

Assignment: Your Physical Environment

Option 1: Factors Influencing Study Spaces

Many factors impinge upon or promote the effectiveness of a study space. In this activity, you identify and reflect on factors that are part of your regular study environment.

Option 1 Directions

- For each of the factors in the list below (Your Study Environment), consider whether or not the factor is an issue for your study environment.

Read more at [10 Ways To Improve Your Study Habits](#) from Western Governors University.

Factors in Your Study Environment

Music: Background music is generally “easy” on the ear and can enhance study productivity, as well as drown out other distractions. Depends on your personal tolerance, though. Headphones negatively impact memory and information retention.

Background noise: Volume of noise and persistence can be major distractions. Try out other environments.

Smells: Any smell, delightful or otherwise, has the potential to pull your attention away from your work. You may want to change your spot.

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Lighting: Good lighting is essential. Without good lighting, you may strain or squint, get a headache, or tire. Be aware of the lighting conditions.

Temperature and humidity: If either is too extreme, it can make you uncomfortable and get in the way of effective studying.

Facebook, email, smart phone: Distractions come in all sizes, shapes, and colors. What draws your attention away from the task at hand? Remove all distractions.

Comfort—too much or too little: Too much of a good thing can be counterproductive. Best to study at a desk in a good chair, sitting up straight, rather than in bed, lying down. Be aware of how you feel.

Associations with other activities: Make sure that you associate the environment you're in with schoolwork, study and concentration. Try new spaces if the associations are not supportive.

The clock: You may wish to set time goals for your studies. But avoid “being a slave” to the clock. Be clear about what you intend to accomplish and how much time you want to devote.

Other people: Depending on who the people are, they can help or distract. Study groups can be very helpful, but housemates all around can be distracting. Know your limits and your weaknesses.

Feng shui: This is the art of placement in your physical environment. Nurture your thoughts, emotions, and senses with good organization of furniture, knickknacks, etc. Avoid feeling cramped. Create a clean, neat workspace.

Does this exercise give you any ideas for ways in which you might change where you study? How might you alter your physical environment to better support your schoolwork? Write a 1-paragraph summary of your conclusions.

Option 2: The Perils of Multitasking

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Option 2 Directions

1. Review the “Perils of Multitasking” infographic, above.
2. Take notes on highlights of the infographic.
3. Write a 1-2 paragraph response to this infographic. What are your current temptations when it comes to multitasking? What habits can you change in order to concentrate more fully on “single-tasking” when necessary?

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