

Supporting Your Child with Revision: The Power of Flash Cards

Flash cards are a simple yet highly effective tool for helping students retain and recall information — and parents can play a big role in supporting their use at home.



Why Flash Cards Work

Flash cards are small cards with a question on one side and the answer on the other. They help students:

- **Break down complex topics** into bite-sized facts or questions.
- **Actively recall** information, which strengthens memory.
- **Self-test** regularly, identifying gaps in knowledge.
- Use **spaced repetition**, revisiting cards over time to boost long-term retention.

This method is backed by research and is especially useful for subjects that require factual recall, such as science, history, and languages.

Why Are They Effective?

Flash cards encourage **active learning** — students test themselves rather than just re-reading notes. This helps them remember more and feel more confident when it comes to assessments.

They also support **spaced repetition**, which means reviewing information over time rather than cramming. This technique is backed by research and helps knowledge stick.

How Parents Can Help

You don't need to be an expert in the subject to support your child's revision. Here are some easy ways to get involved:

- **Quiz your child** using their flash cards — even just 10 minutes a day can make a difference.
- Encourage them to **sort cards** into “confident” and “needs more practice” piles.
- Help them set up a **revision routine**, using flash cards regularly rather than cramming.
- Ask them to **teach you** a topic using their cards — explaining concepts aloud helps deepen understanding.
- Praise their effort and consistency, not just correct answers.

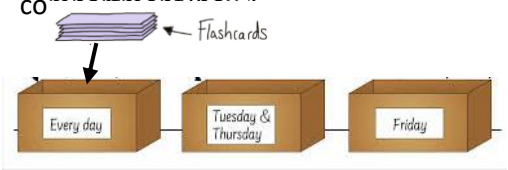
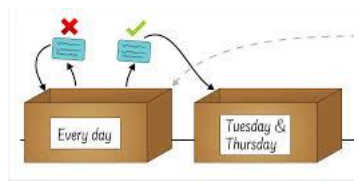
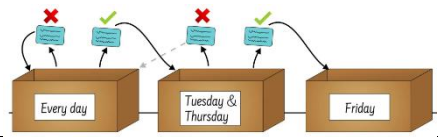
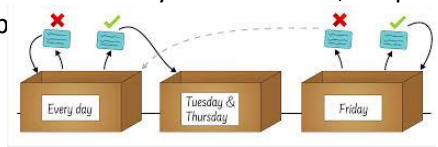
Top Tip

If your child prefers digital tools, apps like **Anki**, **Quizlet**, or **Brainscape** allow them to create and review flash cards on their phone or computer — perfect for revision on the go.

Resources for Further Exploration

The Leitner Method – what it is and how it helps

The Leitner Method is a way of quizzing with flashcards where students move the cards to different compartments depending on whether or not they recalled the information correctly. This strategy makes use of retrieval and spacing.

1. Split a box into 3 compartments and number them or have three separate numbered boxes. 	2. Place all your flashcards in compartment/box 1. 
3. Test yourself on the flashcards in box 1. If you recall the information, move the flashcard to compartment/box 2. If not, place the card back in compartment/box 1. 	4. On Tuesday and Thursday (or every other day), test yourself on the flashcards in boxes 1 and 2. If you answer correctly, move the flashcard one box on. If incorrect, place the flashcard back in compartment/box 1. 
5. On Fridays, or once a week, test yourself on the cards in box 3. If you are correct, keep the cards there. If incorrect, move the card back to box 1. 	

Useful links

- Birmingham City University – How to Use Flashcards for Revision**
 Covers active recall, spaced repetition, Leitner system, visuals, and app options like Quizlet and Anki ([Birmingham City University](#)).
- SchoolPlanner – Revision Flashcards Blog**
 Emphasizes peer feedback, visual memory, concise content, and hands-on repetition ([schoolplanner.co.uk](#)).
- Learning Scientists – “Be Your Own Teacher: How to Study with Flashcards”**
 Offers dual-stack method (concept + instruction cards) to deepen understanding ([The Learning Scientists](#)).
- InnerDrive – Flashcards Retrieval Practice Overview**
 Highlights how flashcards support self-testing and focus on weak areas ([InnerDrive](#)).
- Wikipedia – Spaced Repetition, Testing Effect, Leitner System**
 In-depth background on flashcards' cognitive science foundations ([Wikipedia](#)).