



Sustained Attention

The ability to focus on an activity or stimulus over a long period of time.

Sustained Attention - Examples

- Studying for a test
- Driving
- Air Traffic Controllers



Sustained Attention - Listening

When is it important to be a good listener?

- During a test
- During an emergency
- Listening to directions

Listening Practice Activities





Sustained Attention – Six Strategies

1. Nourish your body and refresh your brain

- Work at a time of day you have more energy
- Try exercising before you study
- Stay hydrated, drink more water
- Try standing or walking while you work
- Take short breaks

Sustained Attention – 6 Strategies

2. Eliminate External Distractions

- Turn off or silence external distractions
- Change your location to someplace less familiar
- If silence is distracting, listen to ambient sounds or music



Sustained Attention – 6 Strategies

3. Minimize Internal Distractions

- If your mind is racing in different directions, make a list of what you are thinking about so you can deal with it later
- Keep a notepad nearby to jot down ideas that come to your mind that are not related to the task you are working on
- Schedule a time later to deal with a worry that is unrelated to the task you are currently working on.



Sustained Attention – 6 Strategies

4. Make it Easy To Get Started

- Shrink a task down (work for 5 minutes or write just a couple sentences, then take a short break).
- Identify just one step you need to take to make progress on the task, then just concentrate on that step



Sustained Attention – 6 Strategies

5. Increase Your Motivation

- Create a reward you will get when you finish
- Focus on the benefits of completing the task
- Increase your Accountability (make a public commitment to a friend, sibling, parent about what you will accomplish)



***Sustained Attention* – 6 Strategies**

6. Create Time Pressure

- Create a completion time goal well before a due date
- Divide work into shorter intervals with deadlines for each task
- Challenge yourself to complete a task in an absurdly short deadline



Sustained Attention - Final Task

Using what you have learned, let's try an activity that will require you to focus your attention. See if you are able to complete it and not let the distractions of the impending Thanksgiving break dismissal bell affect you.

You will need:

- Blank sheet of paper
- Something to draw with

Show [video](#).

