

# Effective Study Habits

*Take turns with other tutors giving an example of each.*

- **Take responsibility for yourself**

Responsibility is recognition that in order to succeed you can make decisions about your priorities, your time, and your resources

- **Center yourself around your values and principles**

Don't let friends and acquaintances dictate what you consider important

- **Put first things first**

Follow up on the priorities you have set for yourself, and don't let others, or other interests, distract you from your goals

- **Discover your key productivity periods and places**

Morning, afternoon, evening; study spaces where you can be the most focused and productive. Prioritize these for your most difficult study challenges

- **Consider yourself in a win-win situation.**

You win by doing your best and contributing your best to a class, whether for yourself, your fellow students, and even for your teachers and instructors. If you are content with your performance, a grade becomes an external check on your performance, which may not coincide with your internally arrived at benefits

- **First understand others, then attempt to be understood**

When you have an issue with an instructor, for example a questionable grade, an assignment deadline extension, put yourself in the instructor's place. Now ask yourself how you can best make your argument given his/her situation

- **Look for better solutions to problems**

For example, if you don't understand the course material, don't just re-read the material. Try something else! Consult with the professor, a tutor, an academic advisor, a classmate, a study group, or your school's study skills center

- **Look to continually challenge yourself**

We all have the ability to concentrate -- sometimes. Think of the times when you were "lost" in something you enjoy: a sport, playing music, a good game, a movie. Total concentration.

# Concentrating when studying

**Sometimes,**

- Your mind wanders from one thing to another
- Your worries distract you
- Outside distractions take you away before you know it
- The material is boring, difficult, and/or not interesting to you.

**These tips may help:** They involve

1. What you can control in your studies
2. Best practices

**What you can control in your studies:**

- **"Here I study"**  
Get a dedicated space, chair, table, lighting and environment  
Avoid your cell phone or telephone  
Put up a sign to avoid being disturbed or interrupted  
If you like music in the background, OK, but don't let it be a distraction.  
(Research on productivity with music versus without music is inconclusive)
- **Stick to a routine, efficient study schedule**  
Accommodate your day/nighttime energy levels  
See our Guide on [Setting goals and making a scheduling](#)
- **Focus**  
Before you begin studying, take a few minutes to summarize a few objectives, gather what you will need, and think of a general strategy of accomplishment
- **Incentives**  
Create an incentive if necessary for successfully completing a task, such as calling a friend, a food treat, a walk, etc.  
For special projects such as term papers, design projects, long book reviews, set up a special incentive
- **Change topics**  
Changing the subject you study every one to two hours for variety
- **Vary your study activities**  
Alternate reading with more active learning exercises  
If you have a lot of reading, try the [SQ3R method](#)  
Ask yourself how you could increase your activity level while studying? Perhaps a group will be best or creating study questions.  
Ask your teacher for alternative strategies for learning. The more active your learning, the better.

- **Take regular, scheduled breaks that fit you**  
Do something different from what you've been doing (e.g., walk around if you've been sitting), and in a different area
- **Rewards**  
Give yourself a reward when you've completed a task

**Best Practices:**

- **You should notice improvement in a few days**  
But like any practice, there will be ups, levels, and downs: |