



Apprendre à étudier
Companion 1: Artificial Intelligence and Your
Learning Habits

Olga Kasatkina & Cécile Hardebolle
Teaching Support Center (CAPE)

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Introduction

Artificial intelligence (AI) is now everywhere. It is becoming increasingly integrated into our studies, our work, and our daily lives. Yet we still know relatively little about its long-term effects. Some of its capabilities are highly promising, while others raise important questions and concerns.

One of these concerns relates to what researchers call **cognitive offloading**: delegating part of our mental effort to a tool or a machine. We already do this when using a calculator for calculations or a GPS for navigation. These tools save us time. However, when they systematically replace our own thinking, they can also make us dependent and limit the development of certain skills.

Artificial intelligence presents this same duality. It can become an excellent learning partner by helping you think, asking you questions, giving you more opportunities to practise, and providing feedback on your work. In this case, AI plays a role similar to that of a treadmill: **you are still the one making the effort.**

On the other hand, if it does the work for you, it may deprive you of the very activities that enable learning. Reading an answer—even an excellent one—does not lead to the same learning as searching, hesitating, making mistakes, and correcting your own reasoning. In this case, AI is more like a golf cart: you move comfortably, but it is carrying you while you remain passive.

The purpose of these companion sheets is therefore **not** to tell you whether you should or should not use AI. Rather, they are designed to help you use AI in ways that **support your learning rather than replace it**.

For each of the learning habits presented in the **Learning to Study** book and MOOC, we suggest practical ways to use AI as a learning tool.

Keep in mind, however, that AI is **neither your teacher, nor an infallible expert, nor a friend**. Its answers may be inaccurate, incomplete, or inconsistent with your course expectations. They should always be checked against your course materials, your instructors, teaching assistants, or other reliable sources. Likewise, AI cannot replace discussions with your classmates or the support provided by qualified professionals when you need it.

Throughout this guide, keep asking yourself one simple question:

Is AI helping me learn, or is it learning for me?

Habit 1 – Plan Your Study Time

AI can help you...

- create a realistic study schedule based on your deadlines;
- estimate how much time to devote to a chapter or project (for example, taking into account the number of ECTS credits and your availability);
- develop a revision schedule spread over several weeks;
- analyse some of your study habits (screen time, study sessions, study rhythm, etc.) to identify areas for improvement;
- set reminders or help you organise your tasks.

Use AI with caution

Don't let AI make organisational decisions for you.

It does not know your learning pace, your personal constraints, or which topics will require more effort from you. It may generate a very convincing study plan, but it will only be useful if it truly reflects your own situation.

Think of AI as an assistant that can help you create a first draft of your study schedule—not as the tool that decides your priorities.

Question to ask yourself

Does this study plan really fit my needs?

Key message

You are the one who should remain in control of your study plan.

Only you know your deadlines, your goals, and your personal constraints. Use AI to save time when organising your work, but make a habit of regularly adjusting your schedule according to your progress, workload, and the demands of the semester.

Habit 2 – Take Effective Notes

AI can help you...

- compare your notes with the course materials to identify possible omissions;
- suggest additions when an important idea appears to be missing;
- rephrase a difficult passage using simpler or different wording;
- generate questions to help you check your understanding.

Use AI with caution

Do not ask AI to take notes or write your course summary for you.

The processes of selecting, organising, and rephrasing information are precisely what help you understand and remember it. The more actively you engage in these tasks, the stronger your learning will be.

Likewise, never replace your course materials, textbooks, or your instructors' explanations with AI. AI models can produce **hallucinations** - that is, they may present inaccurate or entirely fabricated facts, references, or examples as if they were true. When you are new to a subject, these errors can be particularly difficult to detect.

Always use your course materials as your primary reference and verify any information provided by AI.

Question to ask yourself

Have I first created my own notes before asking AI to complete or rephrase them?

Key message

Taking notes is the first step in the learning process.

By selecting, synthesising, and reorganising information, you are already constructing your own understanding. Use AI to enrich or check your work, but continue to rely on your course materials and your instructors as your primary sources of knowledge.

