Unfortunately, there is not a magic wand to help you quickly and efficiently complete all your readings for classes. BUT there are several tips that can help. These ideas all work well together and as students they will hopefully help you too.

* Read the time management and study tips handouts to address how, where and when to study.
* Start by **pre-reading.**
  1. Look at the subject, summary if there is one, headings, pictures.
  2. Check how much space is given to each topic – this gives you an idea of relative importance.
  3. Don’t expect to sit down and read the text book in one pass. You will think everything is important the first time you see it and you will be slower and less efficient about identifying main points and organizing topics.
* Make **questions or outlines** to fill in as you read.
  1. Make the chapter headings into questions.
  2. Remember, the harder it is for you to read (the more cognitive effort) the better your retention. This is not beach reading. Constantly challenge yourself to engage with the reading.
  3. Do the first pre-reading phase at minimum before class. Ideally, continue to the questioning phase before class as well, so you know what to listen for and you can make the best use of lecture time.
* **Read actively.**
  1. Jot down notes. Rephrase. Relate to what you already know.
  2. Stop to ask yourself what you just read.
  3. Answer the heading questions or the questions at the end of the chapter as you read.
  4. Make sure that you can stop at any point and summarize what you are reading. If you can’t, read in smaller chunks (Sections, paragraphs, even sentences – depends on the density of the material and this can change based on your familiarity with the subject).
* **Make something** – this is called the generation effect – you remember what you create much better than what you read.
  1. Again, think about your learning style – do you like to draw charts, mind maps, make lists, draw pictures?
  2. Create the most useful study resources for yourself.
* Follow reading with **retrieval practice.**
  1. I prefer to do this per section or other units significantly smaller than a chapter.
  2. Ask yourself what you just read. Write a summary. Prepare flashcards and stick them around your house or where you study. Talk through the main points. This is where your learning style comes into play.
  3. Reading gives familiarity, but retrieval assures you are fluent and KNOW the material. Familiarity will not get you through exams or help you in clinic.
  4. Quiz yourself. Challenge yourself to write out what you know. You have to identify what you don’t know before you can learn it. Question. Relate. Link material to what you know.
* Follow reading with **retrieval practice** (cont).

1. Learning objectives are extremely helpful in focusing your retrieval practice. If your professor gives you learning objectives, use them. If not, look for chapter questions, chapter quizzes, or write your own questions based on your survey.
2. Consider having a component of retrieval practice include teaching someone else or talking through key points with a group. If you don’t have a group challenge yourself to present the material using a whiteboard in a study room. You’ll quickly discover what you don’t know!

* DO NOT RE-READ text as your preferred method of studying. This rapid repetition feels effective but it’s not. You will become familiar with, but not have mastery of, the topics.
* Similarly, re-listening to lectures gives you familiarity and a false sense of security.
* If you are an audio learner you can create little snippets of your recordings of pertinent information. Play them on your way to school. Consider playing them while you take naps or sleep – this adds passive learning to your active learning.

Popular Styles of reading and studying that emphasize much of what has been discussed above:

**SQ3R** –– you can google this if you are interested

Survey

Question

Read

Recite

Review

**PQRST –**

Preview

Question

Read

Self-recite

Test