

# 14 Rituals for Better Focus at Work

We asked *ADDitude* readers how they stay focused at work. Here are some of our favorite attention hacks that really work!

by the *ADDitude* Editors

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## Managing ADHD on the Job

Distracting co-workers, messy desks, and monotonous work all conspire against ADHD adults on the job — taxing our attention and pushing our focus past its limit. So we asked *ADDitude* readers what tricks you use to keep your brain focused at work — here's what you said!

### Take Notes

"I keep a notepad and pen in my pocket to jot down any random ideas or tasks that float into forethought. This combats distraction by allowing me to keep record of the task that isn't an immediate priority, and set it aside until my present task is complete. I'm able to check items off throughout the day, which gives me a sense of accomplishment." —*Jennifer Mills*

### Plan the Night Before

"Before I go to bed, I write a to-do list of everything I need to do the next day — including small things such as sending a birthday card — and then I email it to myself. When I sit down at my desk in the morning to read my email I print off the list and keep it next to me all day, ticking off items as I go. This also helps me from waking up at night and worrying about all the things I have to do the next day!" —*Niki Worrell*

### Break Down Your Time

"I list three things that are the priority to get done this hour/half hour. When I'm done with that, I find I go to the next three things. One item is not interesting enough to keep me focused." —*Emily Porges*

### Get Up and Move

"At work I will walk a lap around the office before sitting down to focus on a report." —*Rhonda Pratl Harvey*

### Label, Label, Label

"I tend to be a 'piler' of papers. The 'touch a paper only once' rule doesn't work very well for me. But what *does* work is putting a sticky note on each paper in the pile that had on it the next step for that piece of paper. Maybe it says, 'file in bills', or 'make 3 copies' or 'take to office.' This makes that pile seem less intimidating because I know I won't have to think SO HARD when I get to it." —*Kristi Henderson*

### White Noise

"I work in an office with cubicles that is very noisy. I have a small fan that I keep on my desk that is just enough white noise to 'drown out' most of the people talking. It works wonders. Instead of hearing every conversation and being tempted to join or talk to others, I really have to strain to hear, which I don't as I am able to focus on my work." —*NatalieJ*

### Talk to Yourself

"I have a voice recorder that I use to record ideas or tasks that I must do." —*Linda Follis*

### Go In Early

"To reduce my distraction at work concerning paperwork, I will go in 30-45 minutes early and shut my door to get the work done when it is quiet with no distractions." –*James Atkison*

## Find a Private Space

"In college, before medication was available, my best place to study late at night was the laundry room. There was usually no one around, and I could read out loud. Seeing and hearing the material at the same time improved my focus and comprehension." –*Louise Bevilacqua*

## Save the Best for First

"When I have a list of tasks that need to be done, I've found that sometimes (depending on what those tasks are) completing the 'fun' tasks FIRST will often times help me 'rev up' my brain with enough positivity to be able to more easily muscle through the remaining 'boring' tasks. (So much for saving the best for last, eh?)" –*Mark Trumple*

## Go Old School

"I listen to old time radio dramas! They entertain my audio sense so I can focus on my visual work." –*DallasM*

## Productivity Apps

"I love an app (only for Android) called StayOnTask. It is super simple — you turn it on and lay it on the table beside you, and it chimes at random intervals asking you to press a button if you're on or off task. It's astoundingly helpful." –*Susan*

## Allow for the Wiggles

"I use a stability ball at work; I notice the difference when I don't." –*Sherry Singer*

## Different Textures

"It's really just so simple. A small piece of the scratchy side of Velcro on the table next to me. When I'm drifting or foggy, I just rub my finger on it and before I realize it – I'm back in the zone." –*Kevin McClure*

## ADHD on the Job Resources

For more tips on working with ADHD, take a look at:

Don't Let ADHD Ruin Your Work Reputation!

8 ADHD-Friendly Jobs

Wanted: Career Confidence

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New Hope Media, 108 West 39th Street, Suite 805, New York, NY 10018