

Tips to Help Improve Attention and Short-term Memory

Slow Down

- Find a speed that works for you. Find a speed where you make few or no “oops” errors — where you just weren’t concentrating.
- Ask people to slow down when they talk to you.
- Ask people to tell you one thing at a time.

Reduce Distractions

- Turn off the TV or radio.
- Clear off a space to do your work.
- Work in a quiet room or place in your house.

Work for Short Periods of Time

- Gradually increase the time you spend concentrating as it gets easier. For instance, start by trying to concentrate for 30 minutes. The next time, increase your time to 60 minutes.

Check Your Work

- Ask someone you trust to look over important information, such as medicines, bills or tax forms.

Work on Important or Difficult Activities When You are Rested

- Having a clear mind will help you think and solve problems better.

Write Down Important Information

- Write down any important information you do not want to forget. For example, write down appointments on a calendar.

Repeat Important Information

- Repeat information you want to remember, such as a phone number.
- You may read the information you write aloud.

Use Visual Reminders

- As you leave your car, look back to remember where it is and how it looks.
- Picture in your mind the milk you need to buy, or the shoes you need to get from your closet.
- Leave your medicine bottles out where you will see them when you need to take them. Make sure to keep them out of children’s reach.

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- Leave the bag you need to take to the car in front of the door so you don't forget.

Organize

- Organize your grocery items by category. For example, write down all of the vegetables together.
- Use files to reduce clutter.

Keep Items in the Same Place

- Keep your keys on a hook by the door.
Find a spot for your wallet or purse.
Put your glasses in the same place.

What Not To Do

Until your concentration gets better, do not:

- drive, use power tools
- cook on the stove, use knives
- do anything where, if you aren't paying attention, you or someone else could get hurt.