

Tips for Managing ADHD

✔ **Create a daily schedule.** When starting out, it's better to under-schedule than to over-schedule. Build in plenty of preparation time for activities, including time for travel. Be sure to include leisure and self-care activities in your schedule.

✔ **Break large tasks into smaller parts.** When a task feels daunting, breaking it down helps it feel more manageable. Instead of writing "clean the kitchen" on your to-do list, write "wash the dishes" and "wipe down counters". For tasks that can't easily be broken down, set time limits, such as "use the treadmill for 20 minutes" instead of "exercise".

✔ **Accept some discomfort when completing tasks.** You may never be 100% in the mood to do some things, and that's okay. Sometimes you just have to work through it. You might find that once you get started, the task isn't as bad as you expected.

✔ **Focus on the outcome of completing a task.** How do you think you'll feel when you complete something on your to-do list? Adults with ADHD often overestimate how difficult a task will be, and underestimate the positive feelings that come from completing it.

✔ **Develop plans for handling distractions.** Write a list of common distractions, and write an "if, then" plan for each one. For example, "If my coworkers ask me to coffee while I'm writing a report, then I will tell them I'm busy, but can meet for lunch."

✔ **Identify procrastination behaviors.** These tend to be mindless and unproductive, such as flipping through TV channels. They might not even be fun—they're just less strenuous than other tasks. Once you start these behaviors, they can be hard to stop.

✔ **Create a distraction-free area for completing tasks.** Keep the area tidy, with everything you need to complete your tasks ready to go. When you sit down, silence your phone and place it in a drawer. Let others know that when you are in this area, you are busy. If there isn't space for a dedicated area, use a signal, such as closing the door or playing music.

✔ **Know your objective and stick to it.** If you have to go to the grocery store for milk, go directly to the dairy aisle. If you have to get on the computer to pay a bill, don't open a social media site first. Clearly define your objective, and don't take any detours.

✔ **Reward yourself for completing tasks.** Think of a small treat—such as a special meal or a fun activity—that you can use as a reward. For a reward to be effective, it should be something you don't have often. Even a small treat can make a mundane task more appealing.