Habit 3 – Solve Exercises

AI can help you...

- give you a hint when you are stuck;
- check your reasoning step by step;
- generate additional practice exercises;
- explain a solution method when you do not understand the official solution.

Use AI with caution

Always try to solve the exercise on your own before asking for help.

If you get stuck, first ask for a **hint** or a **guiding question** that will help you move forward. Avoid asking for the complete solution right away.

AI models often provide more information than requested. Even if you ask only for a hint, they may reveal the entire solution process. When this happens, you miss out on the productive struggle that develops your understanding and your problem-solving skills.

Whenever possible, turn first to your instructor, teaching assistants, or exercise sessions. AI can be a valuable complement when no immediate support is available.

Question to ask yourself

Have I genuinely tried to solve the exercise before asking AI, or am I using it to skip the thinking process and save time?

Key message

The time you spend searching, making mistakes, and trying different strategies is not wasted - it is during this effort that your brain learns how to solve problems.

Always begin by working through the problem yourself. Then use AI to guide you, check your reasoning, or help you identify your mistakes, rather than to solve the exercise for you.

Habit 4 – Learn from Your Mistakes

AI can help you...

- explain why an answer is incorrect;
- identify recurring mistakes in your reasoning;
- suggest targeted exercises to help you address your weaknesses;
- identify concepts that you have not yet fully mastered;
- engage in a dialogue with you to help you practise and challenge your thinking.

Use AI with caution

Do not ask AI to redo exercises for you.

After completing an exercise or receiving an exam back, do not simply read the solution. First, take a few minutes to reflect by asking yourself:

- Where did I first go wrong?
- What did I fail to understand?
- What strategy could I have used instead?

Try to explain your mistakes in your own words before comparing your analysis with AI's feedback.

It is this process of reflection that helps you improve. Simply reading a solution often creates an **illusion of understanding**—you feel as though you have understood, even when you have not. The only way to know whether you have truly learned is to apply the same method immediately in a new exercise.

Question to ask yourself

Do I really understand why I made this mistake, or have I simply read an explanation that sounded convincing?

Key message

Mistakes are valuable learning opportunities.

Start by analysing them yourself. Then use AI to deepen your reflection, check your analysis, and identify the areas that still need improvement. Finally, apply what you have learned straight away by solving a new exercise using the same method.

Habit 5 – Review Effectively

AI can help you...

Use AI with caution

Do not replace your revision with automatically generated summaries or study notes.

You learn more when you create your own summaries, diagrams, concept maps, and revision sheets. Organising information yourself is already an important part of the learning process.

AI is particularly valuable when it prompts you to answer questions, solve new problems, or justify your reasoning. It is much less useful when it simply provides content for you to read passively.

Keep in mind that AI does not know your instructor's assessment criteria. The questions it generates may be useful for practice, but they do not necessarily reflect the level of difficulty, style, or expectations of your exam.

The effort involved in retrieving information from memory—even if you make a few mistakes—is time well spent. It is through this retrieval effort that your memory becomes stronger.

Question to ask yourself

Is AI actually making me think and answer questions, or am I simply reading what it produces?

Key message

Use AI to practise, test yourself, and challenge your understanding.

The more actively you engage during revision, the stronger your learning will be. AI can be an excellent learning partner, but it does not know the specific expectations of your exams.

Habit 6 – Find Help When You Need It

AI can help you...

- obtain an additional explanation when a concept remains difficult to understand;
- rephrase a definition or explanation using different words;
- compare different ways of explaining the same concept or phenomenon;
- identify topics that you should explore in greater depth.

Use AI with caution

Never consider AI to be your only source of information.

Its responses may be incomplete, inaccurate, inconsistent with your course content, or simply incorrect. It may also use terminology, notation, or methods that differ from those expected by your instructor.

Whenever you have doubts, always return to your course materials, and do not hesitate to ask questions to your instructor, teaching assistants, or classmates. These interactions are an important part of the learning process.

