

STUDY SKILLS

PATS

To help me not get distracted when I study.

Pick the right environment to study.

- Choose a place to study where you feel most comfortable. You may like to study in a place with people around (e.g., the library) or with no people (e.g., your room at home). You may like music or TV to drown out background noises or you may want complete quiet. You also may like to study with bright light or with dim light.
- Reserve the place for studying only so that you associate that place ONLY with studying. For example, if you study in your bed, you may confuse yourself because your bed is associated with sleeping, and not studying.

Always reduce visual distractions.

- If you are visually distracted, be sure to find a place to study where there is nothing to distract you (e.g., the desk in your room). If you are studying in the library, make sure to sit away from the main desk and the door. If possible, sit facing the wall or the book stacks.
- Even if you like to study with people around, you need to be sure that you will not be tempted to watch people rather than study. For example, if there is a baseball game happening outside the room where you're studying, be sure to sit far from the window so that you're not tempted to watch the game.
- Do not study near things that you may be tempted to play with (e.g., a video game or a stapler)

Try to eliminate noise around you.

- If you are distracted by noises, study in a quiet room. If you are still distracted by noises (e.g., the air conditioner), use earplugs to block out all background sounds.
- If you like to study with music or TV, make sure that they are not distracting you. Find out if music helps you or not. If you listen to song lyrics while studying, you are distracted by the music. If you ignore the lyrics, you may be helped by the music. If you have the TV on and you are listening to what people are saying, then the TV is distracting you. If you don't pay attention to what people are saying, then the TV may block out background noise.
- Use earplugs if necessary.

Self talk to control internal distractions

- Sometimes people are distracted by internal factors from their own bodies (e.g., grumbling stomach, itch, thoughts about other things to do).

- When you become aware of internal distractions, talk to yourself and direct your attention back to studying. For example, if your stomach is grumbling, say to yourself: "It's almost lunch time and I'm hungry. I have to study for another 30 minutes before lunch, so I'll ignore my stomach noises."