



## Intro



**Let's just get into it and look at the facts!**

- Focus is essential to completing tasks.
- Completing tasks is key to achieving your goals.
- And achieving your goals is key to success in life, your feeling of self worth and your happiness.

**Therefore focus is simply essential, if you want to accomplish anything in life.**

Whether it's boredom, frustration, a lack of concentration, or stress, many factors stop us from starting a task and completing it quickly and efficiently.



To help you combat this, we've gathered the top strategies backed up by science to help you improve your focus so you can reach your goals.

So if you're not getting the results you want in your business and life there is a good chance it is because you haven't mastered your ability to focus.

**Luckily this value packed Definitive Guide to Focus will help you cross the finish line.**



As with everything Ultiself we are taking a comprehensive approach. We are going to teach you the fundamentals, like identifying your daily most important task (MIT) and we will cover life hacks, foods, supplements and mental training exercises that will make you a master at focusing.



**TRUST US...THIS IS ONE OF THE MOST CRITICAL SKILLS YOU CAN HAVE. NOW LET'S LEARN HOW TO MASTER IT!**

# Focus Strategies

## 1. NEEDLESS TO SAY...BUT WE WILL - WRITE DOWN YOUR TASKS

There are a ton of benefits to this.

For starters It clears your mind. According to David Allen's GTD method you do not want your brain carrying your to-do list. Your brain's resources need to be used for critical thinking now trying to remember things that you could have written down. So, for starters, free up your brain's ability to focus by putting everything you need to do on paper or an app.

Additionally writing down your tasks helps you focus on your goals and understand what you need to do to achieve them.



Task lists, clear up your mind and help you to visualize your upcoming tasks and map out when and how they will be completed.

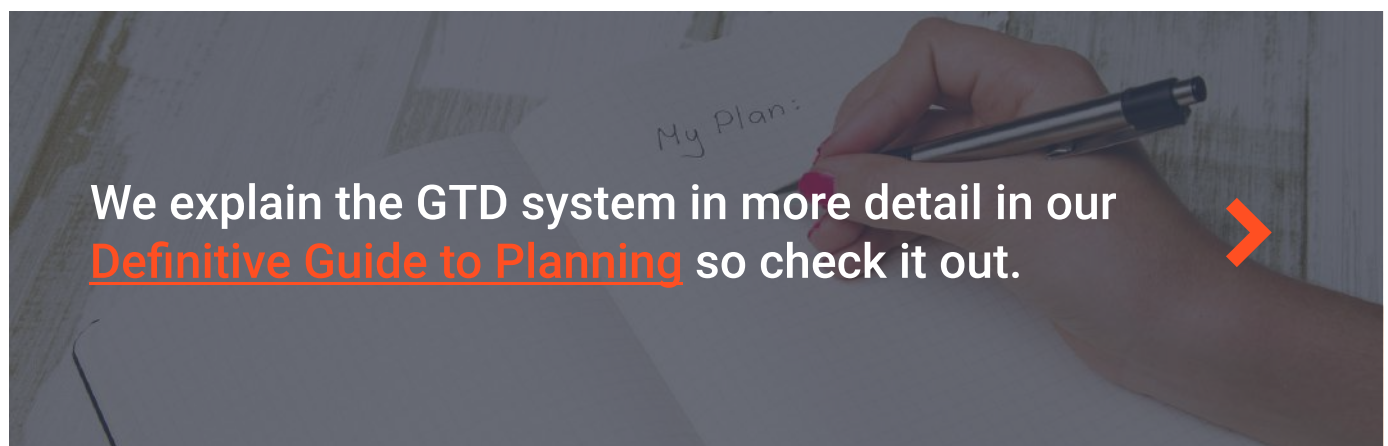
But don't just take our word for it, [research](#) tells us that simply writing down an action plan increases the productivity of that plan.

Multitasking has been shown to reduce productivity by [40%](#), and to-do lists can help us to focus on one task at a time, improving our productivity levels.