AI can complement these resources, but it should never replace them.

Make full use of the support services available at your institution. The library, study skills workshops, academic support services, mentors, coaches, and advisors can often provide guidance that is better suited to your individual needs.

Question to ask yourself

Have I verified this information using my course materials or with a qualified person?

Key message

AI is only one source of information among many.

Continue to rely on your course materials, ask questions to your instructors, and develop your critical thinking skills. Knowing how to find and evaluate reliable information is an essential competence for both your studies and your future professional life.

Habit 7 – Manage Stress

AI can help you...

- develop a realistic and progressive study plan;
- remind you of simple techniques for managing stress;
- break a large goal into smaller, more manageable steps;
- monitor and reflect on your progress.

Use AI with caution

AI can help you organise your work, but it cannot do the work for you.

Avoid using it as an immediate solution whenever you feel discouraged. Self-confidence develops gradually through consistent effort and by recognising your own progress.

Be cautious when discussing your worries, doubts, or important decisions with AI. AI models often tend to validate what users say rather than challenge their reasoning. As a result, they may reinforce certain beliefs or interpretations without helping you gain the critical distance you need. They cannot replace the perspective of an instructor, a peer, or a qualified professional.

If you experience significant stress, persistent anxiety, or difficulties that affect your daily life, seek support from qualified professionals or from the student support services offered by your institution.

Question to ask yourself

Am I using AI to organise my work more effectively, or am I relying on it to avoid getting started or simply to reassure myself?

Key message

Your well-being depends first and foremost on maintaining healthy habits.

Getting enough sleep, eating well, staying physically active, spending time with friends and family, and working consistently from the beginning of the semester are the foundations of academic success. AI can help you stay organised, but it cannot replace these habits or the support of the people and professionals around you when you need it.

Habit 8 – Review Your Learning Habits

AI can help you...

- analyse your study habits and organisation;
- identify your strengths and areas for improvement;

- suggest exercises tailored to your learning needs;
- monitor your progress throughout the semester;
- help you develop a realistic improvement plan.

Use AI with caution

AI's recommendations are **not universal truths**.

Every student learns differently. A strategy that works well for one person may not be effective for another. AI's suggestions should be seen as ideas to explore rather than ready-made solutions.

AI can help you reflect on how you learn, but it cannot observe your learning process for you. The best indicators of your progress remain your ability to understand concepts, solve problems independently, and improve throughout the semester.

Take time to regularly evaluate what works best for you. Compare AI's suggestions with your own observations, the feedback you receive from your instructors, and the advice of your classmates.

Question to ask yourself

Do these suggestions genuinely match the way I learn and help me make progress?

Key message

Regularly reflecting on how you learn is one of the most valuable learning habits you can develop.

Use AI as a tool to support this reflection, but maintain a critical perspective on its suggestions and adapt them to your own experience, goals, and learning needs.

In Summary

Artificial intelligence can become a powerful learning partner—**provided that you remain actively engaged in your own learning.**

AI can help you organise your work, practise your skills, understand difficult concepts from different perspectives, and receive feedback on your work. However, when it replaces your own thinking, problem-solving, or interactions with others, it can hinder rather than support your learning.

Throughout this guide, one key idea appears repeatedly: **you learn by being active.** Searching for a solution, taking notes, making mistakes, explaining your reasoning, and creating your own summaries are all activities that strengthen your knowledge and develop your skills.

Keep these simple principles in mind:

- **The time you spend thinking is never wasted—it is during this effort that your brain learns.**
- **AI is a learning partner, not a substitute.**
- **AI is most valuable when it provides feedback on your work, and much less so when it does the work for you.**
- **Always ask yourself:** *Is AI helping me learn, or is it learning for me?*

A simple rule can guide all of your study habits:

First, I work. Then, I use AI to check, refine, test, or improve what I have produced.

By adopting this approach, you will not only deepen your knowledge but also develop your independence, critical thinking, and ability to learn throughout your life. **Ultimately, these are the most valuable skills you can acquire.**