

## VARK guide to learning

Take the assessment online at:  
<http://vark-learn.com/english/index.asp>

This packet includes study guide sheets for each learning preference.

Apply your learning preferences to engage academically.

# VAR K

visual | aural | read | write | kinesthetic

## The VARK Questionnaire (Version 7.1)

### How Do I Learn Best?

Choose the answer which best explains your preference and circle the letter(s) next to it.

**Please circle more than one** if a single answer does not match your perception.

Leave blank any question that does not apply.

1. You are helping someone who wants to go to your airport, town centre or railway station. You would:
  - a. go with her.
  - b. tell her the directions.
  - c. write down the directions.
  - d. draw, or give her a map.
2. You are not sure whether a word should be spelled 'dependent' or 'dependant'. You would:
  - a. see the words in your mind and choose by the way they look.
  - b. think about how each word sounds and choose one.
  - c. find it in a dictionary.
  - d. write both words on paper and choose one.
3. You are planning a holiday for a group. You want some feedback from them about the plan. You would:
  - a. describe some of the highlights.
  - b. use a map or website to show them the places.
  - c. give them a copy of the printed itinerary.
  - d. phone, text or email them.
4. You are going to cook something as a special treat for your family. You would:
  - a. cook something you know without the need for instructions.
  - b. ask friends for suggestions.
  - c. look through the cookbook for ideas from the pictures.
  - d. use a cookbook where you know there is a good recipe.
5. A group of tourists want to learn about the parks or wildlife reserves in your area. You would:
  - a. talk about, or arrange a talk for them about parks or wildlife reserves.
  - b. show them internet pictures, photographs or picture books.
  - c. take them to a park or wildlife reserve and walk with them.
  - d. give them a book or pamphlets about the parks or wildlife reserves.
6. You are about to purchase a digital camera or mobile phone. Other than price, what would most influence your decision?
  - a. Trying or testing it.
  - b. Reading the details about its features.
  - c. It is a modern design and looks good.
  - d. The salesperson telling me about its features.
7. Remember a time when you learned how to do something new. Try to avoid choosing a physical skill, eg. riding a bike. You learned best by:
  - a. watching a demonstration.
  - b. listening to somebody explaining it and asking questions.
  - c. diagrams and charts - visual clues.
  - d. written instructions - e.g. a manual or textbook.

8. You have a problem with your heart. You would prefer that the doctor:
- gave you a something to read to explain what was wrong.
  - used a plastic model to show what was wrong.
  - described what was wrong.
  - showed you a diagram of what was wrong.
9. You want to learn a new program, skill or game on a computer. You would:
- read the written instructions that came with the program.
  - talk with people who know about the program.
  - use the controls or keyboard.
  - follow the diagrams in the book that came with it.
10. I like websites that have:
- things I can click on, shift or try.
  - interesting design and visual features.
  - interesting written descriptions, lists and explanations.
  - audio channels where I can hear music, radio programs or interviews.
11. Other than price, what would most influence your decision to buy a new non-fiction book?
- The way it looks is appealing.
  - Quickly reading parts of it.
  - A friend talks about it and recommends it.
  - It has real-life stories, experiences and examples.
12. You are using a book, CD or website to learn how to take photos with your new digital camera. You would like to have:
- a chance to ask questions and talk about the camera and its features.
  - clear written instructions with lists and bullet points about what to do.
  - diagrams showing the camera and what each part does.
  - many examples of good and poor photos and how to improve them.
13. Do you prefer a teacher or a presenter who uses:
- demonstrations, models or practical sessions.
  - question and answer, talk, group discussion, or guest speakers.
  - handouts, books, or readings.
  - diagrams, charts or graphs.
14. You have finished a competition or test and would like some feedback. You would like to have feedback:
- using examples from what you have done.
  - using a written description of your results.
  - from somebody who talks it through with you.
  - using graphs showing what you had achieved.
15. You are going to choose food at a restaurant or cafe. You would:
- choose something that you have had there before.
  - listen to the waiter or ask friends to recommend choices.
  - choose from the descriptions in the menu.
  - look at what others are eating or look at pictures of each dish.
16. You have to make an important speech at a conference or special occasion. You would:
- make diagrams or get graphs to help explain things.
  - write a few key words and practice saying your speech over and over.
  - write out your speech and learn from reading it over several times.
  - gather many examples and stories to make the talk real and practical.

