

**Introduction:**

Many students have trouble concentrating on their studies. Even though they have committed a significant amount of time, they may find that they do not achieve anything. External and internal distractions are the most typical markers of attention issues. It is important for students to identify the distractions that take them away from concentration.

**1- Concentration:** To fix your attention on something.

keeping your mind on what you are reading or studying, involves two major skills or abilities *exclusion* and *focusing*

**External distractions**

1. Uncomfortable study environment (e.g. noise, furniture, lighting, temperature).
2. Phone calls, e-mails, and instant messaging (e.g. SMS, Whatsapp, Facebook, etc.) .
3. Interruptions from roommates and friends.
4. Television programmes, computer games.

**Internal distractions**

1. Tiredness, inadequate sleep, illness, hunger.
2. Daydreaming.
3. Preoccupying thoughts on personal matters.
4. Lack of interest, and motivation

**2- EXCLUDING DISTRACTION :**

It will be impossible to eliminate all the sources of distraction and interruption, but if you can control several of the factors which interfere with concentration, you will improve your ability to concentrate.

**2-1: Place:**

- The place, setting or physical location you choose for reading and study determines, in part, the number of distractions or interruptions you will have.
- Try to study in the same place.
- Don't try to study in your TV chair or stretched out across your bed
- *Avoid relaxing while working.*

**2-2 Time of Day:**

The time of day or night when you study also influences how easy or difficult it is to shut out distractions. Some people are very alert in the early morning; others find they are most alert at midday or in the evening. Read and study during the peaks of your attention span. Avoid studying at times when you know you will be easily distracted.

**2-3:Physical State:** If you are tired or sleepy, concentration will be difficult. As you plan and revise your study schedule, be sure to schedule studying at a time when physical needs will not interfere or distract you from studying.

**2-4 Avoid Noise/Music:** Try studying in complete silence; then try soft music; then try other types of music. Keep trying different noise situations until you have found that which is least distracting.

**3- FOCUSING YOUR ATTENTION**

You can use a variety of strategies to draw your attention to what you're reading or studying.

**3-1 Give Yourself a Goal:** Psychologically, reaching or achieving a goal is a positive rewarding experience. For each reading assignment you have to do or exam you have to study for, give yourself a goal to work toward. Set a time limit and work toward meeting it.

**3-2 Pre-reading:** The technique of pre-reading will help focus your attention on what you are reading and make concentration easier. To pre-read, skim the title, introduction, headings and subheadings, graphics, summary, and list of terms.

**3-3 Combine Physical and Mental Activities:** Physical activities, such as writing and underlining, when combined with the mental activities of reading, reviewing and memorizing, will help you focus your attention.

**3-4 Vary Your Activities:** The ability to focus on a particular subject will improve if you try not to *force your concentration on only one type* of activity for a long period of time.

**3-5 a Distraction List:** As you are reading or studying, often you will think of something you should remember to do. To overcome these mental reminders flashing through your mind as you study, keep a distraction list.

**3-6 Build Your Attention span (degree):** An easy way to increase your attention span is to note how many times you are distracted during a specified period of time. Each time you think about something other than what you are studying, make a mark of the paper. Total up your marks at the end of the specified time. Check yourself again, and try to reduce the number of distractions by ten percent.

**You will be able to concentrate best if you:**

- Study during the day and early evening.
- Study when there are the fewest competing activities in progress.
- Take short breaks and **STOP** studying when fatigue or lack of attention occurs.

## HOW TO BUILD CONCENTRATION

1. **Develop an interest.** An excellent way to do this is by previewing the material. This will acquaint you with the subject and give you some background information. You may also write some questions that you think will be answered through the reading. This will focus your attention.

2. **Set a goal.** Be specific in setting goals. By setting a goal you have established an objective for your study time.

3. **Prepare to concentrate.** Study in a place designed only for study.

4. **Vary the activity.** Varying your activity from time to time. Read for a period of time, then switch to taking notes or reciting aloud. By doing this, you will find that you won't tire as easily.

5. **Prevent daydreaming.** The best way to overcome daydreaming is to be aware of it happening. Immediately when you begin to daydream you need to force the distracting thoughts from your mind and get back on track.

6. **Relate learning.** You need to make meaningful associations between what you are learning and what you know. This way your learning becomes meaningful and is more readily recalled in the future.

7. **Set a time.** Set a time for the completion of your task. This will keep you focused as you attempt to complete the work before time is up.

8. **Pace yourself.** Trying to do too much too fast destroys concentration. When the assignment is long or involved, it is best not to attempt to complete it at one sitting.

9. **Organize the assignment.** One major reason students cannot concentrate is that they often have nothing to concentrate on. If your approach to the assignment is unplanned, that in itself may become a distraction.