YSAFE *Presents*

Digital distraction and **study skills toolkit.**

Top tips to help you **manage digital distractions** so you can win at study time.

Tech is an indisputable part of the way we live and has infiltrated our lives in ways that bring constant digital distraction. Did you know on average it takes **23 minutes and 15 seconds for a person to return to full focus after being distracted?** That's a lot of wasted time that could be better spent! With this in mind, here are some tips to help keep digital distractions in check so you can focus on what's important.

Out of sight, out of mind

Did you know that simply having your phone in sight or within reach has been shown to have a negative affect on your brain's ability to process and retain information?

Even if it's face-down on your desk, research shows you are distracted just by knowing it's there. Put your phone away in another room, where you can't see or reach for it easily to make it less tempting to check.

Did you know that **having your smartphone in sight, reduces your cognitive capacity.**

On average, people are checking their phone every

6 minutes

Practise productivity

How often is your concentration interrupted by checking your device? Consider apps like **myHomework** or **My Study Life,** especially designed for teens to help them stay organised and on track when it comes to school.

Try the Pomodoro hack

The Pomodoro what now? This hack is about setting a timer for blocks of concentration. Break up your study time into four blocks of 25 minutes each, with a five-minute brain break in between to stretch or get a snack. The final half-hour at the end is used as a longer break for checking your socials or responding to DM's.

Are you continuously distracted by your device? You might not be performing as well as those who use **intentional breaks** to check messages or make calls.

The average person receives **63.5 notifications every day.**

Bundle your notifications

Take action to group notifications according to a category, and control your response time. Instead of checking and replying to messages as they come in (and being distracted each and every time), take control by using the bundling option in your app settings to help improve your productivity, and setting time aside to check and respond to in bulk.

Activate your online status

To help avoid the greatest distraction of all (hello tea in the group chat), be proactive in updating your online status so family and friends know not to disturb you. Resist the urge to respond to messages or posts immediately. Set your status to 'away' in instant messaging apps that allow for it.
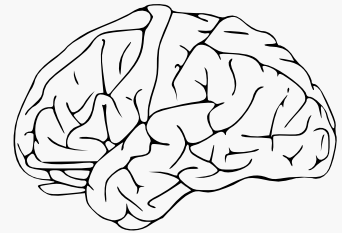
Scientific studies have proven that 'always on' behaviour is **harmful to mental health as it leads to burnout**, even in school.

Remove temptation

Set your screen to dull greyscale, close down distracting tabs, and move tempting apps off the first few pages of your device so you are less likely to look at it when your time is better spent studying instead. If you notice that there is an app you can't resist, consider deleting (even temporarily).

Setting your phone to **greyscale makes your device less appealing and visual notification alerts not as noticeable.**

Keep things on the DL

Turn off annoying notifications, or invest in some good quality noise-cancelling headphones if you're finding your device and other background noise distracting. If you're the type of person who is distracted by silence, consider listening to lyric-free classical music, or ambient or white noise.

Studies have shown that **listening to classical music or ambient noise** while studying can help improve your cognitive function.

Forgetting what you learnt in class? If you're one of the

72% of students

using their smartphone in class, that might be why.

Multitasking is a myth

Like streaming Stranger Things while studying? Hold up - studies have shown that it's impossible to concentrate on more than one thing at a time actively. By sticking to a single screen while studying, shutting down any tabs you don't need and turning off notifications, you'll be able to delve deeply into your study content, enhancing your learning and memory consolidation.

Treat yo self

Along with the stress of study, the overwhelm experienced by constant notification bombardment gets real. Reward yourself for getting through your planned study without getting distracted. By taking the time to celebrate the wins, you'll have added purpose to steer clear of your device or favourite platform. If a reward is not enough, consider investing in an app like **Forest** that rewards your focus by growing a virtual tree (and causes it to wither and die if you touch your device).

> Constant notification bombardment can add to the stress of study.

Sleep - shocking, right?

You've heard this before, but lack of sleep has a huge negative effect on your well-being and ability to function. Constant notifications make it next to impossible for users to switch off and rest, and the blue light emitted by a device's screen has been scientifically proven to cause insomnia.

Are you one of the 71% of smartphone users who sleep with their phone next to them every night?

Not only can digital distraction lower your potential and grades - **it's also been linked to creating feelings of depression, stress and frustration!**

Make what you value most a priority

Digital distraction while you're studying makes you less productive. It takes longer to do the dry stuff, and gives you less quality time to spend on things you really enjoy. While this may seem obvious, the real power is in the doing (not the knowing) so you can fully experience the benefits that come with taming your tech.