# VARK

visual aural read/write kinesthetic

## The VARK Questionnaire Scoring Chart

Use the following scoring chart to find the VARK category that each of your answers corresponds to. Circle the letters that correspond to your answers

e.g. If you answered b and c for question 3, circle V and R in the question 3 row.

Question	a category	b category	c category	d category
3	K	V	R	A

## Scoring Chart

Question	a category	b category	c category	d category
1	K	A	R	V
2	V	A	R	K
3	K	V	R	A
4	K	A	V	R
5	A	V	K	R
6	K	R	V	A
7	K	A	V	R
8	R	K	A	V
9	R	A	K	V
10	K	V	R	A
11	V	R	A	K
12	A	R	V	K
13	K	A	R	V
14	K	R	A	V
15	K	A	R	V
16	V	A	R	K

## Calculating your scores

Count the number of each of the VARK letters you have circled to get your score for each VARK category.

Total number of **V**s circled =

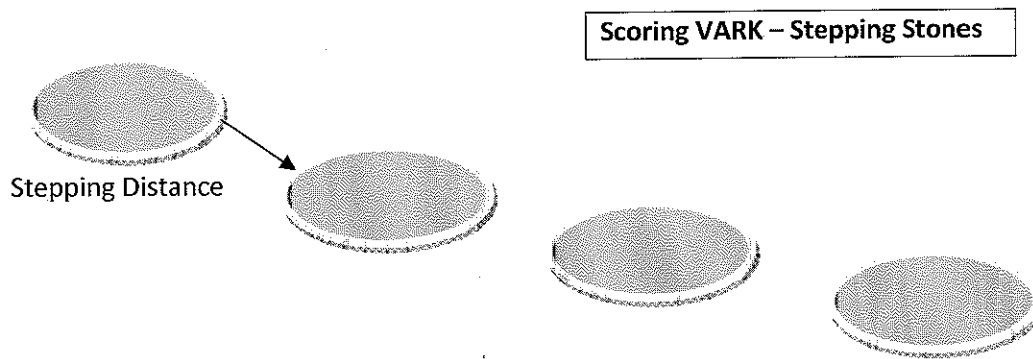
Total number of **A**s circled =

Total number of **R**s circled =

Total number of **K**s circled =

# VARK Assessment Scoring Breakdown

Because you could choose more than one answer for each question, the scoring is not just a simple matter of counting. It is like four stepping stones across some water. Enter your scores from **highest to lowest** on the stones in the figure, with their V, A, R, and K labels.



Your stepping distance comes from this table:

