

Tips for Revising Maths

1. Before you start revising, get all your notes sorted, and draw up a list of all the topics you need to cover. This serves two purposes: you will definitely cover everything you need to cover, and it is a relaxing way to ease yourself into the revision process.

2. Plan exactly when you are going to revise, and be strict with yourself. Don't just say that you are going to be revising all day because you won't get a lot done. Say that you will work from 10 until 11, then take a half hour break, then work until 12.30, then have some nice lunch, then do another hour, then go for a walk, and so on. If you are only revising in small chunks, and if you know the next break is just around the corner, your revision is likely to be much more focused.

3. Give yourself little treats and things to look forward to. If you do a good day of revision, take the night off, watch some telly, go and see your friends, put all thoughts of maths and school to the back of your mind. Buy yourself some chocolate, but only let yourself eat it once you have achieved what you need to do.

4. Don't just read through the textbook! The only way to revise maths is to do maths. You will do much better spending 20 minutes doing maths questions than spending two hours just reading a textbook. The more questions you do yourself, the more you will get right, the more you will enjoy your revision, and the better you will do in the exam.

5. Use the internet. The internet is like having your own personal teacher who is available for you whenever you like.

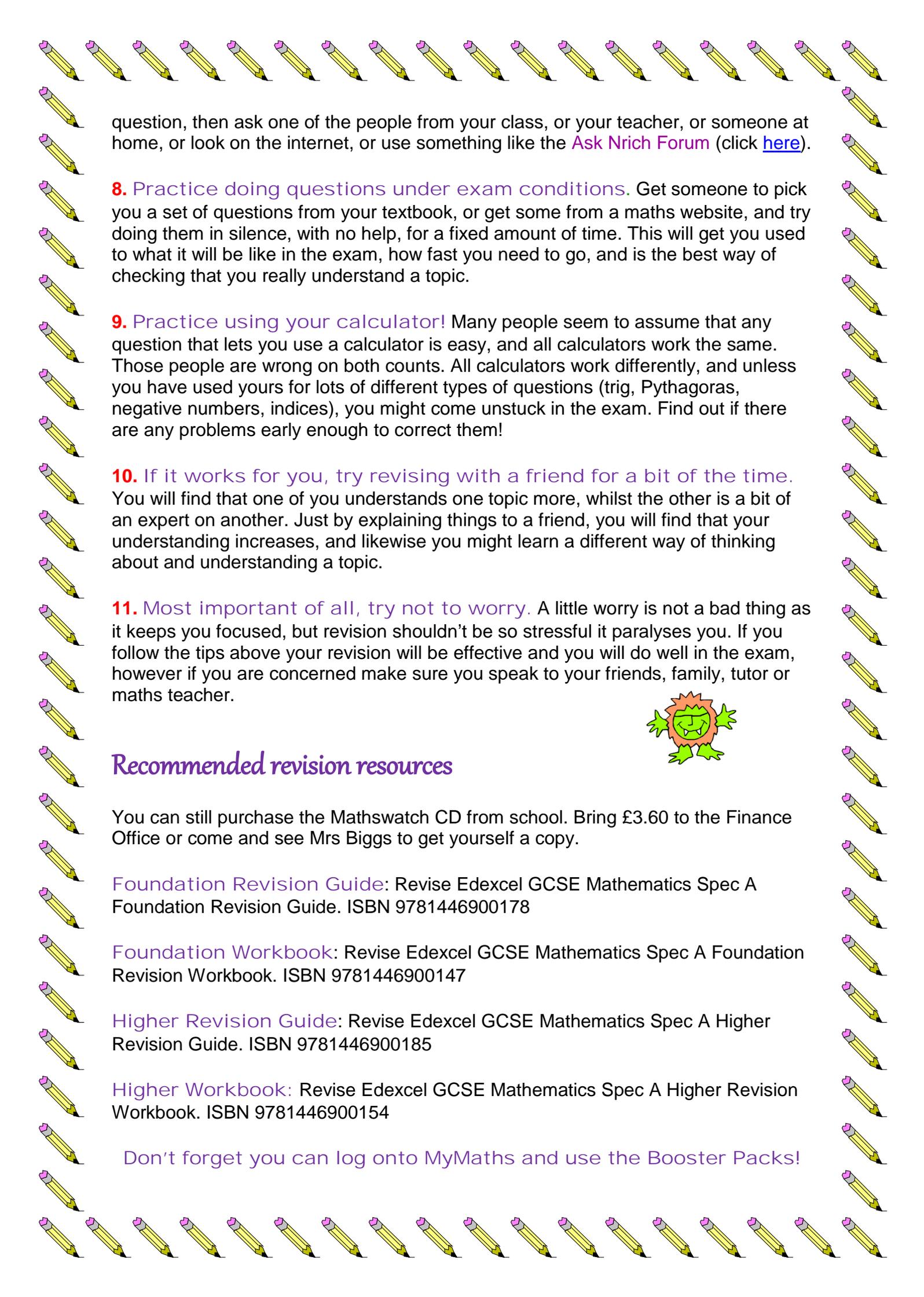
- There are [websites](#) that can set you questions and mark them for you, take you through step-by-step how to tackle certain topics, and use fancy illustrations and animations that might just make that really annoying topic finally make sense.

