



How can I reduce distractions while studying or taking a test?

Study Tips for Reducing Distractions

- Set up an ideal study environment. Study in a location that minimizes both visual and auditory distractions. Try to find a location where you cannot see others moving around and is located in a quiet space.
- Remove unnecessary items from your study space that are not needed for studying.
- Use noise cancelling headphones or listen to white noise to reduce auditory distractions or try using earplugs.
- Remove electronic distractions. Turn your phone on silent and put it where you cannot see the screen. Turn off notifications on your laptop.
- Take timed breaks. Know your threshold for focus. When you start losing focus frequently, take a timed break. This will help to remind you to return to your studying.
- Reduce internal recurring thoughts. Keep a post-it note or piece of paper to right down your thoughts so you don't forget them. You can take care of the items on your timed break or when finished studying.
- Do not cram. Set a schedule to review material in a timely manner. List out specific goals/a study plan – even hour-by-hour, and use timers to try to stay on track.
- Move around while studying. Get up and use a whiteboard or change positions often.
- Chewing gum is sometimes helpful for focus, and/or having a stress ball or other fidget device can help when you start to feel restless.
- Some students find sitting on an exercise ball while studying helpful with focus as well.
- Use mind mapping to help organize your thoughts and create a visual representation of the information.
- Chunk the information. If you have a lecture to learn or review, approach the information in chunks instead of trying to learn all the information at one time. It can be helpful to organize the information by learning objectives.
- Use highlighting or paraphrasing information as you read it.

Testing Tips for Reducing Distractions

Unit exams will continue to be delivered electronically through ExamSoft and will be completed at home until further notice. Thus, the College will not be proctoring exams in the Testing Rooms until students are permitted to return to campus. It will be incumbent upon students receiving reduced distraction/private testing accommodations to find time and space in their own homes to take exams that supports their needs. To accomplish this, we recommend that you:

- Find a location in your home in which to take exams that has good lighting, is quiet, and is away from others as much as possible.
- Find or set up a workspace that faces a wall or corner with little to no artwork or foot traffic nearby.
- Avoid work spaces near windows.
- If available, try to have ear plugs or headphones available to minimize noise distractions during testing times.
- Ask others in your household to respect your testing needs for the duration of your testing time.
- Ensure that your laptop or computer is plugged in to a power source and has a strong internet connection.
- Remember, it may be the case that your completed exam does not upload right away. If this is the case, try moving the laptop to a part of the home that has stronger internet connectivity. The test will automatically upload when the bandwidth is available.