

HOW TO CULTIVATE STUDY SPACES



Tips from the CEP desk

ESTABLISH A DAILY ROUTINE

Create consistency

Get out of bed and get dressed. Take a shower, brush your teeth, do your skincare routine or other routines to prepare for your day. Rituals like eating meals at regular intervals, making your bed, or tidying up your room can help you retain a sense of normalcy.

SET BOUNDARIES

Reduce possible distractions

Try not to have background media or potentially distracting browser tabs open (don't multitask). Playing a tv show, movie, or music in the background may be distracting and make it harder to absorb information. Discuss with your family or roommates to make adjustments for shared spaces.

CREATE A DESIGNATED WORK SPACE

Define where work happens

Try to find a table, desk, any platform that you can work on. Clearly define the part of your house where work happens and where it doesn't. More likely you'll get work done when you're there. Keep your workspace tidy. If possible, try to have multiple places to get work done for a change of scenery.

FOCUS ON WHAT YOU CAN CONTROL

Make the most of what you can

Create as much structure and predictability in your life. While you may not be able to control everything, you can work with what you can control. Start by setting small routines and goals to help you feel accomplished and productive.

TAKE IT ONE DAY AT A TIME

Be kind to yourself

Recognize that it is okay to not feel your most productive or motivated under these new and changing circumstances. Remember that learning (and life!) looks very different now. Do the best that you can and remember to take care of yourself!



8 TIPS

TO JUMPSTART YOUR FOCUS

Having a hard time staying focused or getting started on your coursework? Try one or more of these strategies to help you get focused and stay focused.

1 ELIMINATE DISTRACTIONS

Put your phone on airplane mode or Do Not Disturb. You can also try placing it out of reach or in a different room. If you're reading or completing an assignment that does not require digital devices, try closing your laptop.

2 THE "TWO-MINUTE" RULE

Set aside 2 minutes. If you see a task or action that can be done in 2 minutes or less, do it immediately. Completing the task right away takes less time than having to go back and do it later.

3 "BLAST OFF" METHOD

Conduct a 5-4-3-2-1 countdown and then launch yourself into the task you've been procrastinating on. This practice will help you override bad habits and put you in greater control of your actions.

4 POMODORO METHOD

Balance dedicated periods of focus with deliberate breaks in between. Work for 25 minutes straight, then take a 5 minute break. Repeat 4 times, then take a longer break. This works particularly well if you're feeling restless.

5 COMPLETE RECURRING TASKS AT THE SAME TIME EACH DAY

Pick one or two daily tasks and set aside specific times for them. This helps you to avoid decision fatigue and develop consistent habits. A good task to do at the same time each day is checking your email or downloading readings from Courseworks.

6 GIVE IT 20 MINUTES

Give yourself 20 minutes to work on a particular task, especially if it's something you are avoiding. Do nothing else for those 20 minutes. Set a timer—timing helps add a sense of urgency.

7 PLAN YOUR DAY THE NIGHT BEFORE

Write down three things you want to accomplish the next day. This gives you a head start on the next day as you've already planned what needs to be done. Cap the list at 3 items— keep it short, simple, and realistic!

8 MAKE A NOT-TO-DO LIST

Create a list of all the activities you plan to stop doing in order to be less distracted. You can also list activities that you want to consciously deprioritize.

