

Dealing with distractions



When you're meant to be studying, it's amazing how interesting everything else can be...

...like checking your Facebook... having one more cup of coffee... defrosting the freezer... watching daytime television...

You shouldn't feel that you need to spend all your time studying, but sometimes it's difficult to get the right balance. Try some of these suggestions from other students to get your distractions under control.



Instant messaging and emails	<p>"Keep yourself logged out while studying."</p> <p>"Switch on the pop-up blocker and mute the volume if I have to be logged on so I don't get distracted by alerts."</p> <p>"Fix a time when you're going to look at your emails and messages, and how long you're going to spend on them - then set an alarm so you know when to stop."</p>
Phone calls and texts	<p>"Mute your phone and put it somewhere you can't see it! Check it when you have a break from study."</p> <p>"Set up your voicemail to say that you'll be free at certain times, so your mum doesn't worry if she doesn't get an answer."</p>
Facebook/Bebo/MySpace	<p>"An application like Leechblock is good. It temporarily restricts the amount of time you're allowed to spend on certain websites. It's a good trick to use to break the habit and prove to yourself that the world doesn't stop turning if you don't check your Facebook every five minutes."</p>
Surfing the net	<p>"Unplug your ethernet cable or temporarily disable your wi-fi."</p> <p>"If you need to use the net for research, make a list of questions you need answered before you start, and stick to it."</p>
Computer games	<p>"Work somewhere very public like the library, or your department so you're not tempted."</p> <p>"If the games you've playing are online, you could use Leechblock to reduce the amount of time you spend on them. Or disable your internet connection."</p>
Television	<p>"Check the schedules for the things you really want to watch and set reminders on your mobile. Or record them to watch later."</p> <p>"Get out of the habit of turning the telly on when you walk into a room!"</p>
Food and drink	<p>"When I'm working at home, the kettle's always calling me! So I fill a vacuum flask at the beginning of my study session and keep it on my desk so I don't get up and lose my concentration."</p>
Tidying your room and other chores	<p>"I fix a time to do these after lunch when my brain doesn't work so well. Then I don't persuade myself that I HAVE to get them out of the way before I start studying."</p>
Family commitments	<p>"If I'm not careful I end up giving my family half my attention all the time (and not really focusing on study with the other half). I think it helps to give them my undivided attention for some of the time, then they're more likely to understand when I have to work."</p>
Housework	<p>"Lower your standards! Only wash up once a day – and no-one needs ironed duvet covers."</p> <p>"I just had to tell myself, well, I've worked hard to get to university, and I deserve to have the time to study and get good marks. I'll clean the cooker when I graduate!"</p>