

Attention Checklist

- Do you find yourself being distracted by background noise or activities?
- Do you find your mind wanders 5-10 minutes after class has started?
- Do you find it hard to stay on task as there are always too many things to attend to?
- Can you do many tasks at once?
- Do you get restless doing one task after 5-10 minutes?

If you answered YES to most of these questions, keep reading for successful strategies to help you increase your attention span.

Try 1 new strategy each week and then add another strategy the next week.



Need more ideas? Check out these resources:

- http://library.queensu.ca/websrs/faculty_guide-Staff.html Excellent Resource at Queen's University
- <http://www.queensu-hcds.org/> Resources, Assessment and Learning Strategies (RARC and BeWell-DoWell)
- www.ldonline.org Good Technological Resources
- <http://www.parkland.edu/goals/Workshops.html> Online Survival Workshops
- <http://www.metamath.com/lsweb/dvclearn.html> Learning styles

***Above all:** Take care of yourself and focus on the POSITIVE... you *do* have strengths! Make sure your "Self Talk" (what you say internally to yourself about yourself) is positive and that you regularly exercise sleep and eat! ☺*



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Take Control of Your Learning with Attention Strategies!

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"I think I've put together the perfect presentation that's guaranteed to hold everyone's attention from start to finish...all 17 seconds of it!"

Research has shown that successful students use these strategies. Try to find a few that work for you!

LIFE STRATEGIES:

- Take one thing at a time (use a list and cross things off as you do them)
- Make small detailed goals for yourself, write them down, place them in a visible area (e.g. your mirror) and reward yourself for accomplishing these tasks
- Keep a log during the day and find out when you are most distracted
- Make sure you keep a regular routine and include exercise (at minimum 3 times a week for 30 minutes), rest (7-8 hours/night minimum) and eating (a balanced diet). This routine will help you to focus

COURSE SELECTION STRATEGIES:

- Consider scheduling your courses so that they are during the time(s) when you are most attentive (e.g. If you are a morning person, try to schedule your classes during the morning)
- Consider decreasing your course load-take an extra year if needed

LECTURE STRATEGIES:

- Sit near the front of the lecture room (away from windows and chatty people) to avoid distractions, or be near the exit so that you can take a 2-3 minute break during long lectures
- Participate in lecture discussions and ask questions in class
- Print off lecture notes and follow them (add your own notes/pictures)
- Record lectures on tape or order textbooks on tape
- Have the appropriate readings done before the lecture
- Compare your notes with someone else so that you don't miss anything or misinterpret information
- Buy fidget toys and use them in class if they help you to focus better

ASSIGNMENT AND NOTE TAKING STRATEGIES:

- Use a computer to write notes and assignments
- Have a proof reader for assignments
- Ask for clarification with assignments and formats of exams

STUDY STRATEGIES:

- Get ready for exams/major papers by brainstorming with a group where everyone brings information (e.g. everyone reads one chapter of the text and shares the main points with the group)

- Study in a location that is away from distractions (windows, posters, computer, music, TV and doors)
- Turn off MSN and ICQ!
- Studying is most effective if it is done for a maximum of 50 minutes at a time, followed by a 15 minute break (make sure you get out of your seat and MOVE!)
- Reward yourself each time you successfully complete a goal
- Use earplugs when studying
- Review information with a tutor/friend/study group to make sure that you are on track
- Learn concepts by using hands on material (e.g. write in sand or make models out of Lego)

ACCOMMODATIONS:

- Select living arrangements that have fewer distractions (e.g. Have a single room)
- Tell your instructor(s) so that they are aware of your needs and accommodations
- Have a note taker for each of your lectures so that you can focus solely on what the professor is saying
- Arrange for extra time and a separate room for tests and exams
- Speak to a counsellor
- Get a tutor or a mentor
- Use an FM system in lectures