

# Distractions

TIME MANAGEMENT



## What is it and why do I care?

We all struggle with distractions. They're everywhere, with your phone, computer, television, other people, and your own thoughts topping the list. As college students, you usually have more freedom and autonomy to structure your time. But your good intentions to study, prep healthy meals, complete assignments, and get enough sleep before tomorrow's class are often derailed by the lure of distractions. Those distractions lead to procrastination which can result in late assignments, last-minute cramming for tests, a junk-food diet, and a lack of focus in class because you were up until 2am scrolling on your phone. Your plans end up derailed, your stress and anxiety spike, and you beat yourself up for making "bad" choices.

## How do I combat them?

### Internal Distractions (thoughts and emotions)

- **Create a daily plan**
  - Create a time, place, and location for your work. Pick your high energy times for challenging work.
  - Break down your work into small chunks with breaks (see the [Pomodoro Technique](#)).
  - Set goals and designated stopping points with your work.
  - Reward yourself along the way (when you complete a to-do list or reach a goal).
- **Manage your thoughts while studying**
  - Try [mindful breathing](#) or listening to instrumental music (use headphones for even more focus).
- **Aim to rest**
  - Try to get at least 7 hours of sleep each night.
- **Practice Self-Talk**
  - If your mind wanders, acknowledge it, affirm the importance of the work, and refocus.
  - Praise yourself for accomplishments and reinforce positive actions.
  - Use [affirmations](#) to motivate and boost positive thinking.
- **Regulate yourself**
  - Acknowledge when you are distracted and change what you can, step-by-step.

### External Distractions

- **Pick the best setting:** Alone or in a group? Library, home, or the park? Morning or evening? Silence or white noise?
- **Seek accountability:** Have your roommate hold onto your laptop/phone. Study in groups and check each other's work.
- **Regulate technology:** Silence tech, hide the screen, or keep them out of your study area. Try these options to keep you on track:
  - ⇒ Leech Block (Firefox)
  - ⇒ Stay Focused (Chrome)
  - ⇒ Mac Freedom (Mac & PC)
  - ⇒ Self-Control (Mac OS X)

## Video Resources

<https://youtu.be/kjwAtaXVcl>

<https://youtu.be/CgHwUONUe-0>

<https://youtu.be/KZGVgz9b2fw>