One psychological theory as to why a written plan helps us to maintain focus and improve productivity is that a written plan means the brain no longer has to carry the burden of worrying about unfinished tasks. This is known as the ["Zeigarnik Effect"](#) named after the Eastern European psychologist Bluma Zeigarnik who pioneered the study of plan-making.

To start a to-do list for a project you're struggling to focus on, break tasks into realistic small goals, giving yourself enough time to complete the more demanding and important tasks.

It is best to use an app for your to do list. A great system to use is GTD by David Allen. And an amazing app for the GTD system is [Nirvanahq.com](#). This app is far better than any to do list and really frees up your mind. Causing Nirvana :)





## 2. HOW TALL IS CHARLES BARKLEY? - WRITE DOWN YOUR DISTRACTIONS



One of the major obstacles to maintaining focus on a task is distractions. Both distractions and interruptions have been **shown** to negatively affect performance outcomes, especially when the task requires memory skills.

Whether it's social media notifications, your neighbor's puppy, or thoughts about a show you're binge-watching, identifying your biggest distractions is the first step to avoiding them and maintaining your focus.

Unfortunately this is how we typically work. We write down a task and start working on it. Half way through working on it a crazy, unrelated, distracting thought comes into our mind. **Like How tall is Charles Barkley? :)**

We immediately jump on to Google or Youtube and start researching.

Then as you are Googling his height you see a highlight video of him playing against Michael Jordan in the 1993 NBA Finals and you start watching it.

Then you see Suns Point Guard Kevin Johnson Dunking and you think wow he looks way too short to be dunking. Let's look at his height...

Now you are down the rabbit hole and your task is nowhere close to being done. And you are nowhere near accomplishing your goals.

Or a friend texts or email you about something pointless and you immediately go to Skype, Whatsapp, or your phone and engage in the conversation.

And god forbid it's a group text! Then you are totally screwed.

Long story short...What ends up happening is you attended to all of the distractions and did not complete any of your planned tasks.

**So why not flip the script???**

Why don't you trick your brain by telling it that you will write down your distractions and come back to them later. Then your curiosity void "will" get filled. In other words you think that at some point in the future you will find out that thing that you are desperately trying to find out while you should be working.

**And you will not be distracted from the important task at hand.**

Simply keep a pad of paper and a pencil by your side as you are working. And train yourself... When a distracting thought or a message from a friend pops up.

Train yourself to just write it down, instead of acting on it. This strategy will be instrumental in improving your focus. You will be blown away by how much your productivity improves.

Oh and by the way, Charles Barkley is 6 foot 5 and is one of the greatest power forwards of all time. A position where most players are around 6 foot 10. Pretty impressive right?

**Just don't start looking it up when you should be working :)**

### 3. ANTICIPATE YOUR DISTRACTIONS



Another thing you can do is anticipate your distractions.

For example around what time will your friends or co-workers start bothering you?

A good idea will be to turn your phone off at that time.

Make a list of what thoughts and situations typically pull you away from your work.

