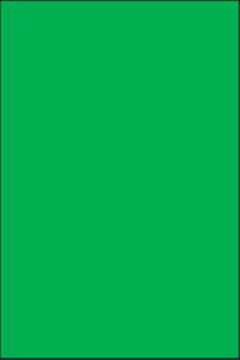
Learning

Working

Practicing

**This is how
you are most
likely spending
your time now
preparing for
exams:**

Time spent ↑



Learning

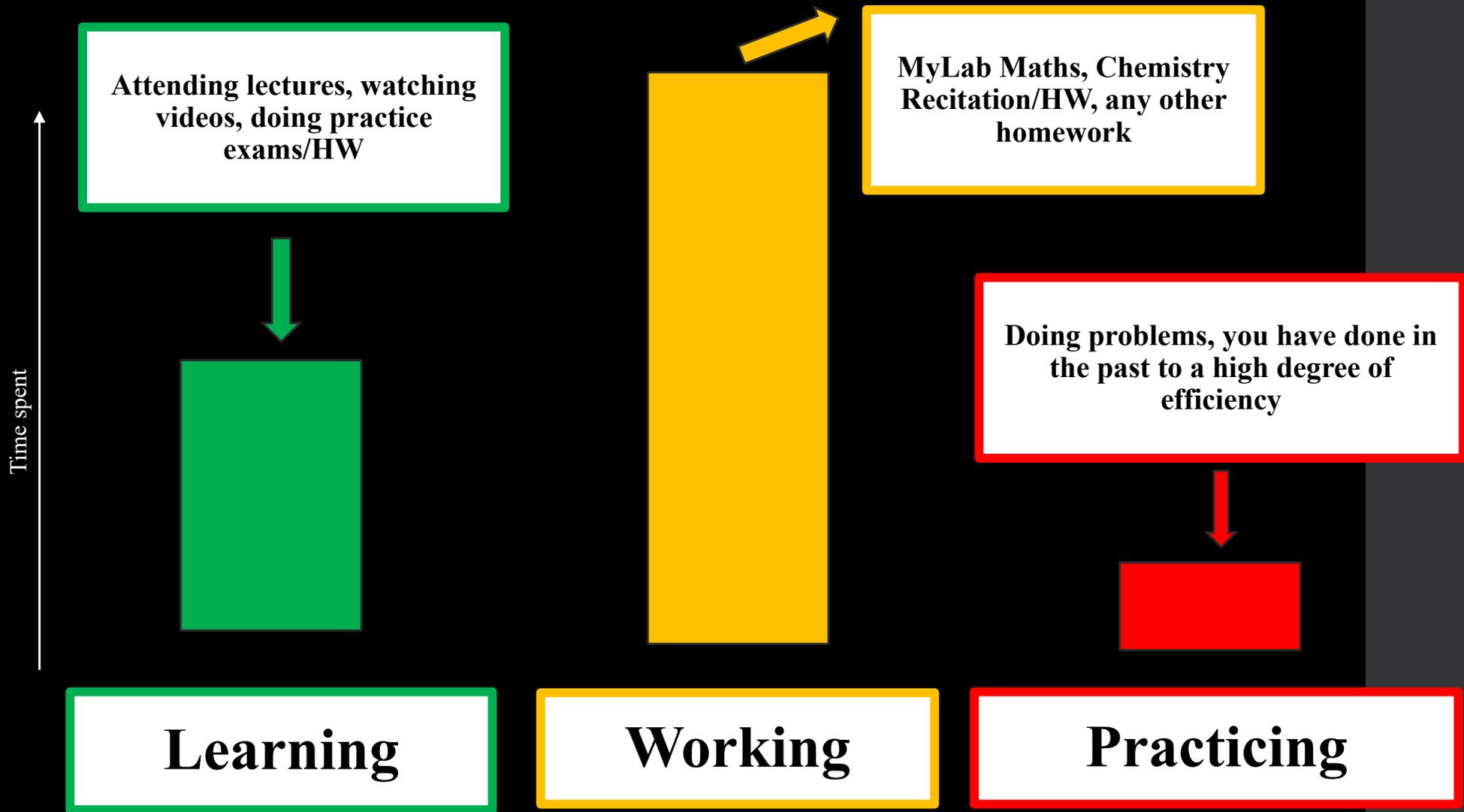


Working



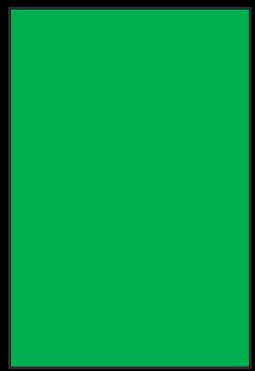
Practicing

This is how you are most likely spending your time now preparing for exams:

