1. “I never do well on tests” – you have a fixed mindset and to work towards developing a growth mindset. Remember that intelligence and talent aren’t fixed and everyone can learn and growth through hard work and deliberate practice.

2. Get on your feet - you remember 10% more when you stand up (this is due to the fact that more blood goes to your brain when you stand).

3. Lots of H₂O - your brain is 70% water and most people do not drink enough water for the brain to function optimally. Pop and caffeinated energy drinks dehydrates your brain. Form: 1 8oz cup of water for every 25 lbs of body weight.

4. Prepare a study schedule. The absence or the presence of a study strategy is the greatest single predictor of successful studying and a positive outcome on the test.

5. Set goals: you need to write them down. If you don’t they’re just wishes (on a sheet of paper write down your academic goals and your action plan for achieving them. Post this in your room, on your locker etc. so you can refer to it often the more you see it the better).

6. Picture it - close your eyes and think of a horse. Did you see the word horse or a picture of a horse? The brain is picture driven not word driven. By turning concepts into pictures, your retention goes up!

7. Brain Breaks (2 minutes of walking or other forms of exercise - NO TV or phone calls). Formula: Brain Breaks = age + 2 to a maximum of 20 minutes. For example, if you are 15 you take a break every 17 minutes.

8. Write it down! Note takers will score 50% higher on a test than the non-note takers (even if he/she never looks through the notes).

9. Use the SQ4R or Cornell Note-taking system:

10. Start thinking like a teacher: try to think of the questions you think your teacher will ask on a test.

11. Questions make your brain search for an answer. Questions jump start your brain, make you pay attention in case you are called on for an answer, and release chemicals in your brain which makes learning easier. Questions are to learning what an ignition is to a car.

12. Keep your room cool. The ideal temp for studying is 17°C.

13. Turn off the TV and put away your laptop if it is not needed when studying.

14. Turn on the Baroque music (e.g., Bach, Vivaldi). Yes it has to Baroque not just classical! Studies have found that there is a 25% - 400% increase in learning when Baroque music is listened to while studying.

15. Get interested. Learning can be defined as the process of remembering what you are interested in, so find a way to get interested in what you are studying.
16. Use colour when taking notes. Your brain is more stimulated with the use of different colours. The four colour Bic pens work well or highlighters.
17. Use red for important information such as what will be on a test. Your brain is drawn to the colour red.
18. Use a cover card when studying. If you use the Cornell method, the cover card could be used to cover up the note section so that you can test yourself. Read the question, give your answer, then move the cover card to see if your answer was correct.