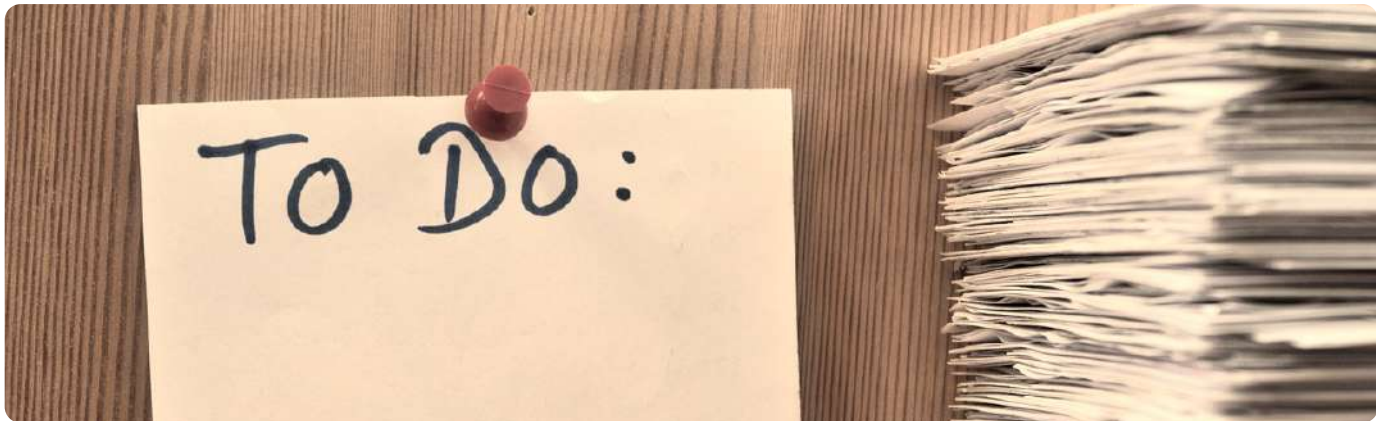
Once you've identified and written down these distractions, you can do your best to avoid them. Some of the main distractions people experience can be more easily avoided by working in a quiet place, disconnecting from the internet/social media, or closing the door to your workroom.



Cellphones can be particularly distracting, and one [study](#) of students found that 68% of students reported ringing cell phones to be a distraction to their work, affecting their concentration and ability to learn.



#### 4. PLAN THE DAY'S TASKS THE NIGHT BEFORE

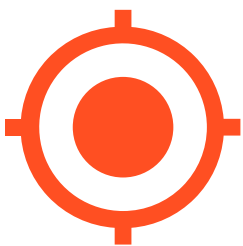


Just like writing out a to-do list can help you to focus on what needs to be done, **planning** out a day's tasks the night before can help you to increase productivity and concentration.

By taking the planning out of a day, you remove decision fatigue and are ready to dive straight into your work, with no excuses to sit back and wonder about what you should do first.

Planning your work the night before is also a simple psychological tool to increase the standards for your goals by the simple fact that you are planning for the “tomorrow” you.

We've all thought this way before, “tomorrow I'm spring cleaning the house” or “tomorrow I'm waking up at 5 a.m. to make that gym class”. We tend to have higher expectations of ourselves when we don't have to undergo the task immediately.



By combining your to-do list writing with night-before planning, you may be able to improve your focus while setting more impressive tasks for yourself.

Be very specific here. Identify what you will do first and ideally second and third.

You know that feeling you get when the house is super messy and you don't even know where to start when it comes to cleaning it....so you just end up doing nothing.



That is the feeling you want to avoid.

Have a clean list in front of you with your most important action item and **HIT THE GROUND RUNNING.**

Just look at the [declutter habit](#). This habit also works for your to-do list.

## 5. IDENTIFY YOUR M.I.T.



The M.I.T. technique is one that you can use to stay focused and improve your productivity. M.I.T., or Most Important Task, is about identifying the most important/critical task you need to achieve to reach your goal. Completing the M.I.T. will create the most significant results and move you the closest to the finish line.



By highlighting your most important task, you are keeping it at the forefront of your attention, helping to ensure you finish this critical work sooner than if you hadn't focused on the significance of the work.

If you are a business owner, an executive or are involved in a performance based job and trying to stay productive, prioritization is absolutely key.

Everyday there are way more tasks on your plate and requests from customers, affiliates and employees than you can handle. Make sure to really spend the time and prioritize so that you can work on the task(s) that will truly get you to your goal.

**WHAT IS THE 1 TASK THAT WILL HAVE THE BIGGEST IMPACT FOR THE DAY? THE TASK THAT IS THE MOST CRITICAL?**

That is your MIT. Make sure that you add identifying your next day's MIT as a habit into your habit tracker! If you are at all concerned with productivity and success this is a critical one.

Really take the time to think about this every night when you plan your next day's tasks.