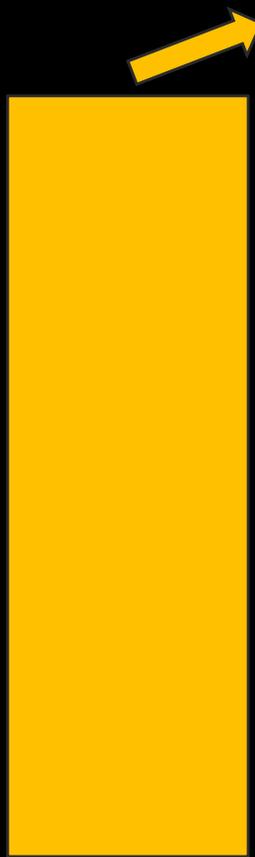


Time spent ↑

Attending lectures, watching videos, doing practice exams/HW



Learning



MyLab Maths, Chemistry Recitation/HW, any other homework

Working

Doing problems, you have done in the past to a high degree of efficiency



Practicing

You can do multiple columns at once, but it lessens the efficiency of each action of studying

Practicing

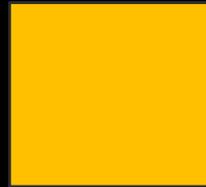
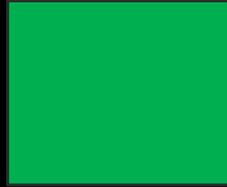
- Practicing is the most important factor in exam score
- The more practicing you do, the higher the exam score, it is as simple as that

- My freshman year, I performed a mini-experiment on students who got 100% on physics 1 exams and high performers on calc 2 exams... Here's what they told me
- ...They had spent a ton of time practicing, to the point where they had already practiced enough problems enough times to where they recognized those exact problems on exams.

Practicing

- **That answer was strikingly UNIVERSAL among all the successful students I had questioned.**
- **They had gotten to the point where they had already learned the material in the past and gotten their work done, AND THEN, they spent time practicing**
- **... To the point for when the exam came, it wasn't anything new, they had seen it before, and they were well practiced at it.**

Time spent



Learning

Working

Practicing

Knowing this... Here is what you time spent should look like.

THIS IS HARD!!! You must learn everything and get all you work done first!



Learning

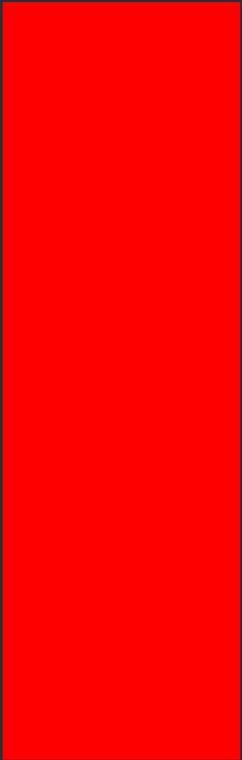
Working

Practicing

Some people have naturally picked this up over time (i.e. they are faster at getting work done, or do extra learning while in lectures), which allows more time for them to practice. Which makes it seem like “Why are people just better at this class than I am?”. THEY AREN'T!

What is practicing?

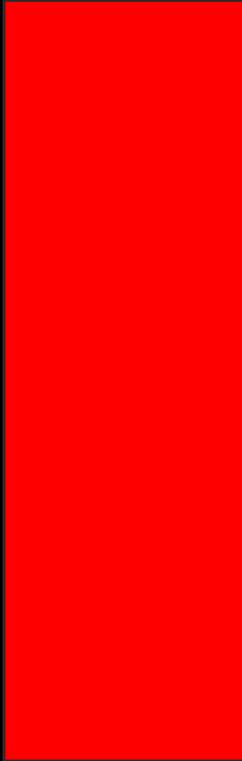
- Practicing is NOT → doing your homework, doing a practice exam for the first time, or reviewing your notes
- Practicing IS → repetition of material you have already reviewed. Do a practice exams 3-4 times – that is practicing. Complete a homework from last week without cheating – that is practicing! Can you recite your notes from 2 weeks ago – that is practicing!



Practicing

Remember, Exams work in ~ 4-week cycles

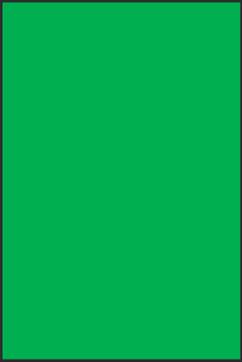
- Spend the first two or three weeks learning and getting all your work done, so that the week before the exam can be strictly practicing.
- YOU DO NOT want to be learning a topic the night before an exam
 - that happens to everyone.
 - This is the honest truth, not the truth you want to hear.



