

# HowToBeMoreIntelligent

## 101

1. **Read staggering amounts**, regularly returning to the classics *both fiction and non-fiction*.
2. **Write your own notes of your daily learnings** aiming for super concise summaries. *In that way you must squeeze and reveal the essence of a subject.*
3. **Stay active during the day**. That's not just 'go to the gym'. *Stay active; you'll notice the ideas flowing so much more quickly and easily.*
4. **Reduce TV watching drastically**. Talk, write, cook, listen to music, walk, shoot ball, hold hands... *instead*.
5. **Find a mentor**. He/she inspires. He/she can spend some time with you. *He/she will challenge you.*
6. *A moment's insight is sometimes worth a life's experience.* Oliver Wendell Holmes.
7. **Develop other parts of the brain**. Reading loads? *Take up art*. Writing loads? *Take up the guitar*. Playing in a band? *Cook more simple, fresh food*.
8. **Write your personal manifesto**. What do you believe in? *What do you stand for? What are your resolutions without needing a New Year...* Bonus: [Zen & The Art of Cubicle Freedom](#).
9. Ask **deeper** questions and thus build your knowledge base upon which your best thinking-and intelligence-is dependent.
10. **Multi subject**. Read some chemistry along-side some marketing strategy. Some Cubism along-side some leadership coaching. Be amazed at how synergy comes into play, ideas spark and smartness is boosted.
11. **Play with scale**. Go smaller; consider the minutiae; go bigger: consider the landscape.
12. **Change your environment** and notice how the dulled, 'not smart' feeling will leave you.
13. **Write a list** of what you believe to be fundamentally true. And now ask what if everyone of those 'facts' were in fact malleable...?
14. **Sit quietly** on a winter's beach for 1h with a blanket wrapped around you and watch the waves crashing. And now through boredom, through 'oh why?', through meditative experiences will arise one or two epiphanies. Maybe some genius.
15. **Sort out your music by mood** and use it to change your mood; make sure there is 'I feel pretty damn smart' category. Keep it to yourself; humility allows smartness.
16. **Start travelling again**.
17. **Admit** that you make mistakes, errors and crazy decisions. But you are learning. *And fast*.
18. **Go back** to the primary source of your data more often. Read the wikipedia article. *But then note and certainly read some of the sources quoted*.
19. **Every 45 minutes** stop, stretch and ask: *what is truly important at this point?*
20. **Create a virtual advisory team**: assemble your heroes from all fields, alive, dead, imaginary and when you want inspiration, ask: *what would they do?*
21. **Watch** the [World at War](#), the [Ascent of Man](#) and [2001, A Space Odyssey](#). Summarise each episode of the first two. *Reflect on the third*.
22. **Stop** the relentless interrupts to your quality thinking.
23. **Go back-packing**: climb high, breathe deep and take no photos. *Just be there*.
24. **Crack algebra** once and for all.
25. **Read the history** of the Periodic Table.
26. **Review your week and itemise what could be improved for next week. Focus on when you were smart**.
27. **Focus on some of the other elements of intelligence apart from numeric/linguistic** e.g. spatial (go shoot ball), musical (borrow a keyboard and learn some basics) and artistic (sketch with some charcoal).
28. Learn **Chess** and/or **Go** for mental stretch. And hopscotch for mind-body co-ordination.

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29. Sleep until rested. Do not press snooze. Get up and stretch into activity. *Fatigue causes stupidity.*
30. Focus on **the task** for **the time**.
31. Work in **intense pulses of application, say 90 minutes**. Then take a proper break.
32. Develop your thinking: treat it **as a skill**.
33. **Observe** your thinking to refine it and get more *bang per buck*.
34. Use **proactive thinking**: *what do I need to anticipate?*
35. Use **critical thinking**: *what do I need to do better?*
36. Use **lateral thinking**: *what do I need to do differently?*
37. Get to grips with the **subjunctive case** in Spanish.
38. Listen to **personal development audio books** while driving between business meetings.
39. Take any **major conspiracy theory** and explain why it is false/accurate in 100 words.
40. Re-invent your working environment so that (1) distractions are minimised (2) the **vital few** are prioritised and visible (3) the **trivial many** look after themselves.
41. Look after your brain. Keep it oxygenated by stretching and breathing deep into the lungs. Keep it hydrated with pure water. Avoid it getting over-heated with fresh air. Avoid it getting chilled by wearing a hat when necessary;).
42. Start a **personal development fund**: put 2% of your income towards courses, books, coaching. Spend the money. *Some people spend more on their car than they do on their brain.*
43. **Study the masters** in as many fields as possible. You can't have Einstein's brain but you can be curious about his routine. Were their things he did which boosted his intelligence? *Can you copy those?* Absolutely. Reference also Kurt Harden's [work on studies](#).
44. **Produce stuff. Make stuff. Get it out there**. Perhaps a poster. Perhaps a post-card. Perhaps a business card. A quiz, a board-game, a new cocktail. A better burger recipe... test your ideas in the wider world.
45. A *qualification means knowledge*; **it does not necessarily mean wisdom**. Apply your learning every day. Ringo Starr "it wasn't suddenly Sgt. Pepper. We were a working band".
46. *Much school, college and work is about social conditioning*. Your true, deep and on-going smartness comes when you question the most fundamental of assumptions. For your health. For your business. For your life. For your very best work.
47. Like an artist, **build a portfolio of your best work**. Regularly review and update it and allow yourself to be reminded of what you can do.
48. **Notice the foods** that wipe you out, especially at work, especially in the afternoon. Eliminate them. 100% totally. Keep them for chill out days.
49. **Set up a learning team**. Three people, 1h/month, every month. Bring along ten minutes of materials to teach the other two. You get smarter by teaching and in return you learn two new subjects.
50. **Struggle with the problem**. Don't give up. Clarify the problem. Research the problem. Then allow the problem to incubate for a while before returning to it. When you get that breakthrough you will have become smarter.
51. **Write lists**. Set high numbers e.g. 25 colours to access the hidden depths of your brain.
52. **Memorise more**. Key numbers. Key passwords. Shakespeare. Quotes: *All men dream, but not equally. Those who dream by night in the dusty recesses of their minds, wake in the day to find that it was vanity: but the dreamers of the day are dangerous men, for they may act on their dreams with open eyes, to make them possible.*  
T E Lawrence