**Now identify your MIT and get to work on it.**

There are also psychological benefits of identifying and completing your MIT.

Finishing a task that you have designated as special and important will likely induce extra feelings of satisfaction and productivity. The main goal of this is to feel an extra drive to finish a task when it feels more satisfying to complete.

**Research** tells us that unfinished tasks are a burden on the brain, and the goal of the M.I.T. technique is to use that burden of knowing for important tasks to put enough pressure on the task to complete it.

A good idea is to work on your MIT when your brain is most effective. So try to identify those times with your biohacking app like Ultiself. And use that time to put a dent into your MIT.

## 6. SET WEEKLY OBJECTIVES



As you might have noticed, goal setting is especially important for maintaining focus on tasks and helping to improve work outcomes. Setting goals enables us to understand the work that needs to be done, to motivate us to work toward something, and to provide a sense of satisfaction when the goal is completed.

But goal setting will come to nothing without regular progress checks. To make sure you are meeting expectations and being as productive as possible, creating a list of weekly objectives can be a great way to ensure you are completing the necessary tasks. Having clear **weekly objectives** will help keep you accountable.

Accountability is a huge driver of action and success. The **American Society of Training and Development (ASTD)** highlighted how important accountability is to success.



Their research found that people have a 65% chance of achieving a goal if they have an accountability partner. Impressively, the odds of success jump to 95% if you organize specific accountability appointments with that person.



## 7. ARE YOU A HYPE OF MELLOW FOCUSER?

Different things motivate different people. While some people work best in high-pressure environments, others crumble in those same environments. These differences also mean that certain approaches to focus might work better or worse for you.

Here is a great example of different people needing completely different things to improve their focus. Some people need to be energized to be focused and productive, while others need to calm down.

More hyper people's minds are typically racing so much that they have a really hard time focusing on 1 thing. If they have a stimulant that gives them even more energy, forget about it. They will be all over the place and will not be able to focus or get anything accomplished. For these people it may be a good idea to mellow out for productivity. Maybe a cup of chamomile tea or some **CBD**.



Other's need energy to focus and be productive. For these people a **cup of coffee** is all they need.

Caffeine is obviously a stimulant, while **CBD** is anxiety-reducing and calming.

You may also want to consider **Bullet Coffee** by David Asprey. Bullet Coffee is a combination of Coffee and **healthy fats**. When combined they may have a synergetic effect. There are many possible benefits to bullet coffee. It won't make you as jittery as regular coffee and the increased energy and alertness from the caffeine may last longer than regular coffee.

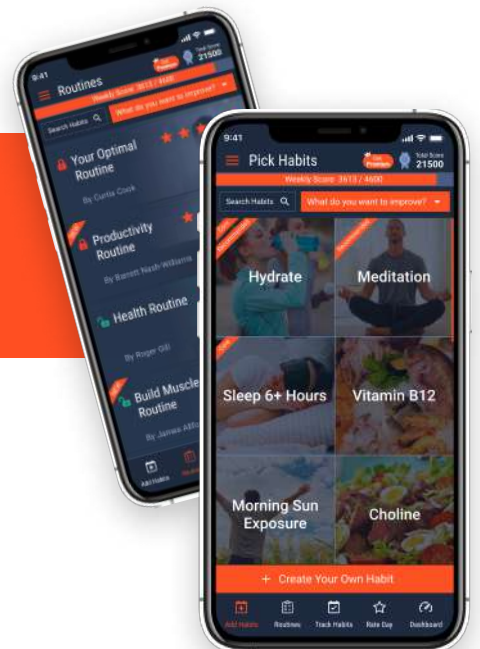


CBD can also be a helpful alternative for those who find their caffeine dependence is counterproductive for them.

The key here is to identify what is better for your focus.

AND ONE OF THE BEST WAYS TO DO IT IS WITH A **BIOHACKING APP** LIKE ULTISELF.

With Ultiself you will be able to track your productivity every day and our AI also will be able to identify which habits you did on your most productive days and essentially create a habit effectiveness rating. This way you will be able to identify what effects you the best.



