

Study tips for folks with ADHD

Here are some effective methods people with ADHD can use to manage challenges at school.

1. Do a body check

“I always start with the body check,” says ADHD coach and tutor [Kit Savage](#). “You don’t need to have a dedicated environment to study, like your bedroom or the kitchen table. It just needs to be an environment where you’re comfortable and feel safe.”

“Once you’ve found your spot, do a body scan,” Savage suggests. “Literally go through your body and ask yourself: Am I hungry? Am I thirsty? Do I need to use the bathroom? What am I going to need for my body?”

You can’t study well if your body isn’t well nourished and comfortable.

2. Do a mind check

Next, do a mind check. That means check in on your feelings. Are you mad, angry, happy, or sad? If you’re feeling strong emotions, address them.

“Write out your emotions or chat with someone like your parent or a tutor,” Savage recommends. “Whatever is on your mind has to come out before you start your studying. Now is not the time to fix the problem. It’s just time to get it out.”

After you’ve expressed what’s on your mind, consider doing a few minutes of [deep breathing exercises](#) to release the rest of your tension, Savage suggests.

Your mind and body check will probably take about 10 minutes.

3. Be honest about what scares you

Whether you’re studying for a test, writing a paper, or going through your homework assignments, there’s likely one thing about the work ahead that seems to be the scariest.

The best way to tackle that? Say it out loud.

“What’s your worst fear right now?” Savage asks. “Are you afraid you’re never going to finish that long-term project because you’re so far behind? Are you afraid you’re going to fail because you just don’t understand the subject? Write it down.”

That fear is preventing you from getting started. But, once you’ve expressed it out loud or in writing, you’re no longer blocked by your fear, and you can get started.

4. Get organized

Make a plan. Start by looking at everything you have to do and make sure you have all the necessary materials.

Then, take out a piece of paper and make a chart with three columns:

1. In the first column, write down what you need to do.
2. In the second column, estimate how much time it will take you to do it. Consider allotting yourself a little more time than you might actually need for each task.
3. Leave the third column blank for now — it will be for the actual amount of time it takes.

Then, figure out the order of the tasks you want to do, writing numbers beside each task.

5. Do an easy task first

“If you’re struggling to get started, you need to be successful right away because it’ll motivate you,” Savage says. “So, do any easy project at the beginning of your study session. I call it taking the win.”

6. Reread your assignments

“You can’t start unless you understand the expectations of the assignment. That’s huge,” Savage says. “Often, people with ADHD just dive in. But you need to know what’s expected of you — what you need to know, what you need to write, etc.”

“Then, once you know the expectations of the assignment, you can figure out how to achieve them,” Savage adds.

Before you get started, consider making a list of all the criteria you need to meet, such as word count, number of pages, number of references required, and so on.

You can refer to this list as you’re doing the assignment and check off these criteria as you complete them.

7. Begin as soon as you know about the assignment or test

Folks with ADHD may tend to wait until the last minute. But starting earlier can save you a lot of stress and improve your grades overall.

In fact, [researchersTrusted Source](#) have found that while cramming for a test can help you remember information in the short term, you’ll quickly lose it.

Studying over time will help you remember the information in the long term. This is especially important for subjects like math or science, where your knowledge builds on what you’ve previously learned.

“Work backward,” Savage recommends. “Look at when you’ll have your test or when your assignment is due, and plan to do a little each day. Make sure you include time to review everything before an exam, or write *and edit* your paper.”

8. Know yourself and what will work best for you

Everyone works differently, and it may take some time to get to know how you work best. Consider taking notes on what works for you and what doesn't.

You might find it helpful to ask yourself questions like:

1. Can you hyperfocus on anything you do, or does it have to be something you're interested in?
2. Do you work better if you begin as soon as you get home from school?
3. Do you need a 30-minute break to relax before you begin?
4. Does exercising help you focus?
5. Can you focus better after dinner or late at night?
6. Do you get easily distracted by your phone or other screens? If so, consider removing them while you study.
7. Do you need to get the thing you fear most out of the way after an easy win? That is, does it help you to do the easiest task first so you feel good about it, then tackle the task you're dreading?
8. Do you study better when you save it for last?
9. How have you overcome writer's block in the past?

For example, do you find it hard to start writing essays? Many people do! However, there's no rule saying you must write your introductory paragraph first — and that can be the hardest part.

In fact, many people write their intro and conclusion after they've written the rest of the essay.

So, if it's easier for you to write the supporting paragraphs and then write the introduction, do it that way.