The total of my four VARK scores is

My stepping distance is

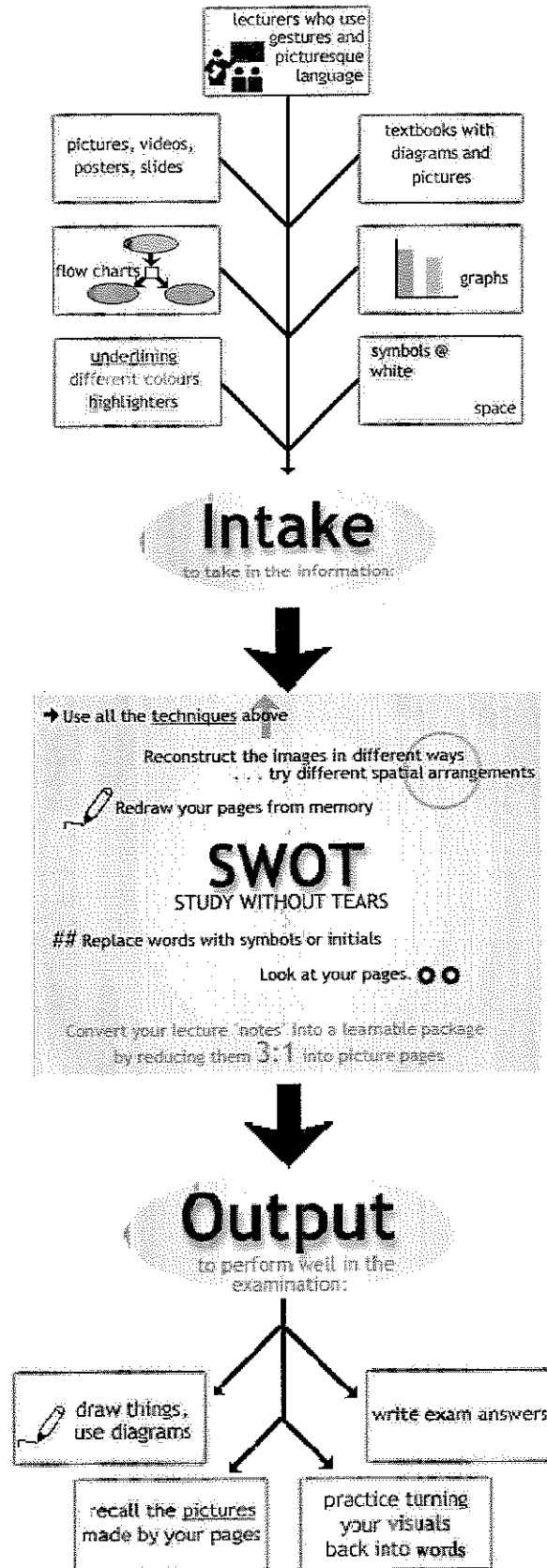
16-21	1
22-27	2
28-32	3
More than 32	4

**Follow these steps to establish your preferences.**

1. Your first preference is always your highest scores. Check that first stone as one of your preferences.
2. Now subtract your second highest score from your first. If that figure is larger than your stepping distance, you have a single preference. Otherwise, check this stone as another preference and continue with step 3.
3. Subtract your third score from your second one. If that figure is larger than your stepping distance, you have a bimodal preference. If not, check your third stone as a preference and continue with step 4.
4. Last, subtract your fourth score from your third one. If that figure is larger than your stepping distance, you have a trimodal preference. Otherwise, check your fourth stone as a preference, and you have all four modes as your preference!

Note: If you are bimodal or trimodal or you have checked all four modes as your preferences, you can be described as multimodal in your VARK preferences.

# Visual Study Strategies



You want the whole picture so you are probably holistic rather than reductionist in your approach.. You are often swayed by the look of an object. You are interested in color and layout and design and you know where you are in your environment. You are probably going to draw something.

# Aural Study Strategies

If you have a strong preference for learning by **Aural** methods (**A** = hearing) you should use some or all of the following:

## INTAKE

To take in the information:

- attend classes
- attend discussions and tutorials
- discuss topics with others
- discuss topics with your teachers
- explain new ideas to other people
- use a tape recorder
- remember the interesting examples, stories, jokes...
- describe the overheads, pictures and other visuals to somebody who was not there
- leave spaces in your notes for later recall and 'filling'

## SWOT - Study without tears

To make a learnable package:

Convert your "notes" into a learnable package by reducing them (3:1)

- Your notes may be poor because you prefer to listen. You will need to expand your notes by talking with others and collecting notes from the textbook.
- Put your summarised notes onto tapes and listen to them.
- Ask others to 'hear' your understanding of a topic.
- Read your summarised notes aloud.
- Explain your notes to another 'aural' person.

## OUTPUT

To perform well in any test, assignment or examination:

- Imagine talking with the examiner.
- Listen to your voices and write them down.
- Spend time in quiet places recalling the ideas.
- Practice writing answers to old exam questions.
- Speak your answers aloud or inside your head.

You prefer to have this page explained to you.  
The written words are not as valuable as those you hear.  
You will probably go and tell somebody about this.