## 8. FIND YOUR MOST PRODUCTIVE TIME(S)



We've all heard the debates between the benefits of being a morning person or a night owl, but it just comes down to preference.

When trying to get the most out of your focus and work, it's best to figure out which time of the day you are most productive. Maybe you're a night owl who works best after dark or a morning person who gets the majority of their work done before midday.

Either way, realizing when you're at your most productive and scheduling your tasks during those times will help you work to your highest potential. Also, it's best to avoid trying to achieve something at an hour of the day when you just can't focus.

If you're not sure what hours you're most productive at, some research may help. A [report](#) published by the software company Redbooth found that productivity amongst its office workers peaked at 11 a.m., dropped slightly after lunchtime, and then plummeted after 4 p.m.

The company also found that Monday was their most productive day, and Friday was their least productive working day.

Clever management of your productive times can help you to cram more work into a shorter space of time, increasing your productivity and leaving you with more free time.

**You can go even further. It also depends on the types of tasks.**

For example some people can be great at talking on the phone or sales during the day when their mind is running. But they can't really stay focused on attention requiring tasks like bookkeeping or writing.

Then at night when their mind slows down they can really concentrate.

**Being mindful of this information ahead of time can help you structure your work days for optimum focus and productivity.**

For example if you are best at sales during the day trying to do sales at night can set you up for failure.

**So really take the time to be mindful of your brain and identify when you work best and adjust your day accordingly.**





## 9. PROACTIVE BREAKS



For those wanting to improve their focus and productivity, taking a break might seem counterintuitive, but it is a very important part of an efficient and focused routine.

While sometimes you may just want to push through and continue working, well-timed breaks are important for mental health and productivity as they allow you to relax, rest, and refocus. Taking a break during work may even make you more productive than if you just kept working. Think of it like a race car going into a pit stop.

A [2011 study](#) measured participants' performance of a repetitive task over time, with one group performing the task with no breaks, and another receiving two brief breaks during their task. The results of the study found that participants who didn't receive a break saw their performance drop significantly throughout the task, while participants who took brief breaks saw no reduction in performance.

However, as important as breaks are, it seems not many of us are taking them. A survey by [Tork](#) found that around 38% of North American workers don't feel encouraged to take a lunch break.

So don't feel bad next time you want to take a break from work. That brief pause could just be the thing to increase your productivity and focus!

To take things one step further, take vacations! Sometimes 3-4 days of not focusing on your work and letting your mind wonder is one of the best things you can do.



## 10. POMODORO TECHNIQUE

While breaks are important to maintaining focus, it's important to not take too many and let time run away from you. The Pomodoro technique is an easy way to monitor your breaks and make sure you're not spending too much time on them.



The Pomodoro technique sets a schedule for breaks, helping you to stay focused and have a rest to look forward to while not letting break run away on you.

**To incorporate the Pomodoro technique into your work routine, follow these steps:**

- ✓ Select the task you want to complete (big or small)
- ✓ Set a timer for 25 minutes and start your task
- ✓ When the timer goes off, set the timer for 5 mins and use that time to take a small break
- ✓ After 4 rounds of work, you can set the break time for 20-30 mins
- ✓ Repeat this pattern until the task is complete

We already know that breaks are important for performance outcomes, and the Pomodoro technique provides you with a clear routine that allows you to take reasonable breaks at appropriate times. So get that timer out next time you're struggling to focus on a task. It may just help you get your head in the game and your work done.

## 11. IMPORTANCE OF SLEEP/REST



Sometimes when we have a task at hand, we just want to push through the night and get it done, but ignoring sleep can often be detrimental to work performance.

Sleep is especially important for helping the brain function at its optimal level, and sleep deprivation has been linked to a range of cognitive deficits.



Zzz

A [2004 study](#) highlighted the potential dangers of sleep deprivation. Following the schedules of medical interns, researchers found that interns who worked for periods of 24 hours or longer made 35.9% more serious medical errors than interns working a schedule that allowed them more time to sleep.

