

YOUR STUDY JOURNALS

What are Study Journals? Why are they important?

Your study journals are your records of what you have learned. You will complete one for each course or subject, and they, in turn, become study guides you can refer to in the final preparation for taking your exams.

In the homeschooling community, "notebooking" has been a popular teaching method for several years. Students study certain topics, then draw pictures and write essays about those topics, creating their own textbooks. A study journal follows much the same concept.

For each course you study, you will need the following:

- One 3-ring binder. The inexpensive, flexible binders will work, though the hard-back binders protect your papers better. Watch for the back-to-school sales that start in mid-summer to stock up.
- Notebook paper for note-taking and printer/copy paper for print-outs.
- Dividers. (If you cannot find inexpensive dividers and will be studying several courses, consider purchasing a package of brightly colored card stock to use instead.)
- A hole punch.

1) Your first section will be a reading list, a record of all books and websites you use over the course of your studies. This will include those sources provided for you on this website, as well as any books or materials you find on your own, such as reference materials from your local library. Keep a running list and star any sources you found particularly helpful, in case you want to refer back to them later.

2) After your next divider, you will put notebook paper to be used for notetaking. It is very important that you take good notes, based on what you have studied. Start each study session by marking the date and covered topic or topics. For instance, if you are studying Western Civilization I, you might begin your notes with something like: *08/18/10 Ancient Greek Cities.*

Be especially diligent in taking notes during any video lectures. You can pause the lecture any time to keep from falling behind as you write.

3) Following your notes, you will place another divider. This next section is devoted to "study aids" or other print-outs. During the course of your studying, you may find a chart, article, or list/page of information you find helpful. Print any of these items for this section. For example, if you are studying American Government, you might print a copy of the Bill of Rights, and a chart that breaks down the powers of each branch of the federal government.

4) The last section of your notebook is for any quizzes, review questions, papers, or activities you complete while studying. Many of the free online resources contain such additional work and you may use them to reinforce your learning. If you maintain grades to meet homeschool accountability laws in your state, you may want to keep a grade sheet here until you finish the course, then move it to your official Record of Study book. (See "Getting Started" for more information about your building your Record of Study.)

Keep your study journals for future reference, at least until you are certain you are finished with the materials. Remember, some topics may overlap from test to test, so it's a good idea to hang on to your journals until you have completed all your studies.