# Read/Write Study Strategies

If you have a strong preference for learning by **Reading** and **Writing (R & W)** learning you should use some or all of the following:

## INTAKE

To take in the information:

- lists
- headings
- dictionaries
- glossaries
- definitions
- handouts
- textbooks
- readings - library
- notes (often verbatim)
- teachers who use words well and have lots of information in sentences and notes
- essays
- manuals (computing and laboratory)

## SWOT - Study without tears

To make a learnable package:

Convert your "notes" into a learnable package by reducing them (3:1)

- Write out the words again and again.
- Read your notes (silently) again and again.
- Rewrite the ideas and principles into other words.
- Organize any diagrams, graphs ... into statements, e.g. "The trend is..."
- Turn reactions, actions, diagrams, charts and flows into words.
- Imagine your lists arranged in multiple choice questions and distinguish each from each.

## OUTPUT

To perform well in any test, assignment or examination:

- Write exam answers.
- Practice with multiple choice questions.
- Write paragraphs, beginnings and endings.
- Write your lists (a,b,c,d,1,2,3,4).
- Arrange your words into hierarchies and points.

You like this page because the emphasis is on words and lists.

You believe the meanings are within the words, so any talk is OK but this handout is better.

You are heading for the library.



# Kinesthetic Study Strategies

If you have a strong **Kinesthetic** preference for learning you should use some or all of the following:

## INTAKE

To take in the information:

- all your senses - sight, touch, taste, smell, hearing ...
- laboratories
- field trips
- field tours
- examples of principles
- lecturers who give real-life examples
- applications
- hands-on approaches (computing)
- trial and error
- collections of rock types, plants, shells, grasses...
- exhibits, samples, photographs...
- recipes - solutions to problems, previous exam papers

SWOT - Study without tears

To make a learnable package:

Convert your "notes" into a learnable package by reducing them (3:1)

- Your lecture notes may be poor because the topics were not 'concrete' or 'relevant'.
- You will remember the "real" things that happened.
- Put plenty of examples into your summary. Use case studies and applications to help with principles and abstract concepts.
- Talk about your notes with another "K" person.
- Use pictures and photographs that illustrate an idea.
- Go back to the laboratory or your lab manual.
- Recall the experiments, field trip...

## OUTPUT

To perform well in any test, assignment or examination:

- Write practice answers, paragraphs...
- Role play the exam situation in your own room.

You want to experience the exam so that you can understand it.

The ideas on this page are only valuable if they sound practical, real, and relevant to you.

You need to do things to understand.

## Multimodal Study Strategies

If you have multiple preferences you are in the majority as somewhere between fifty and seventy percent of any population seems to fit into that group.

Multiple preferences are interesting and quite varied. For example you may have two strong preferences V and A or R and K, or you may have three strong preferences such as VAR or ARK. Some people have no particular strong preferences and their scores are almost even for all four modes. For example one student had scores of V=9, A=9, R=9, and K=9. She said that she adapted to the mode being used or requested. If the teacher or supervisor preferred a written mode she switched into that mode for her responses and for her learning.

So multiple preferences give you choices of two or three or four modes to use for your interaction with others. Some people have admitted that if they want to be annoying they stay in a mode different from the person with whom they are working. For example they may ask for written evidence in an argument, knowing that the other person much prefers to refer only to oral information. Positive reactions mean that those with multimodal preferences choose to match or align their mode to the significant others around them.

If you have two dominant or equal preferences please read the study strategies that apply to your two choices. If you have three preferences read the three lists that apply and similarly for those with four. You will need to read two or three or four lists of strategies. One interesting piece of information that people with multimodal preferences have told us is that it is necessary for them to use more than one strategy for learning and communicating. They feel insecure with only one. Alternatively those with a single preference often "get it" by using the set of strategies that align with their single preference.

We are noticing some differences among those who are multimodal especially those who have chosen fewer than 20 options and those who have chosen more. If you have chosen fewer than 20 of the options in the questionnaire you may prefer to see your highest score as your main preference - almost like a single preference. You are probably more decisive than those who have chosen 20+ options.