If you're struggling with a task, sleep has also been shown to improve skills related to performance. Studies have found that a healthy sleep schedule may improve [cognitive processing](#), [memory](#), and [learning skills](#).

The next time you're struggling with a task, a good nap could help improve your cognition and give you the best chance at succeeding.

## 12. KNOW YOUR STRENGTHS AND GET ASSISTANCE WHEN YOU CAN

John Stockton is one of the greatest point guards to ever play in the NBA. In fact he was on the Original NBA Dream Team in 1992.

This team played in the Olympic Games in Barcelona Spain.

One day the team was on a bus and hit crazy traffic. They were only a few miles away from their hotel and Stockton decided to get off the bus and walk.

Stockton walked through a really busy plaza and not a single person there recognized him.

Reason being is that Stockton is only 6 foot tall compared to the other much taller players.

So how do you think Stockton would do playing underneath the hoop, trying to rebound and block shots? Not too well right.



Stockton's focus was on passing and he was one of the best in the business. While his counterpart Karl Malone, a much bigger player, took care of the stuff under the hoop.

The same goes for business and productivity.

Even if you take all the advice we've given you to improve focus, sometimes your biggest asset can be knowing when you can and cannot complete a task.

It doesn't matter how focused you are if a task is outside of your capabilities. Sometimes the best use of your time is to ask for help. Knowing your strengths and weaknesses and asking for assistance when you need it can truly skyrocket your productivity.

No one knows better than you when you need help and what you need help with. Instead of letting a task beat you, find the right person to help you with it. You can not conquer the world by yourself. So focus on creating the right team around you. Then you may not need to worry about being focused as much :)



**SELF-AWARENESS IS ONE OF YOUR GREATEST ASSETS!**

### 13. GAMIFY YOUR WORK TO FOCUS



Ever heard the saying that if you do something you love you never have to work again in your life?

**Not TRUE!**

There are going to be components of any business that will require you to do things that you do not like, that are not fun and that you struggle with.

Probably even if you are a pornstar :)

And one of the biggest reasons for lack of focus is that doing work can be plain old boring.

Let's face it, it may be much more fun and exciting to text with your friends, watch random videos on Youtube and possibly even stare at a wall.

You all know the benefits of mindfulness. Mindfulness means paying attention to what your mind and body is really doing.

**If you feel like you are getting bored with your task, gamify it.**

For example, if you are writing see how many words you can write in a 30 minute increment. Or try to beat a certain time to get your project done. **Gamifying your work will make it a bit more exciting and will certainly help you focus.**

Just think about it, when you are playing blackjack all you are doing is counting. The same holds true for doing your taxes. But "for some reason" blackjack is just WAY more fun!



## Foods & Supplements for Focus



You can do your best to focus on a task, but if your body isn't getting the right fuel, you're still likely to struggle. There are many cognitive-boosting foods and supplements you can add to your diet that may improve your focus, memory, and concentration. Add some of these food and supplements to your [habit tracker](#) to incorporate them into your life.

## 14. OMEGA-3



Omega-3 is a fatty acid found in fish that is a key component in brain health and growth.

**Omega-3** is essential for healthy learning and memory and may even be a **preventative** measure for cognitive disorders such as Alzheimer's disease.



You can increase your omega-3 consumption by either taking a fish oil supplement or by adding more fish like salmon and sardines to your diet.

## 15. VITAMIN E



Vitamin E is not just good for your hair and nails, but it also holds a lot of brain-boosting potential. Vitamin E is a known **antioxidant**, meaning it protects cells from oxidative damage caused by free radicals.

Neural cells are particularly vulnerable to oxidative stress, and vitamin E offers great potential as a neural protector alongside its cognitive-boosting properties.



Nuts like walnuts are a great way to incorporate more vitamin E into your diet.



## 16. COFFEE



This is good news for coffee addicts because your daily dose of caffeine has a range of positive effects on brain function.