You might also find it easier to start by freewriting with no expectations at all. You might be surprised by what comes out.

9. Repetition, repetition, repetition

"Studying is about performance, so repetition is key," Savage says. "Many people with ADHD [may have issues with] [working memory](#), which means you can't easily retain what you've learned. So, take notes in class, read the chapter more than once, and review everything over and over again."

"I like the three times rule: Make sure you go over everything at least three times, even if it's a subject you're good at," Savage says.

10. Request appropriate accommodations

In this context, "accommodations" means any methods your teachers or school use to accommodate your needs, such as setting you up in a private room for an exam or providing more time.

For example, if you have trouble remembering math formulas, consider asking your teacher to provide them for you during the test, suggests Savage.

“Accommodations aren’t giving you an advantage — it’s leveling the playing field,” Savage explains. “Tests should measure your ability, not your disability.”

“If you don’t have those accommodations, then all you’re testing is your disability,” Savage says.

11. Reward yourself

Each time you check a task off your list, write down how long it took, and then reward yourself.

“I like immediate rewards and long-term reinforcement,” Savage says. “The immediate reward can be a quick dance party, a walk around the block, texting a friend — whatever you’d like. But it should be a short break, just a few minutes.”

How to help a loved one with ADHD study

If your child with ADHD is in elementary school, you can help them study by sitting with them and encouraging good study habits.

Go through each step together. Guide them when they’re younger, and gradually allow them to show you how they can do the steps themselves.

Once they reach middle school, let them do this on their own. Create a checklist for them if they need it, but don’t hover.

“By middle school, it becomes a power struggle between parents and students if you try to sit with them,” Savage advises.

“Instead, be their guide,” Savage says. “Ask them if they’ve met with the teacher, but try not to get involved unless it’s necessary.”

“They need to learn how to fix their own problems. If they don’t, they’ll have a very difficult time when they’re on their own in college,” Savage says.

[You can learn more tips for succeeding in college with ADHD here.](#)

Along the way, reward your child as their grades begin to improve. Celebrate the small victories, too, such as completing an assignment and turning it in on time.

How to Study Effectively with ADHD

Study Problem 1: Cramming Before Exams

Students should space out study periods to avoid pulling all-nighters. We’re better able to recall information and concepts if we learn them in multiple, spread-out sessions. A few 30-minute study sessions over several days instead of a three-hour crash course the night before is more effective in the long run. Picture an overstuffed suitcase – things are bound to fall out the moment you move it.

Study Problem 2: Seldom Reviewing Notes

Many children and teens with [ADHD](#) make the mistake of reading through their notes once and thinking they're ready for the exam. Repetition, however, is key. For [effective studying](#), rinse and repeat. A lot.

Study Problem 3: Rereading, Only

Rereading doesn't make information stick. When rereading, students can adopt a faulty "I know this!" mentality because the material is familiar. They stop processing what they're reading, and are no longer deepening their understanding of the material.

The antidote to this is rewriting notes. The physical act of writing helps students absorb information on a deeper level than reading the same material twice. To take it up a notch, rewrite in a different form than the original notes (draw a diagram, create an outline, develop a Q and A — anything that changes your notes into a different format). Organizing the material differently will also help students figure out whether they truly understand the material.

[\[Click to Read: 10 Secrets to Studying Smarter with ADHD\]](#)

Study Problem 4: Using Only One Study Tool

Creating a single study guide unfortunately won't be enough. Mixing different study tools will optimize learning by keeping the material fresh, fun, and more engaging.

Some fun ideas to try:

- Write a song as a way to learn a language
- Draw cartoon pictures to memorize the ancient gods
- Make up a dance routine to learn the periodic table

Study Problem 5: Ignoring Textbook Questions

The questions at the end of each textbook chapter are study gold! But only if you use them effectively.

Prior to reading a chapter, students should write out each question on a separate sheet of paper (leaving space in between), and answer the questions as they make their way through the chapter. This technique helps my students overcome procrastination every time! And a tip within a tip: Don't forget about the questions or highlighted text in each chapter. General rule: If something is bolded, italicized, or highlighted, the reader needs to know it.

Study Problem 6: Skimming the Surface

Many students think that knowing some of the material means they really know it all – and they avoid further studying. But not knowing things makes us uncomfortable, and our lack of understanding comes out in our test scores.

[*\[Read This: 7 Ways To Enhance Your Study Space\]*](#)

Studying material in the order in which it was first presented can lead to a false sense of security. To encourage learning and go beyond the surface, mix it all up! Start in the middle. Jump around. Break up the order.

