How to Study Effectively — Cheat Sheet

Bonus one-pager for uniquestoremarket.com's “How to Study Effectively” guide

The six chapters, in order

1. **Spot the illusion of competence (Ch. 1)** — close the source and try to produce the material; smooth re-reading measures familiarity, not retrievability.
2. **Use retrieval practice (Ch. 2)** — turn notes into questions in your own words and answer them cold, on a blank page, before checking.
3. **Space your revision (Ch. 3)** — spread the same hours across days; revisit after about a day, three days, a week, then two.
4. **Interleave and elaborate (Ch. 4)** — mix related problem types in one session and explain ideas aloud without textbook phrasing.
5. **Build a schedule that survives a bad week (Ch. 5)** — plan by topic and method, count days and topics first, leave slack, and define a fifteen-minute minimum.
6. **Practise under test conditions (Ch. 6)** — do a full past paper timed and closed-book, mark it against the scheme, and feed the findings into your plan.

Before you start this week

- Close the book on the last page you read and write down everything you can recall, then compare honestly (Ch. 1).
- Turn one full topic of notes into ten questions, answer all ten on a blank page, and sort them into knew it, half knew it and blank (Ch. 2).
- Put three short sessions for one subject in your calendar on three different days, each opening with ten minutes of questions from the last (Ch. 3).
- Shuffle three problem types into one mixed set, and explain one core concept aloud in sixty seconds without notes (Ch. 4).
- Count days, topics and passes, write the plan by topic and method, and write a fifteen-minute minimum for your next five sessions (Ch. 5).
- Sit one full past paper timed and closed-book, then mark it against the scheme and adjust the plan (Ch. 6).

Pitfalls the guide names

- Trusting fluency: a page that reads smoothly the second time feels known, but only producing it from memory proves it (Ch. 1).
- Flipping the flashcard early, which turns the exercise back into re-reading (Ch. 2).
- Cramming in one block: it feels efficient, but the material evaporates within a week (Ch. 3).
- Giving revision time to topics you enjoy instead of the shaky ones, or overrunning on an early question you like in the exam (Ch. 5, Ch. 6).