Caffeine has been found to increase alertness by blocking adenosine, a chemical compound that induces feelings of sleepiness. Caffeine has also been found to improve mood, concentration, and may even have neuroprotective properties.



If coffee is not your thing you can always opt for green tea for similar effects. It has some pros and cons but is certainly easier on your stomach and may cause a bit less jitteriness.

## 17. PUMPKIN SEEDS



Snacking can often be a distraction to focus, but thanks to the brain-boosting power of pumpkin seeds, we may have found you the perfect work snack.



Pumpkin seeds are high in magnesium, copper, iron, and zinc, and all of these nutrients have demonstrated powerful brain-boosting action.

Magnesium is especially important for memory and learning development, and low iron has been linked to reduced brain functions. Both copper and zinc have been shown to play a key role in the prevention of certain neurodegenerative disorders.



## 18. STAY HYDRATED



73% of your brain is made up of water. Needless to say, if you do not drink enough water your brain function and focus will deteriorate.

So here is a simple must do focus habit that you absolutely must add to your habit building app...Stay Hydrated.



Keep a bottle of high quality water by your desk and drink it at least 2 times every hour.

## Focus Training



Our focus levels do not remain the same across the day, but luckily, there are many techniques you can try to help train yourself to focus better. Most techniques focus on extending your attention span, mindfulness practice, and helping you to laser in your focus. **If you want to improve your focus be sure to add some of these techniques to your habit tracking app like Ultiself.**

## 19. IMAGINE NUMBERS ON PAPER



This is a simple concentration workout that requires you to fully devote and focus your attention. Simply imagine a series of numbers, focus on the order of the numbers, and repeat them while devoting your full attention to them. This is a simple meditative technique that can also be done while focusing on your breathing or while doing a small repetitive task like throwing a ball in the air.



Meditative actions such as these have been shown to improve attention and focus.

## 20. DUAL N-BACK



Dual N-Back is a simple brain training game where you match visual and audio signals to previously shown signals. The game requires memory and focus to complete and is thought to help with concentration, reading, and verbal fluency.

Playing the game for 20 minutes a day, five times a week should be sufficient to see results. One [study](#) of the game found that participants who completed the game saw greater left frontal lobe activity, the region of the brain responsible for motor function and decision-making.



It's pretty hard to explain what dual N-Back is. The best thing you can do is download a Dual N-Back app on your phone and start playing the game. It can get frustrating at times, but should really improve your focus.

## 21. READING



It may seem like a leisurely activity, but reading is a great exercise that you can do to strengthen your brain and improve cognitive function and focus. As well as increasing **brain connectivity**, reading has also been shown to potentially **reduce your risk** of neurodegenerative diseases such as Alzheimer's and dementia.



## 22. CHESS



Games like chess can be both fun and beneficial. As a game that requires strategy and focus, chess can be a great way to improve your ability to focus while also being entertained. Chess players were found in one [study](#) to have significantly better auditory memory function.

Don't worry if you've never played before, learning chess may be even more beneficial as learning a new skill is a great way to strengthen your memory.



Here is a “surprisingly” great way to start playing chess. Visit [Chess.com](https://www.chess.com) ... It has tutorials, drills and layers of all levels.

## Conclusion

There you have it! 20 strategies that you can use to boost your focus so that you can get results in life and achieve your goals.

We can all struggle with focus for a variety of reasons, but that doesn't mean your work should come to a halt! Focus techniques such as planning, incorporating breaks, reducing distractions, and ensuring that both your body and environment are optimized can kick your productivity in gear and ensure you aren't losing any more time to being unfocused.

Obviously not all of these strategies will work for you. Some like hydration you absolutely **MUST** add to your habit tracker. Others like pumpkin seeds, you can experiment with. This is the beauty of the biohacking app, Ultiself. You can add these habits and the AI algo of our app will determine how effective they are on your productivity. Keep the habits that are most effective and eliminate the ones that are not. This way you can create your optimal routine.

