**How to study Trigonometry**

**Studying Trig**
Congratulations! You are about to begin your study of trigonometry. As you progress through the course, you should discover how to use trigonometry in your everyday life and in your career. The prerequisites for this course are intermediate algebra, an open mind, and a willingness to study. When studying, the material you learn each day builds on material you learned previously. There are no shortcuts—you must keep up with your studies every day. Before you begin read through the following hints that will help you succeed.

**Making a Plan**
Make your own course plan right now! A good rule of thumb is to study at least two hours for every hour in class. After your first major exam, you will know if your efforts were sufficient. If you did not get the grade you wanted, then you should increase your study time, improve your study efficiency, or both.

**Preparing for Class**
Before every class, review your notes from the previous class and read the portion of the text that is to be covered. Pay special attention to the definitions and rules that are highlighted. Read the examples carefully, and then try to do the same examples without looking at the solutions. These steps take self-discipline, but they pay off because you will benefit much more from your instructor's presentation.

**Attending Class**
Attend every class. Arrive on time with your text, materials for taking notes, and your calculator. If you must miss a class, get the notes from another student, and go to a tutor for help. Try to learn the material that was covered in the missed class before attending the next class.

**Participating in Class**
When reading the text before class, reviewing your notes from a previous class, or working on your homework, write down any questions you have about the material. Ask your instructor these questions during class. Doing so will help you (and others in your class) understanding the material better.

**Taking Notes**
During class, be sure to take notes on definitions, examples, concepts, and rules. Focus on the instructor's cues to identify important material. Then, as soon after class as possible, review your notes and add any explanations that will help to make your notes more understandable to you.

**Doing Homework**
Learning trigonometry is like learning to play the piano or basketball. You cannot develop skills just by watching someone else does it; you must do it yourself. The best time to do your homework is right after class, when the concepts are still fresh in your mind. Doing homework at this time increases your chances of retaining the information in long-term memory.
Finding a Study Partner
When you get stuck on a problem, you may find that it helps to work with a partner. Even if you feel you are giving more help than you are getting, you will find that teaching others is an excellent way to learn.

Keeping Up with the Work
Don't let yourself fall behind in this course. If you are having trouble, seek help immediately—from your instructor, a tutor, your study partner, or additional study aids. Remember: If you have trouble with one section of your text, there's good chance that you will have trouble with later sections unless you take steps to improve your understanding.

Getting Stuck
Every student has had this experience: You work a problem and cannot solve it, or the answer you get does not agree with the one given in the text. When this happens, consider asking for help or taking a break to clear your thoughts. You might even want to sleep on it, or rework the problem, or reread the sections in the text. Avoid getting frustrated or spending too much time on a single problem.

Preparing for Tests
Cramming for a test seldom works. If you keep up with the work and follow the suggestions given here, you should be almost ready for the test. To prepare for the chapter test, review the Chapter Summary and work the Review Exercises. Then set aside some time to take the sample Chapter Quiz and the sample Cumulative Test. Analyze the results of your Chapter Quiz and Cumulative Test to locate and correct test-taking errors.

Taking a Test
Most instructors do not recommend studying right up to the minute the test begins. Doing so tends to make people anxious. The best cure for test-taking anxiety is to prepare well in advance. Once the test begins, read the directions carefully and work at a reasonable pace. (You might want to read the entire test first, and then work the problems in the order in which you feel most comfortable.) Don't rush! People who hurry tend to make careless errors. If you finish early, take a few moments to clear your thoughts and then go over your work.

Learning from Mistakes
After your test is returned to you, go over any errors you might have made. This will help you avoid repeating some systematic or conceptual errors. Don't dismiss any error as just a "dump mistake." Take advantage of any mistakes by hunting for ways to improve your test-taking skills.

Good luck to all.
I hope you have a great semester.