

Improving Your Concentration Skills

Identify Your Distractors

- Internal Factors (reoccurring thoughts, emotions, etc.)
- External Factors (noise, people, environment, etc.)

Techniques For Staying on Task

1. Set a goal on how much you want to study before you begin and stick to it. (i.e.- # of pages read, etc.)
2. Use the "Checkmark Technique" to keep track of how often you get distracted. Each time you divert your attention from your work, give yourself a checkpoint. At the end of your study session, count your check marks, and make a goal to reduce the checks next study session.
3. If while you are studying, you are constantly thinking about things you have to do, make a "To Do List". This should be done before you begin to study and then if something enters your mind while studying you can write it down on your list. When you have finished studying, you can begin to work on the tasks on your list.
4. Feeling overwhelmed with your study tasks? This is a major internal distractor. Try chunking or separating your assignment into smaller parts. Every task can be broken down into simpler ones and completed one at a time. The short time span will help you to stay focused and allow you to accomplish more work during your study session.
5. For other internal distractors, try the "tunnel vision technique". As soon as your mind begins to wander, bring these thoughts to a halt and get back on task. Think of nothing but the goal you have set and the information to be learned.
6. Try to study your most difficult coursework first. Completing the hardest material first, can improve your motivation to continue studying and keep you focused on your academic information.
7. As an assessment tool, try to summarize materials read or reviewed during your study session. The summary will allow you to determine how focused you were during the session and reinforce your understanding of the information.