



## Study Tips for College Students

**Music** - Studies show that listening to music can greatly help with focus and concentration. Create a 30-60 minute playlist of upbeat, instrumental music. Check out the “Deep Focus” playlist on Spotify. The important thing is to choose music that is dedicated solely for homework/study time. There’s an added bonus to listening to a repeated playlist while studying. If the student can recall the study playlist music, often they will be able to also recall the material they studied while listening to the playlist.

**Fidgets** - You’ve probably heard of fidget spinners but fidgets can also be a piece of jewelry or a stress ball. Chewing gum can actually help with focus and so can sitting on an exercise ball. How do these help with focus? The part of the brain that would normally get distracted is occupied with the mindless activity of chewing gum, balancing on the exercise ball or handling a fidget item. Therefore, the other part of the brain is able to focus on the task at hand. Additionally, the movement is keeping the brain alert and awake.

**Breaks** - Be aware of how long you can focus. Plan for a short break when you think your focus will be fading. Set an alarm to signal the beginning and end of the break. The amount of time you are able to focus can vary depending on subject matter. You may find that you are able to focus longer on subjects you enjoy.

**Study buddy** - Studying with a classmate or surrounding yourself with others who are studying and doing homework can be very powerful. Go to the library or lab to study rather than your room or living space. Make the library your home away from home for studying.

**Snacks** - Go for high protein, low sugar. Some examples are nuts and nut butter, cheese sticks, boiled eggs, yogurt or beef jerky. Be careful of protein bars and protein shakes. Sometimes the sugar content is high.

**Schedule Study Time** - Build homework time into the schedule. Treat it as an obligation just like going to class. If you don’t have impending assignments, use the dedicated time slot to review notes and readings so you won’t be cramming before the next test.

**Stand up or walk around while studying** - In addition to the fidgets mentioned above, movement keeps the brain awake and raises hormones necessary to maintain focus.

**Talk to yourself** - Verbalize what you’re reading or memorizing. It’s another way to retain information. This is especially helpful for auditory learners.

**Talk to text** - Voice to speech apps and software can be useful if writing is difficult. Rather than staring at a blank screen or paper, simply start talking. Check out Google Docs Voice Typing or Dragon Speak.

**Work with your energy level** - Plan to do the most difficult subject or task when you’re most able to focus. Save easier tasks for when you’re tired and less able to focus.

**Ask for help** - Pursue academic support resources on your campus and ask for help. Most campuses offer a writing center that will proof-read and edit your written assignments. Resources such as this are typically included in tuition so take advantage of them.