

## 10 Tips to Improve Concentration

1. **Intend to Concentrate:** Humans tend to do what they tell themselves to do. Therefore, it's easier to concentrate if you set a *specific* length of time to study and consciously tell yourself that "I will concentrate" for that length of time.
2. **Prepare to Concentrate:** Have everything you will need before you begin to study: pencils, pens, paper, notes, textbooks, reference books, etc.
3. **Use Concentration Promoting Activities:** Study with a pen or pencil in hand and condense what you read into organized notes. Rewrite and better organize lecture notes. *If you study by rereading and suffer from poor concentration and poor recall, you are normal.*
4. **Vary Your Study Activities:** If your study style is not to focus on one subject for long periods of time, then vary what you do. Read and take notes for awhile, formulate questions and answers for a time, recite and review to break the monotony. Another example is to do math problems for awhile, then read another subject, review that subject, and then go back to math.
5. **Find a Non-Distracting Study Environment:** Study in the same place and use that place **only** for studying. Remove potential sources of visual and auditory distractions or remove yourself to a less distracting study environment.
6. **Set up a Specific System for Studying and Learning:** An effective step-by-step plan for studying and learning makes concentration easier. For example, take main ideas and turn them into questions and place them on one side of a notecard. On the other side, use the details that clarify and explain each main idea as answers for your questions. Frequently and regularly look at the questions and practice reciting answers aloud from memory. Then, turn the notecard over to check your answer. If right, move on to the next notecard. If wrong, don't move on until you read the answer aloud and quiz yourself again until you get it right.
7. **Eat Regular and Well-Balanced Meals:** Research suggests those with healthy diets earn higher grades. Avoid quick uppers such as sugary snacks because quickly rising and falling blood sugar levels negatively affect concentration. High fat foods cause sluggishness and drowsiness. Snack on fresh fruits and vegetables.
8. **Get Plenty of Night-Time Sleep:** Fighting sleepiness lowers concentration.

9. **Set Daily, Monthly, Weekly, and Semester Academic Goals:** It is easier to concentrate and feel motivation when you have goals and can see yourself progressing toward those goals.
10. **Take Regular Study Breaks:** It is normal for concentration time to vary individually from 5 minutes on up. Take a short 5-minute break when concentration wanders.