

How to Concentrate on Studying

Good study habits are what separate the good students from the mediocre. It's natural to not want to study; especially when there are video games to play, friends to gossip with and TV to watch. After a good study session, you will enjoy all those activities even more. Besides, developing your concentration is its own reward in that it helps make you a calmer, smarter person for life.

Step 1: Pick a spot to study. If you find the right place and keep coming back to it, you will condition your brain to focus when the time comes to crack the books. Find a place where you can spread out your materials. Think about whether you concentrate best in complete seclusion or with some background activity. Any location you pick should be well lighted and ventilated.

Step 2: Choose a time to study. Everybody has points in the day when they are sharpest, whether be in the calm morning hours or after a workout. To develop good study habits, start at the same time each day and plan your other activities around this period.

Step 3: Begin at the beginning, and make a plan if you're not sure where that is; especially around finals or when approaching a term paper, just thinking about work involved can literally induce panic. Start your study session by making a list of what you need to get done. Break large projects up into easily digestible chunks, and give yourself plenty of time to complete each one.

Step 4: Minimize distractions, including cell phones, email and social networking sites. Noise is okay if you need the sound of music or television in the background; if you need total silence, invest in ear plugs. If you are distracted by shiny objects, keep your head down so you see only the page in front of you. Just think, the better your concentration, the sooner you'll be done.

Step 5: Use active reading techniques to keep your brain from wandering off. Reading is only as effective as the information you remember, so challenge yourself by asking questions as you go. Try looking away from the page and summarizing out loud what you just read. Make notes on what you don't understand and follow up with the instructor.

Step 6: Mix it up. Study one subject for an hour, take a break, and then continue with another subject. It's natural to want variety so that you stay interested in what you are trying to learn. If you find a particular subject boring, sandwich it between two subjects you enjoy.

Step 7: Give yourself incentives to finish. This is an important part of developing good study habits. Deep down we are all five year olds who just want a candy bar. Let your treat be a chat with