

# Study Smarter, Not Harder: Take a Break!

*Does your brain feel...fuzzy?  
Tired of Zoom fatigue?*

Research shows that **productive breaks** are one of the best ways to give your brain a rest, improve your focus, and come back ready and refreshed. Here are some tips for making the most out of short study breaks!

## Keep It Moving

Combining movement with studying helps improve memory, attention, and motivation. **Any type of movement** helps, and breaks of 5, 10, or 15 minutes are enough to get active (plus, they help save your back and neck from staring at a screen for too long!). Here are some low-effort ways to exercise from your desk.

Stand up at your desk

- Take a brisk walk around the room
- Write key concepts on a whiteboard
- Take a 5-minute jumping jacks break
- Bounce a ball or toss a beanbag
- Stretch your arms & neck
- Play with a pet

LeechBlock (Firefox)  
StayFocusd (Chrome)  
Forest (phone app)  
Cold Turkey Blocker (Windows, Mac)  
Freedom (Windows, Mac, iOS, Android, Chrome)

## Avoid Social Media

Ever opened Instagram “just to check” and found yourself scrolling for hours? Because social media is designed to trap viewers’ attention, try to avoid it during breaks. Out of sight is out of mind: close your computer, put your phone somewhere you can’t see it, and enjoy a novel, snack, sketchbook, or other **screen-free entertainment**. Also, check out these apps for helping dodge digital distractions.

## Stay Energized

Pushing your brain to the breaking point isn’t an effective way to retain information. Don’t forget to take care of the rest of you while you’re studying - rest, recharge, and don’t be too hard on yourself! Self-care will keep your energy and motivation high.

- Refuel with a snack break
- Stay hydrated (water, not caffeine)
- Take a 20-minute power nap
- Make a study break playlist
- Connect with friends & loved ones
- Build in time for your hobbies