Practicing

Become an expert at Learning!

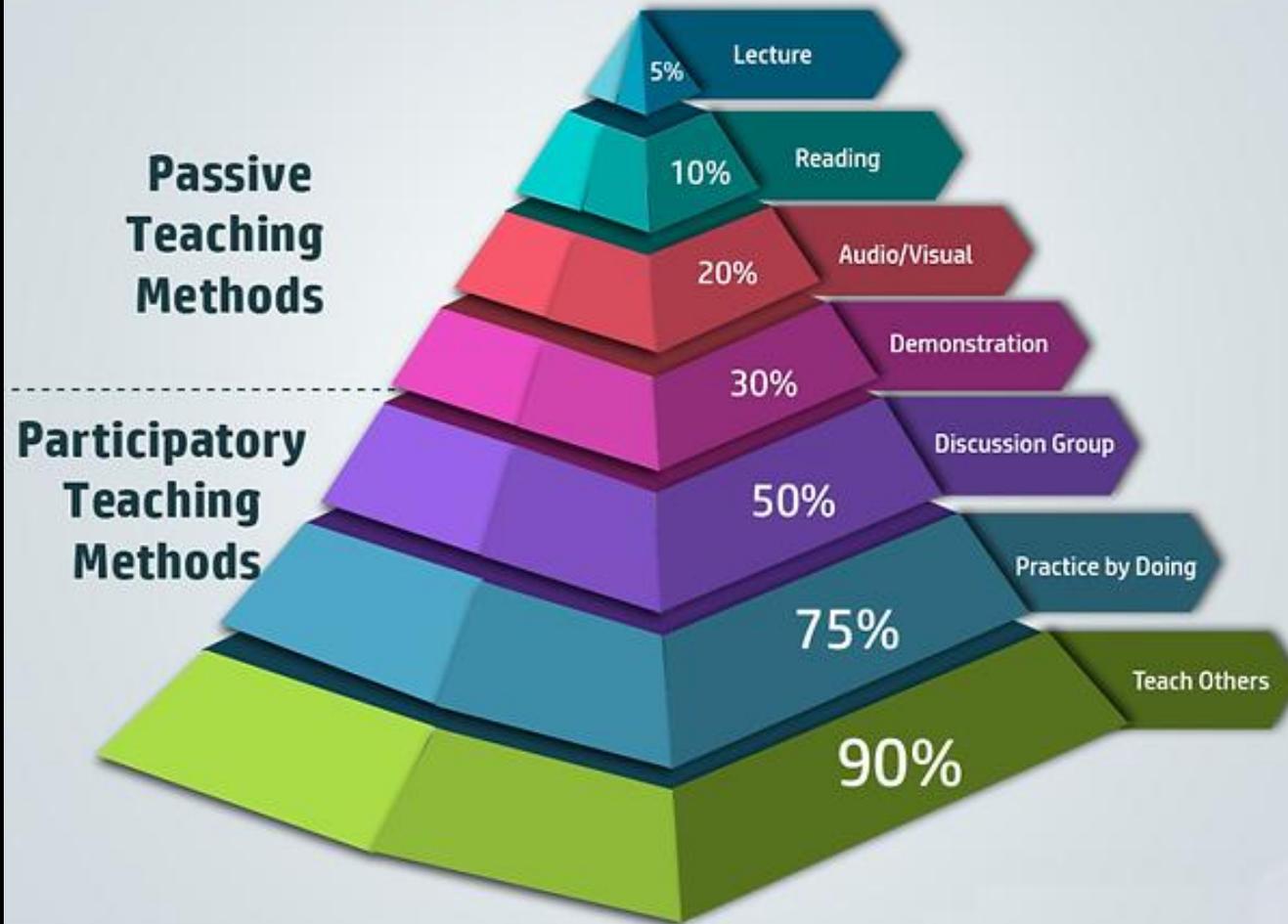
- Learning speeds up the process of work, leaving more time to practice (increasing exam scores).
- This makes the most efficient and effective learners the best students.
 - The highest form of learning is being able to teach others.



