

# What's Your Preferred Learning Style?

Developed by Jeffrey Barsch, formerly of Ventura Community College, Ventura, California  
Public Domain by permission of author.

For each statement below, give yourself points according to the following scale:

5 = Often true

3 = Sometimes true (about half the time)

1 = Seldom or almost never true

## **Section I**

- \_\_\_\_\_ Follow written directions better than oral directions.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Like to write things down or take notes for visual review.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Am skillful and enjoy developing and making graphs and charts.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Can understand and follow directions on maps.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Can better understand a news story by reading it than by listening to it on the radio.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Feel the best way to remember is to picture it in your head.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Grip objects in your hands during learning periods.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Obtain information on an interesting subject by reading related materials.

## **Section II**

- \_\_\_\_\_ Can remember more about a subject through listening than reading.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Require explanations of graphs, diagrams, or visual directions.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Can tell if sounds match when presented with pairs of sounds.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Do better at academic subjects by listening to tapes and lectures.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Learn to spell better by repeating the letters out loud than by writing the word on paper.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Would rather listen to a good lecture or speech than read about the same material in a book.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Prefer listening to the news on the radio than reading about it in the newspaper.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Follow oral directions better than written ones.

### **Section III**

- \_\_\_\_\_ Bear down extremely hard when writing.
  - \_\_\_\_\_ Enjoy working with tools or working on models.
  - \_\_\_\_\_ Remember best by writing things down several times.
  - \_\_\_\_\_ Play with coins or keys in pockets.
  - \_\_\_\_\_ Chew gum, snack or smoke during study time.
  - \_\_\_\_\_ Do a lot of gesturing, am well coordinated.
  - \_\_\_\_\_ Am good at working and solving jigsaw puzzles and mazes.
  - \_\_\_\_\_ Feel very comfortable touching others, hugging, handshaking, etc.
- 

Scoring: Add up your score for each section above. The highest total indicates your preferred method of learning while the lowest score indicates your least preferred.

#### Section I Visual Learning Style

\_\_\_\_\_ Total number of points

#### Section II Auditory Learning Style

\_\_\_\_\_ Total number of points

#### Section III Kinesthetic Learning Style

\_\_\_\_\_ Total number of points

For more information or to make an appointment, contact:

**Study Skills Services  
323 Oswald Building  
246-6537**

## **Hints for Visual Learners**

- Choose classes and professors that emphasize visual materials. Readings, films, PowerPoint presentations, handouts, notes on the board, pictures, graphs and drawings are all good ways for you to learn.
- Flash cards, graphic organizers, patterns, outlines, and summary sheets are good ways for you to learn material. Incorporate color, pictures and graphics into the material that you are learning.
- When you annotate your textbooks, use highlighters (sparingly). Draw pictures and illustrations as well as words in the margins of your books when you are making text notes.
- Write your test reviews and summary sheets. Ask yourself questions by turning the captions in your textbook into questions. Write the answers and check the text for correctness.
- Write questions from the main ideas and key terms in your lecture notes. Practice writing a summary of the answer.
- If you are having an essay test, anticipate test questions and practice writing the essay answers. Outlining the answers can also help.
- Make your study aides visually different from each other. Using different colors and drawings or graphic patterns will make them easier for you to learn.
- As you study, turn visuals into words and words into visuals. Redraw pages from memory. Write ideas into other words and reconstruct images in different ways.
- Before you read, take advantage of any visual cues that are available. Look at pictures, illustrations, changes in typeface, use of color, and captions and sub-captions.
- Sit at the front of the room and watch the speaker's face and body language. It will help cut down on visual distractions and help you focus on what the speaker is saying.
- Visual learners usually study better in a quiet place and they often study better by themselves. Take lots of notes during lectures. Since listening is not your strongest modality, it will be particularly important that you have a complete set of notes.
- When you are working on math problems, draw a picture of the problem, if possible, before you start. List what is known and what is not known. Write down the steps of the problem to learn the process.

## **Hints for Auditory Learners**

- Choose courses and professors that emphasize lecture, discussion, question-answer periods and other forms of spoken instruction. You learn best through your ears.
- Use study groups. Being able to discuss the course materials and review for tests with other people will help you hear and remember the information.
- Do remember to take notes during lectures. Review them as soon after class as you can, adding any additional information that you remember. Recite your notes out loud to learn them.
- Summarize and tape record your lecture notes in your own voice. Also, record summary sheets for tests. Listen to your tapes while you are doing other activities that do not require your full concentration: laundry, cooking, cleaning, driving, commuting, or working out. Put your study tapes into your Walkman or car tape player instead of music. After you have heard the tapes several times, you may find that you know a great deal of the information when you sit down to study.
- Rehearse the steps to math problems aloud. You should be able to explain the steps of the problem to yourself.
- Recite your lecture notes aloud. If you are in a place where talking is not possible, try to hear the words in your head. Internal conversations are another good way to use spoken language to learn.

- Review flash cards by reciting the words and their definitions and examples out loud.
- Read particularly difficult passages aloud. Carry on imaginary conversations with the author when you try to wrestle meaning from the reading.
- Tutor other students. You will increase your own knowledge as you listen to yourself explain to someone else.
- See a tutor or your professor to discuss the material. These conversations will improve your memory.
- Describe pictures, visuals, and concepts to yourself as you study.
- Create questions from the main ideas in your lecture notes or the captions in your textbook and recite the answers to yourself.

## **Hints for Kinesthetic Learners**

- Pace as you learn materials. Lecture to yourself. Walk back and forth, gesture, and say the material that you need to learn. The kinesthetic learner needs to move.
- Study in the question/answer format. Shift your body position from question to answer.
- Record your summarized lecture notes and your summary sheets for tests and quizzes. Listen to them as you jog, ride a bicycle, walk, cook, drive, commute, laundry, clean house, dance, and work out. Repeat the information that you are hearing; it will help you concentrate.
- Take a lot of lecture notes. Add pictures and illustrations to your notes as you listen. Write questions using the key terms and the main ideas from the lecture in the margin of the paper. Sit in the front of the room and stay as active and focused as you can.
- Take classes and instructors that emphasize labs, field trips, and experiential learning.
- Study with someone else. Talk, listen, discuss, ask questions and argue.
- Interactive study may be very helpful to you. Try a tutor, a friend or a study group.
- Choose a study area that gives you room to move. Change your study position from the desk to the floor to the bed, etc.
- Keep your study periods short. Study in 25-minute sessions. After a 25-minute session, do some push-ups or take a 5-minute break before you continue studying. Break reading into clumps and try to read for four or five 25-minute sessions each day instead of one long session of reading. Change subjects when you get tired or frustrated and return to it later in the day. Change the kind of study activities you engage in: read awhile, do problems for a time, write a paper, study lecture notes, make a test review, then return to reading.
- Stay active while you read. Annotate the textbook. Make questions from the captions and answer them; mark the answer. Discuss what you are reading with yourself. Combine your text notes with your lecture notes. Add examples from your own experience.
- Make questions from the main ideas and key terms in your lecture notes. Write them in the margin of the notebook. Answer them out loud or write them down. Add examples from your own knowledge.