



Distractions

Why are distractions harmful?

Distractions exponentially increase errors and effectively make you dumber. In fact, the mere temptation to check your phone lowers your cognitive capacity.

What about multitasking?

Multitasking is also a form of distraction, as it hurts our ability to focus on what's important, organize our thoughts, and filter out irrelevant information.



How can you minimize distractions?

1. Set your phone to "Do Not Disturb" so it won't even vibrate, and select "Favorites" who can reach you in this mode.
2. Turn off all those pesky notifications on your computer, including emails, social media, and anything else that frequently pops up on the corner of your screen. Check them only several times a day.
3. Make a conscious decision to stop multitasking. It's not a skill to master, but rather a habit to break.
4. Consider your environment. Work in places with fewer distractors. Also, clear your work area so other things aren't pulling you away from the task at hand.
5. If you have a major task, resolve to work on it—and only it—for at least one uninterrupted hour at a time.

REMEMBER: You can improve your research skills and the quality of almost everything you do by cutting down on distractions.