



# Activities for Adolescents

## Activities



### Organized Sports

Competitive sports allow teenagers to practice skills like focusing their attention, making quick decisions, and responding flexibly.



### Yoga and Meditation

Activities that support a state of mindfulness, or a nonjudgmental awareness of moment-to-moment experiences, may help teens develop sustained attention, reduce stress, and promote less reactive, more reflective decision-making and behavior.



### Music

Memory, attention, and mental flexibility are challenged while developing skills in playing a musical instrument, singing, or dancing—particularly when dealing with complicated pieces that involve multiple parts, sophisticated rhythms, and improvisation.



### Theater

Many schools and communities offer adolescents the opportunity to participate in musicals, plays, or other performances. These activities challenge teens' memory, attention, and behavior management.



## Strategy Games & Logic Puzzles

Classic games like chess exercise memory, planning, and attention.

## Study Skills

In school, adolescents are expected to be increasingly independent and organized in their work. Basic organization skills can be very helpful to be successful. **The list below can serve as a guide for teens:**

### **BREAK IT DOWN**

Break a project down into manageable pieces.

### **CREATE A PLAN**

Identify reasonable plans (with timelines) for completing each piece. Be sure that all steps have been explicitly identified and ensure that the completion of each step is recognized and celebrated.

### **SELF-MONITOR WHILE WORKING**

Set a timer to go off periodically as a reminder to check on whether one is paying attention and understanding. When you don't understand, what might be the problem? Are there words you don't know? Do you know what the directions are? Is there someone you can ask for help? Would looking back at your notes help? If you have stopped paying attention, what distracted you? What might you do to refocus? Identify key times to self-monitor (e.g., before handing in an assignment, when leaving home, etc.).

### **REDUCE DISTRACTIONS**

Be aware of critical times for focused attention. Multitasking impedes learning. Identify ways to reduce distractions (e.g., turn off electronics, find a quiet room).

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: **UTILIZE MEMORY SUPPORTS**  
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: Use memory supports for organizing tasks. Mnemonic devices can be powerful tools  
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: for remembering information. Developing the habit of writing things down also helps.

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: **KEEP A CALENDAR**  
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: Keep a calendar of project deadlines and steps along the way.

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: **REFLECT ON THE ASSIGNMENT**  
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: After completing an assignment, reflect on what did and did not work well. Develop  
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: a list of things that have supported focused and sustained attention as well as good  
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: organization, memory, and project completion. Think about ways to ensure that  
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: these supports are in place for other projects.

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: **THINK ABOUT HOW TO IMPROVE**  
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: Think about what was learned from assignments that were not completed well.  
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: Was this due to a lack of information, a need to improve certain skills, bad time  
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: management, etc.? What would you do differently next time?

