

Reading skills practice: 7 tips for a tidy desk – exercises

Read the tips for keeping your desk tidy and then do the exercises to practise and improve your reading skills.

Preparation

Complete the sentences with a word from the box.

desk	smartphone	folders	tray
space	noticeboard	bin	scanner

1. Put your rubbish in the _____.
2. Put things you want to read in a _____.
3. Keep information on your computer in _____.
4. Make digital versions of text with a _____.
5. Take a photo of important things with a _____ or camera.
6. Put important notes on a _____.
7. Clean your _____ every day.
8. Start each day with a tidy _____.



1 Only keep things you really need on and near your desk.

Use a tray for any papers you have to read. Have a jar for pens and pencils and have a bin near your desk.



2 Don't keep any drinks on your desk.

Go to the kitchen when you want to have a drink or, if you prefer, keep a drink on a small table near your desk.

3 Reduce the amount of paper that you use.

Try to keep as much information as possible in folders on your computer. Before printing a document, ask yourself, 'do I really need to read this on paper?'

4 Scan your notes.

If you have a lot of paper (magazine articles, notes, worksheets, etc.), use a scanner and keep a digital version as a PDF on your computer.



5 Use your smartphone to take photos of things you need to remember.

For example, take photos of notes to yourself, the name and address of a place you need to visit or diagrams you need to study for school.



6 Get a noticeboard.

If you really do need to keep small bits of paper, use a noticeboard on the wall. Check it every day and throw old notes in the bin.

7 Clean your desk at the end of every day.

Choose a time to tidy your desk and do it! If you do it every day, it will only take five minutes and you can start each new day with a clean and tidy space.

Reading skills practice: 7 tips for a tidy desk – exercises
1. Check your understanding: true or false

Circle *True* or *False* for these sentences.

- | | | | |
|----|---|-------------|--------------|
| 1. | You should put everything you will possibly need on your desk. | <i>True</i> | <i>False</i> |
| 2. | You should only have one pen or pencil. | <i>True</i> | <i>False</i> |
| 3. | It's a good idea to have a bin close to your desk. | <i>True</i> | <i>False</i> |
| 4. | It's better to keep information on your computer than on paper if possible. | <i>True</i> | <i>False</i> |
| 5. | If you have written notes on paper you should type them into the computer. | <i>True</i> | <i>False</i> |
| 6. | The camera in your phone can help you remember things. | <i>True</i> | <i>False</i> |
| 7. | A noticeboard is a good way to organise bits of paper. | <i>True</i> | <i>False</i> |
| 8. | You should clean your desk once a week. | <i>True</i> | <i>False</i> |

2. Check your understanding: grouping

Write the ideas in the correct group.

keep pens and pencils in a jar.	leave your desk untidy at the end of the day.	keep a drink on your desk.	use a scanner to make PDFs of magazine pages.
print as much information as possible.	check your noticeboard every day.	take photos of things you want to remember.	keep a lot of paper on your desk.

Do ...	Don't ...

Discussion

Where do you study when you are at home? Is it tidy or messy?



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A message to a new friend

Read a direct message on social media to practise and improve your reading skills.

Before reading

Do the preparation task first. Then read the text and do the exercises.

Preparation task

Choose the sentence (a or b) that is correct.

1. a. It was so nice to know you last week. b. It was so nice to meet you last week.
2. a. I hope you got home OK. b. I wait you got home OK.
3. a. Here's a photo of me. b. Here a photo of me.
4. a. Good memories. b. Good remembers.
5. a. Please send me your email address. b. Please send your email address me.
6. a. Bye until soon. b. Bye for now.

Reading text: A message to a new friend

Hi Lucia

How are you? It was so nice to meet you last week in Sydney at the sales meeting. How was the rest of your trip? Did you see any kangaroos? I hope you got home to Mexico City OK.

Anyway, I have the documents about the new Berlin offices. We're going to be open in three months. I moved here from London just last week. They are very nice offices, and the location is perfect. There are lots of restaurants, cafés and banks in the area. There's also public transport; we are next to an U-Bahn (that is the name for the metro here). Maybe you can come and see them one day? I would love to show you Berlin, especially in the winter. You said you have never seen snow – you will see lots here!

Here's a photo of you and me at the restaurant in Sydney. That was a very fun night! Remember the singing Englishman? Crazy! Please send me any other photos you have of that night. Good memories.

Please give me your email address and I will send you the documents.

Bye for now

Mikel

Tasks

Task 1

Match the sentences (a–d) with the places (1–4).

Places

1. Berlin
2. London
3. Mexico City
4. Sydney

Sentences

- a. Mikel and Lucia met here.
- b. Mikel's new offices are here.
- c. Mikel used to live here.
- d. Lucia lives here.

Task 2

Are the sentences true or false?

1. Mikel and Lucia were friends from school.
2. They work for a company that sells things.
3. The new offices are in a very good location.
4. There is a metro next to the offices.
5. Mikel has never seen snow before.
6. Mikel and Lucia had dinner together.
7. Mikel doesn't have Lucia's email address.
8. Lucia wants to send Mikel some documents.

Answer

- | | |
|------|-------|
| True | False |

Discussion

How do you make plans with friends?