- There are free [video and audio podcasts](#) that you can watch on your computer ([or even on your iPods](#)), which is like having a maths lesson in the comfort of your own bedroom. They can be started, paused, and watched as many times as you like.

- There are [maths games](#) which you can play to practise crucial skills in a more fun way.

6. Don't just practice the topics you can do. If you are really good at fractions, for example, it is very tempting to keep doing lots of fractions questions and then smiling as you keep getting them right. But unfortunately the exam is probably not going to have more than one or two fractions questions. Although it can be painful, work your way through the topics that you struggle with, because it is much better to struggle on them at home than it is to struggle in the exam.

7. Make sure you ask for help. Again, once you are in the exam you are on your own, but during revision you are certainly not. If you are stuck on a topic or a



question, then ask one of the people from your class, or your teacher, or someone at home, or look on the internet, or use something like the [Ask Nrich Forum](#) (click [here](#)).

8. Practice doing questions under exam conditions. Get someone to pick you a set of questions from your textbook, or get some from a maths website, and try doing them in silence, with no help, for a fixed amount of time. This will get you used to what it will be like in the exam, how fast you need to go, and is the best way of checking that you really understand a topic.

9. Practice using your calculator! Many people seem to assume that any question that lets you use a calculator is easy, and all calculators work the same. Those people are wrong on both counts. All calculators work differently, and unless you have used yours for lots of different types of questions (trig, Pythagoras, negative numbers, indices), you might come unstuck in the exam. Find out if there are any problems early enough to correct them!

10. If it works for you, try revising with a friend for a bit of the time. You will find that one of you understands one topic more, whilst the other is a bit of an expert on another. Just by explaining things to a friend, you will find that your understanding increases, and likewise you might learn a different way of thinking about and understanding a topic.

11. Most important of all, try not to worry. A little worry is not a bad thing as it keeps you focused, but revision shouldn't be so stressful it paralyses you. If you follow the tips above your revision will be effective and you will do well in the exam, however if you are concerned make sure you speak to your friends, family, tutor or maths teacher.



Recommended revision resources

You can still purchase the Mathswatch CD from school. Bring £3.60 to the Finance Office or come and see Mrs Biggs to get yourself a copy.

Foundation Revision Guide: Revise Edexcel GCSE Mathematics Spec A Foundation Revision Guide. ISBN 9781446900178

Foundation Workbook: Revise Edexcel GCSE Mathematics Spec A Foundation Revision Workbook. ISBN 9781446900147

Higher Revision Guide: Revise Edexcel GCSE Mathematics Spec A Higher Revision Guide. ISBN 9781446900185

Higher Workbook: Revise Edexcel GCSE Mathematics Spec A Higher Revision Workbook. ISBN 9781446900154

Don't forget you can log onto [MyMaths](#) and use the [Booster Packs](#)!