

7 Top Tips for Better Focus Throughout the Day

If you work in a typical office setting, you likely get about 11 minutes between interruptions and distractions, yet it takes a full 25 minutes to get back on track, according to a [University of California, Irvine researcher](#). Do the math and you quickly see that those figures don't add up to a very successful or focused work day.

Let's face it – with technology, busy to-do lists and packed schedules – focusing is not an easy task. And yet, it is essential to producing good work, to nurturing solid relationships and to keeping your mind calm rather than frenzied. Even when it is difficult, placing a priority on focus will be beneficial for both your work and life outside of work.

If you are struggling with focus and concentration, these top 7 tips can help you get back – and stay – on track.

- 1) **Meditate.** If you are not already meditating – simply focusing on your breath – daily, you have probably heard about its many, many benefits. Meditation exercises can help you enhance focus, [increase grey matter](#) in the brain, reduce [anxiety](#) and depression, and keep your mind from wandering off. Dedicate 10 to 20 minutes per day – you can even split the time up – to simply sit and focus on your breath. It will not be easy at first, but once you start to realize the benefits of meditation, you will understand why it is so touted for so many different benefits.
- 2) **Chew gum.** Believe it or not, researchers at [Cardiff University](#) in the United Kingdom recognized that chewing gum can help to improve focus and memory. Chewing gum had already been established as a means of enhancing visual memory and this study added on, noting that it offered better retention for audio recollection. As a side benefit, gum can also keep your breath fresh.
- 3) **Set yourself up for success.** You have likely heard the phrase that “failing to plan is planning to fail.” The more prepared you are for your day, your goals and staying on task, the more likely you are to succeed. Take a few minutes at the end of each day to prepare for the day to follow, setting short- and long-term goals to bolster your chances of focus, goal achievement and success in your endeavors.
- 4) **Try a [coffee nap](#).** While you may already use coffee to keep you alert and awake, drinking a small amount of coffee or caffeinated tea right before a power nap can help you focus even more when you wake up. The key is to drink the coffee immediately before the nap so that the caffeine doesn't have time to kick in until you wake up, alert and ready for the rest of your day. Short power naps can also provide a much-needed burst of energy for the afternoon.
- 5) **Listen to classical music.** Music soothes the savage beast and it can tame the wild mind. Listening to short symphonies by an 18th-century

composer helped study subjects increase their attention spans, according to a [Stanford University School of Medicine study](#). Classical music also creates a nice environment and can help to keep out other noises and potential distractions.

- 6) **Establish and maintain an exercise plan.** Exercise enhances focus and concentration by decreasing inflammation and insulin resistance and increasing the release of growth factors, according to [Harvard Medical School](#). Likewise, exercising before, during or after the work day can provide the energy you need for your next task, deliver a welcome break from work and help you stay on track. If you don't already have a solid routine, take the time to try various formats such as weight-lifting, yoga and Pilates, running or biking, or kickboxing for a bonus stress relief.
- 7) **Feed your body the right foods.** Focus starts from the inside out. When you provide your body the right fuel and provide ample hydration, you will have sustained energy, increased focus, and overall health and wellness. Rather than sweets, fried foods or processed foods, make sure you are eating lean protein, vegetables, fruits, nuts and whole grains – as well as a solid eight glasses of water each day. Simply put, consuming healthy food can lead to a healthy level of focus and concentration.

Focus is truly an inside job. The more you center yourself, create a positive work environment, and take care of your body and health, the better your chances of maintaining focus on the job and in your relationships. Carve out time each day to breathe, exercise, listen to music, enjoy a cup of coffee and focus on achieving your goals and dreams.