Answers

Preparation task

1. b
2. a
3. a
4. a
5. a
6. b

Task 1

1. b
2. c
3. d
4. a

Task 2

1. False
2. True
3. True
4. True
5. False
6. True
7. True
8. False

Mind Maps

Mind maps are a great way of showing a picture of information that you need to learn. You can use mind maps for all kinds of learning. They work very well for vocabulary when you are learning a new language.

Brainstorm some word groups for 'transport' and think of headings for each one. For example:



sea transport

land transport

air transport

For each one, draw a short line from the centre circle outwards. Add another circle and write the new group word in the middle.

When you can't make any new groups, add a line for each word you know. Write the words along the lines or, if you have space, write them inside more circles.



As you learn new vocabulary, add it to the mind map.

To make the mind maps even better, use colour to show important ideas or parts of the map.

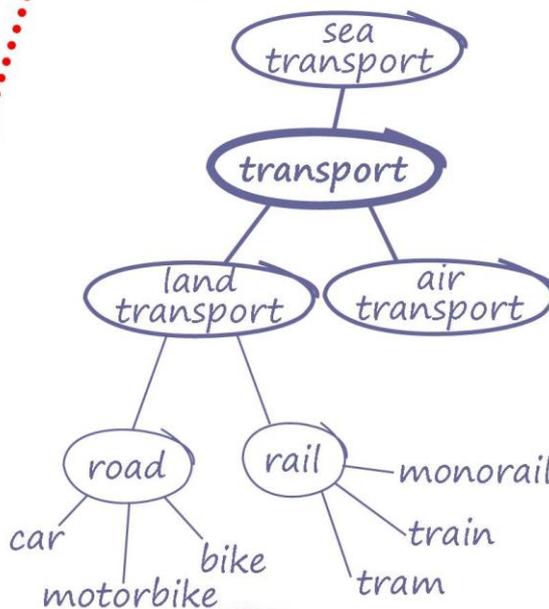
1 Draw a circle in the middle of the page and write the vocabulary subject in the middle. For example:



Look at each group and try to add more groups. For example, in 'land transport' there are two sub-groups:

- road
- rail

Draw two more lines, add two more circles and write the two new headings inside them.



4

5

6

Read the text about mind maps and then do the exercises to practise and improve your reading skills.

Preparation

Match the words with the correct definition and write a–f next to the numbers 1–6.

- | | |
|----------------------|---|
| 1..... kinds | a. sections |
| 2..... vocabulary | b. to think of lots of answers to the same question |
| 3..... the middle | c. the ocean |
| 4..... to brainstorm | d. words and phrases |
| 5..... the sea | e. types |
| 6..... parts | f. the centre |

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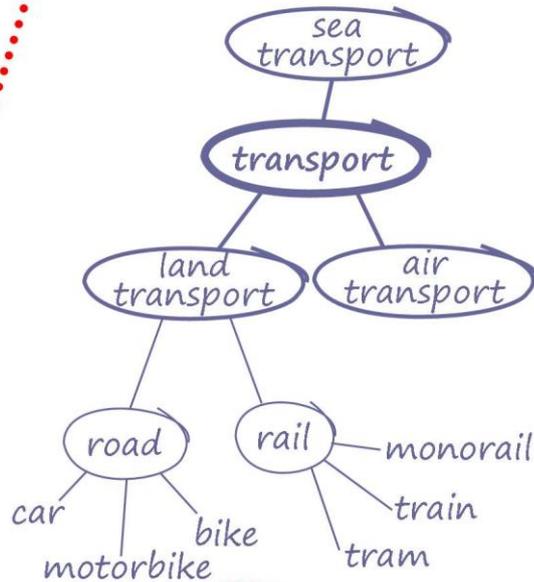
2

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- rail

3

Draw two more lines, add two more circles and write the two new headings inside them.



4

5

6



1. Check your understanding: true or false

Circle *True* or *False* for these sentences.

- | | | | |
|----|--|-------------|--------------|
| 1. | A mind map is a picture of useful information. | <i>True</i> | <i>False</i> |
| 2. | Mind maps are only for learning languages. | <i>True</i> | <i>False</i> |
| 3. | You start by drawing a circle. | <i>True</i> | <i>False</i> |
| 4. | Mind maps are so easy you don't have to think. | <i>True</i> | <i>False</i> |
| 5. | When you learn a new word, you should add it to your mind map. | <i>True</i> | <i>False</i> |
| 6. | It is better to make a simple mind map, with no colour. | <i>True</i> | <i>False</i> |

2. Check your understanding: ordering

Write numbers (1–5) to put these instructions for making a mind map in order.

- | | |
|-------|--|
| | Draw a circle in the middle of the page. |
| | Add new circles and write the group words 'sea', 'road' and 'air' in them. |
| | Write 'transport' in the middle of the circle. |
| | Brainstorm some word groups for 'transport'. For example, 'sea', 'road' and 'air'. |
| | Add lines to the group words. For example, to the 'road' group, add 'car', 'bus' and 'bike'. |

3. Check your vocabulary: gap fill

Complete the sentences with a word from the box.

write	show	start	learn	add	brainstorm
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- Mind maps _____ information as a picture.
- They can help you _____ a new language.
- You _____ with a circle in the middle of the page.
- You _____ groups of words.
- You _____ the words on lines or inside circles.
- You can _____ more words to the mind map as you learn them.

Discussion

What do you do to remember new vocabulary?