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53. **Just know** that are smarter than you were and you can be smarter still.
54. Practise **representing data** in 2 by 2 matrices and graphs to get to the point.
55. Learn a **meditative practice** be it Tai Chi or a simple breathing meditation.
56. **Eat less c\*\*p**. Imagine what that corn syrup is doing to those beautifully formed neural pathways of yours.
57. **Don't believe** the majority of what your teachers told you about your intelligence.
58. Work at a **different speed**.
59. **Do a psychometric** such as MBTI to reveal more about your approach to life.
60. **Switch off your phone** in queues and watch, observe and think.
61. Mountains or Toblerone. Someone was being smart. That was a quest. **Yours is a quest is too**.
62. **Get a set of high quality coloured pencils** and use them.
63. Get that MBA off your CV and **into action**.
64. **Use walking** to overcome mental blocks.
65. Flick through your notebooks seeking inspiration.
66. Think less about qualifications and more about **accelerating** your real experience.
67. Eradicate any limiting mind-sets such as "of course at my age I'm slowing down a lot". **Age is not a chronological fact; it is a psychological choice**.
68. **Become so free, you can become super-smart**.
69. **Regularly review to reinforce and capture detail which boosts smartness and decision-making**. Review the conversation, the meeting and the day.
70. Learn a new word every day and **boost your vocabulary** to allow finer points of expression.
71. Become your own guru, **your own thought-leader**. Push to the edges of your subject be it building walls, chess or fine art and express your own unique views.
72. As you read non-fiction ask **provocative questions**. *What do they mean? How can that be true? How quickly could I use that?*
73. **Stare into the night sky and immerse yourself in the immensity of possibility**.
74. *Write down five stupid things you do*. **Go cold turkey and stop doing them now**.
75. **Sing in the shower** and come out refreshed in every sense.
76. **Experiment** with the *chewing of gum, the shot of espresso and the writing by hand* on your smartness and concentration.
77. Stare at your open palm. Now imagine you have **X-ray vision** and can see muscle and bone. Now take it down a level and imagine that you can see molecules, atoms and vast volumes of space. Now reverse the process. Practise the process regularly.
78. Take smartness-enhancing drugs.
79. Represent **ideas visually** on a whiteboard or with felt pen and paper to access a different part of the brain.
80. Learn **to juggle**.
81. Study your route on the map. Memorise the essential parts of the journey; use SatNav as a back up.
82. **Work on the problem/issue in a different location**. Busy (but not packed) coffee shops invariably seem to increase smartness and creativity.
83. Read this. Write your own list.
84. *The test of a first-rate intelligence is the ability to hold two opposed ideas in mind at the same time and still retain the ability to function.*  
F. Scott Fitzgerald.

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100. Much intelligence may be nature. But decide to nurture your nature.
101. Decide to be more intelligent at dusk than you were at dawn. **Every day.**

Bonus: [You, Only Better](#), the book.

85. Represent the idea/problem/concept in **photographs** on your phone.
86. Work in the kitchen whilst cooking.
87. Give yourself an **Indian head massage**. Even better, get someone who loves you to do it.
88. Sharpen ten pencils. Now write on the issue until all need re-sharpening.
89. Copy Rudyard Kipling: *I keep six honest serving-men/(They taught me all I knew)/Their names are What and Why and When/And How and Where and Who.*
90. Work in 90 minute pulses, then meditate for ten minutes. Repeat.
91. Try different **note-taking styles**: cartoon/mind-map/bullet/narrative...
92. *Intelligence is the ability to adapt to change.*  
Stephen Hawking.
93. Never accept 'OK' work from yourself.
94. **Write a book**: the demands will stretch you to your smartness limits.
95. **Start an on-line business** to become fast-thinking, smart and flexible with competitors.
96. **Start a blog and post every day**: force yourself to commit to something which will have the scrutiny of everyone including your greatest enemies.
97. Discover **where and when and with whom** and **at what time** you do your greatest work.
98. Learn the **fine art of debating**.
99. Write a plan now to become more intelligent.  
*Procrastination is so tomorrow.*