



## Attention Problems

There are different kinds of attention. One type allows you to think about one thing for a short amount of time, another type helps you ignore distractions, and another type allows you to change your attention from one thing to another. Teens with attention problems have a hard time staying focused during appointments or class, may get off-topic when talking with others, and may have a hard time remembering important things. These problems can make you feel ashamed or frustrated. Using and practicing these tips can be helpful:

1. Movement helps the brain focus. If you find yourself becoming distracted, try moving around. For example, ask the adult in charge (such as your teacher or probation officer) if you can stand up, go on a walk, or leave the room for a few minutes before going back to a task.
2. If you become distracted while completing lengthy tasks, such as homework or chores, break them up into small steps. Make checklists and work on only one step at a time
3. Distracting places can make attention problems worse (for example, spaces that are noisy, messy, or have busy views). Work or study in places that are quiet and away from possible distractions. Noise-cancelling headphones or earplugs can help block out background noise.
4. If you find yourself feeling frustrated, use a mindfulness technique to take a break for one minute. Breathe in through your nose, holding your breath for six seconds, then breathe out through your mouth.
5. Recording information can be helpful. To help you remember important details, you can take notes or record voice messages after important meetings.
6. To help you remember meetings or important dates, use the calendar or reminders on your phone/watch/computer or use a regular paper planner or calendar.
7. Sleep is essential for attention. You should use the attached sleep checklist tips to help you sleep better.