Learning

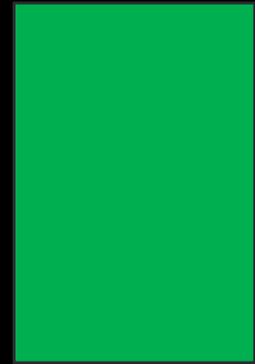
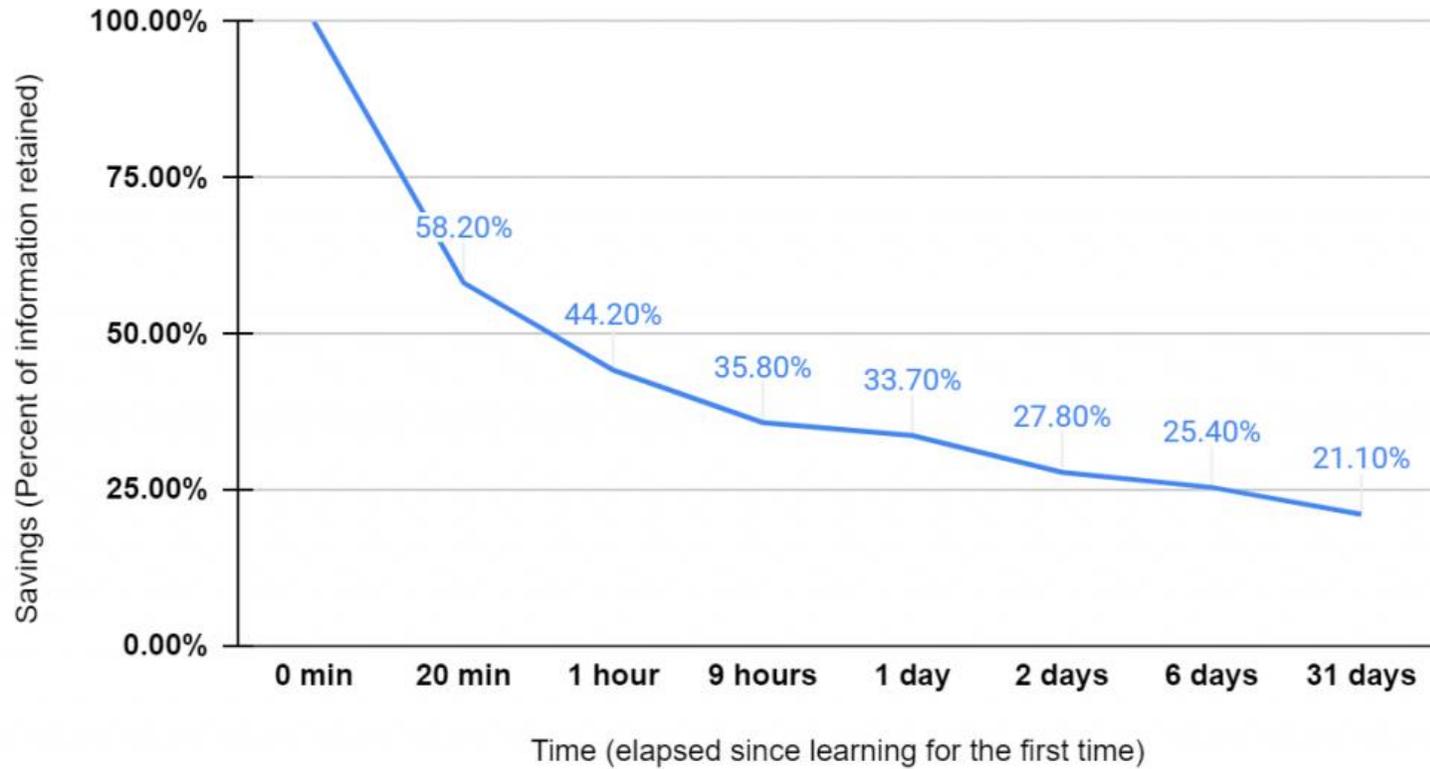
THE LEARNING PYRAMID

KNOWLEDGE RETENTION RATES



Learning

Ebbinghaus's learning curve



Remember that we are on 4-week exam cycles. If something goes unpracticed from the 1st week of lectures, you are very unlikely to remember it for the exams (and you are unpracticed!!!)

Learning

Now that you understand this, replace your understanding of the word “Studying”.



Learning



Working



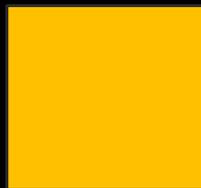
Practicing

Consider replacing the word “studying” in your vocabulary all-together, and use the words learning, working, and practicing. “I am going to the library to learn from butler videos”. “I am in the SIC working on my physics homework”.

To wrap up...

Do This

Time spent



Learning

Working

Practicing

Not this

Time spent



Learning

Working

Practicing

**Thanks for attending study
101**