

# STUDYING AND ADHD

If you have ADHD or ADD, then you know that managing time and persevering with some types of tasks can be really tricky.

Here are some tips to help you avoid the stress and anxiety of unfinished and overdue assignments and skipped classes.



## Make time visible

- Use a semester-long calendar or planner that shows the whole semester and put it all on the one page. This way you can see everything that is coming up.
- Create colour coded zones in a weekly planner to show all your commitments, such as sport, work, family, and travel.
- Why? You think you have two weeks to complete that short speech, but when you see your commitments on paper, you realise you may only have two free days to work on the speech.

## Plan

- Break the assignment process into at least ten small subtasks.
- Use *STUDY Smarter* online Assignment Date Calculator to plan backwards from due dates.
- Set very short-term goals and *immediate* rewards. Don't expect that the satisfaction of getting the job submitted in three weeks will be enough to motivate you through all the steps involved.

*Example: I can text my friend when I have read this article.*

## Set up

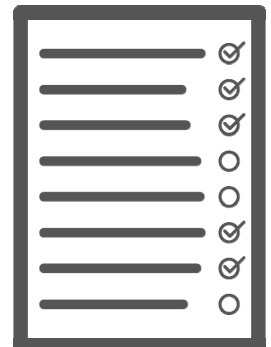
- Make sure you have all your materials available and social media turned off (see over for a list of handy apps).
- Sprint: make yourself work on each subtask for a limited amount of time (e.g. 30 minutes).
- Before you leave the task, write down the next step for when you get back. This will help you to get started again.

### TIP

Beware rabbit holes: keep asking yourself if this interesting trail you are going down is going to add 1% or 50% to your marks. Help to answer this by asking yourself what the underlying task/question is.

## Make lists

Lists can help externalise your working memory. Use pencil and paper, note books, diaries or a program like Evernote to make lists of the things you need to do.



### TIP

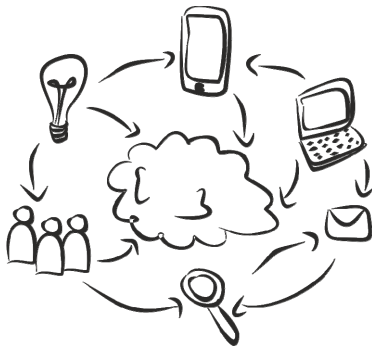
Create a launch pad in your home. This is a place where you leave everything you need for the next day. Then you just grab your already packed bag and go.

## Go to class

Even when class is not actively assessed or you feel it is too easy or boring, going to class increases your chance of success and leads to better grades.

## Set point of performance reminders

Set alarms on your phone for fifteen minutes before important activities. Say your next tutorial starts at 1.00 pm. At 12.00 you go to lunch with friends – the reminder needs to go off at 12.45.



## Use apps that block social media distractions

There are a range of apps that can help you increase your focus and attention by selective blocking of social media, blocking the internet entirely or only allowing access to the relevant tools for your task. *Forest* has a built in reward strategy. Other apps that you might like to research include *Freedom*, *Concentrate*, *Focus Booster*, *FocusWriter* and *LeechBlock*.

## Get help at UWA

- Attend *STUDYSmarter's* free workshop, *Managing Your Study Time*. Details are on the *STUDYSmarter* website.
- Go to UniAccess to discuss alternative exam arrangements and help with extensions for assignments.
- If it all gets too stressful, you can access individual counselling with the UWA Counselling Service.
- Call in at the Student Wellbeing Reception on the first floor of Student Central or telephone 6488 2423 to make an appointment with UniAccess or Counselling.

## Further support

- Stay in touch with your specialist. Starting Uni is probably not a good time to go off your medication.
- *Succeeding with Adult ADHD (2012)* by Abigail Levrini and Frances Prevatt provides practical evidence-based advice and exercises.
- ADHDWA provides specialised support, information and advocacy. Go to <https://www.adhdwa.org/>
- Consider consulting with an experienced Professional Certified ADHD Coach for one to one mentoring and skill development.

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*Effective time management, Avoiding procrastination, Managing stress, The Right Study Load For Me.*

### Want to know more about *STUDYSmarter*?

Find out about all our services and resources at: [www.studysmarter.uwa.edu.au](http://www.studysmarter.uwa.edu.au)

### Any suggestions?

We would love to hear from you. Email us at [studysmarter@uwa.edu.au](mailto:studysmarter@uwa.edu.au)

This resource was developed by the *STUDYSmarter* team for UWA students. When using our resources, please retain them in their original form with both the *STUDYSmarter* heading and the UWA logo.

