

Study Skills and Confidence

Time Management

Pomodoro Technique



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paradigm shift.

Aim and Overview

In this document, we will explain how to use the **Pomodoro Technique** to ensure maximum efficiency from your study sessions.

We will cover the following topics:

- ▶ what is the Pomodoro Technique?
- ▶ why is the Pomodoro Technique so effective?
- ▶ our own experiences of using the Pomodoro Technique

IMPORTANT

As with all our Study Skills and Confidence content, our aim is not to be dictatorial by telling you what to do or how to study ... everyone is different.

Our aim is simply to expose you to **ideas and methods you may not have known about before** – have a go and see what works – you have nothing to lose ... and everything to gain!

1. What is the Pomodoro Technique?

According to Wikipedia, the Pomodoro Technique was invented by Francesco Cirillo in the late 1980s.

Cirillo discovered that by using a timer to break his work time down into 25-minute bursts (followed by 5-minute breaks), he was able to achieve a lot more in the time available. His timer was a tomato shaped kitchen timer (“pomodoro” is Italian for “tomato”) so that’s where the name comes from.

Although there are now numerous apps and websites based on the technique, in a nutshell (or tomato skin), that’s all you really need to know!

So, to try this technique, get hold of 2 timers with a memory function (so you don’t have to keep resetting them to 25 minutes and 5 minutes ... we wouldn’t want to waste any time now, would we?). Then force yourself to **properly** revise for 25 minutes: regardless of whether the content is new, old, easy, hard, boring or exciting ... you will focus for 25 minutes, okay?

No checking your phone, no social media, no tidying your desk or rearranging your devices based on their Net Book Value (or even Value in Use)... just **properly** focus! It’s **only** 25 minutes, after all, and then a break is coming, promise! Come on, you can do it!

How do you eat an elephant? One bite at a time. It’s the same for your ACA studies and with the Pomodoro Technique, no animals need to be harmed. This method breaks larger tasks down into manageable and less depressing chunks and having some kind of target and structure really can work wonders for your efficiency.



2. Why is the Pomodoro Technique so effective?

- ▶ ensures proper focus and flow – you will concentrate on working and competing against the clock, nothing else
- ▶ makes very efficient use of each burst of 25 minutes and therefore better use of your revision time overall
- ▶ helps you develop a more accurate understanding of how long certain tasks take: often our subjective perceptions of time are faulty because if something isn't fun, it can feel like we have spent ages on it when really we haven't at all!
- ▶ a feeling of urgency: you may well have 4 hours of revision ahead of you, but this technique ensures that you really get going right from the start, rather than “easing yourself in” through tidying your pens or checking the fridge again (that's what break time is for!)
- ▶ a feeling of achievement: you can't pass your exam during revision time so you need some other form of milestone to help feel that you made good use of your day – with the Pomodoro Technique you can feel good every 25 minutes!
- ▶ makes you more familiar with time pressure and the clock ticking down (useful for the real exam!)

We have all had that feeling at the end of a revision session that maybe we should have done more with our time rather than dawdling or procrastinating at the start – wouldn't it be great to come away from **every** revision session (whether short or long) with a feeling that we **really gave it our best shot for the whole study session?**

Here the Pomodoro Technique can really help. And there's nothing to stop you using the technique in other areas of your life either.



3. Our own experience of using the Pomodoro Technique

Put simply, it really works! Obviously, we are bound to say that or this tips document would be kind of pointless but give it a go and see!

As the technique gives you a specific goal and timeframe, we really like the fact that the Pomodoro Technique can discipline the mind and force you into just getting on with your work, and then working with focus.

Shocking as it may sound, there are parts of accountancy training that are necessary, but not all that exciting ... checking materials for syllabus changes, amending formatting, talking to students (joking on the last one!).

These are tasks that just have to be done (even the last one!) but it is easy to assume that such tasks take up lots of time. Once you are working more effectively and against the clock, you may well realise that tasks of this kind don't actually take as long as you thought ... so if you just crack on and get them done, you reclaim time!

And you would be surprised how much you can get done, once you have some kind of motivator and framework rather than "work expanding to fill the time available". Instead, challenge yourself to be disciplined.

Time is actually a subjective thing, so if we do not measure our work properly there will always be a risk that something will take longer than it really needs to. So another advantage of the technique is you get a much better understanding of how long tasks really should be taking, based on a proper, concentrated burst of effort. Very helpful for properly planning your study schedule, which may not need to take up as much time if your work is efficient.



Further references

[Wikipedia](#) entry for “Pomodoro Technique”

Official [Francesco Cirillo/Pomodoro Technique](#) webpage

And don't forget to get hold of 2 timers (one to time the 25-minute work bursts and the other for the 5-minute breaks) ... make sure you get timers that default back to the preset 25- or 5-minute period each time you press reset or you will be wasting a lot of time inputting “25” and “5” rather often ... and wasting time is not really the intention of the process!

Look out for further content in our Study Skills and Confidence resources – sign up to our Twitter feed [@parashiftrain](#) to receive the latest updates

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