**The four main types of Reading techniques.**

* Skimming
* Scanning
* Intensive
* Extensive

**Skimming**

Skimming is sometimes referred to as gist reading.

Skimming may help in order to know what the text is about at its most basic level.

You might typically do this with a magazine or newspaper and would help you mentally and quickly shortlist those articles which you might consider for a deeper read.

You might typically skim to search for a name in a telephone directory.

You can reach a speed count of even [700 words per minute](https://berglearning.com/a/howtolearn-home) if you train yourself well in this particular method.

Comprehension is of course very low and understanding of overall content very superficial.

**Skimming Saves You Time**

Skimming will certainly save you a lot of time.

But as stated above, it is not the best way to read because you’re comprehension will be lowered.

However, skimming is useful when your goal is to preview the text to get a better idea of what it’s about. It will help prepare you for [deeper learning.](https://www.shareasale.com/r.cfm?b=733599&u=1914367&m=59453)

As learning expert and author Pat Wyman says in her book, [Instant Learning for Amazing Grades](https://www.howtolearn.com/products/amazing-grades), skimming is a terrific idea to get an overview and mental picture in your mind.

This strategy makes it much easier to recall what you’re about to read.

1. Take a look at the table of contents first.
2. Review the subheadings in each chapter
3. Quickly read the first paragraph in that section
4. Check out anything in your text that is in bold or italics
5. If there is a chapter summary, now is a good time read it over.

This completely prepares your brain to have an overview of what this chapter is about.

You can then go on to use scanning to find specific important ideas.

**Scanning**

Picture yourself visiting a historical city, guide book in hand.

You would most probably just scan the guide book to see which site you might want to visit.

Scanning involves getting your eyes to quickly scuttle across sentence and is used to get just a simple piece of information.

Interestingly, research has concluded that reading off a computer screen actually inhibits the pathways to effective scanning and thus, reading of paper is far more conducive to speedy comprehension of texts.

Something students sometimes do not give enough importance to is illustrations.

These should be included in your scanning. Pay special attention to the introduction and the conclusion.

**Intensive Reading**

You need to have your aims clear in mind when undertaking intensive [reading](https://www.howtolearn.com/2017/08/boosting-reading-skills-and-literacy/).

Remember this is going to be far more time consuming than scanning or skimming.

If you need to list the chronology of events in a long passage, you will need to read it intensively.

This type of reading has indeed beneficial to language learners as it helps them understand vocabulary by deducing the meaning of words in context.

It moreover, helps with retention of information for long periods of time and knowledge resulting from intensive reading persists in your long term memory.

This is one reason why reading huge amounts of information just before an exam does not work very well.

Students tend to do this, and they undertake neither type of reading process effectively, especially neglecting intensive reading.

They may remember the answers in an exam but will likely forget everything soon afterwards.

**Extensive reading**

Extensive reading involves reading for pleasure.

Because there is an element of enjoyment in extensive reading it is unlikely that students will undertake extensive reading of a text they do not like.

It also requires a fluid decoding and assimilation of the text and content in front of you.

If the text is difficult and you stop every few minutes to figure out what is being said or to look up new words in the dictionary, you are breaking your concentration and diverting your thoughts.