If the material requires chronological study, try reviewing it backward. I learned this from a professor during my college years. We tend to spend more time at the beginning of the textbook chapter, the professor's PowerPoint, or our own notes. By starting at the end and working backward, we ensure that we've given everything equal time.

Study Problem 7: Letting Frustration Win

In high school and in college, most students will take classes in subjects that don't come easy to them. To succeed in these classes, students will have to put in more effort than other students, work hard without giving up, get help, and tap into all resources. No easy task.

To avoid a self-defeating mindset, students should try flipping upside down the narratives in their head. Instead of saying, "I don't get this," they should ask themselves, "How can I get this?" Or swap out "I don't know" with "What do I know?" And my favorite one? Changing "This won't work" to "What have I done previously that has worked?"

Study Problem 8: Studying Alone

There's no better [procrastination](#) buster than studying with others. It's one of the most effective study tools out there because it's loaded with all the good stuff:

- Students are teaching each other, not just memorizing. They're writing on smart boards, quizzing each other, and making up mock test questions – fun stuff that puts activity into learning. And to teach is to know.
- Students are talking out loud – it slows them down, helps them process, and forces them to say things in a way that make sense to them.
- Students are drawing from each other's expertise. Someone might be a math god, while another is a computer science whiz. This is the time to take advantage of each other's knowledge.
- It keeps students accountable and, therefore, keeps procrastination at bay. Getting up at 8 a.m. on a Saturday to study alone, for example, may be tough. But if the study group is meeting at that time, your child will be on time.

1. Give yourself extra time

Do you notice your homework always seems to take longer than expected? According to one [2019 study](#), kids and teens with untreated ADHD spend more time each day studying than their [neurotypical](#) peers, or kids without ADHD.

The planning fallacy may help explain why it's not always easy to tell how much time you need for a task. In a nutshell, the planning fallacy refers to a tendency to underestimate how long a project will take. You might focus on the duration of the actual task but forget to budget in time for breaks or setbacks.

If you live with ADHD, you might get distracted easily and find your [concentration drifting away](#) from the task at hand. So, giving yourself a bigger time “buffer” could make a difference.

The size of your buffer will probably depend on the assignment’s size and importance. For instance, if you think you can complete a take-home worksheet in 30 minutes, you may want to add a buffer of 5-10 minutes. On the other hand, if you think your term paper will require about 20 hours of work total, you might want to budget for [at least 30 hours](#).

When it comes to bigger projects, one roadblock can cause a domino effect that delays your whole timeline.

2. Interact with the material

If you have ADHD, you may find it harder to focus on things that don’t hold your attention. This isn’t a matter of willpower, but of brain chemistry.

People with ADHD tend to have [lower levels](#) of [dopamine](#), a chemical that helps you stay motivated and on task. With less dopamine in reserve, your brain may flutter from distraction to distraction, trying to find something naturally rewarding to engage with. Tasks you find interesting, challenging, or new can [boost low dopamine levels](#).

You can’t always make [algebra homework](#) fun, but you can make it feel novel by engaging your senses as you work. A few ideas to try:

- Highlight key vocabulary or concepts in bright colors.
- Take a pen and underline each word as you go.
- Read each question or formula out loud.
- Write comments in the margins of your notes.

3. Remember your reminders

Many people with ADHD have trouble with [prospective memory](#), or remembering to follow through on plans — which can also complicate the studying process.

For example, say you mentally promised yourself to start writing an essay after completing your chemistry lab write-up. But you get so focused on chemistry that your brain drops your plans from its memory storage. When you wrap up your lab report, you take the rest of the night off because you forgot about the essay.

In situations like these, reminders often come in handy. You can set yourself up for success by:

- **Setting an alarm on your phone:** Giving the alarm a name, like “history essay,” can help you remember what it’s for.
- **Using sticky notes liberally:** Try attaching notes to your TV, gaming console, refrigerator, bathroom mirror, or other visible locations. It might also help to put the sticky note in a new place each time so your eyes don’t learn to skim over it.

- **Recruiting an accountability buddy:** This person can check in with you and offer vocal reminders to get started on your work. It helps to choose someone who will actually hold you accountable and not take, “I’ll start in a few minutes” at face value.

4. Organize, organize, organize!

Absolutely, ADHD can make organization difficult, but you *can* learn to develop this skill. What’s more, [researchTrusted Source](#) suggests organizational skills training can help students with ADHD improve in these areas:

- managing schedules and tasks
- keeping track of papers and school supplies
- [inattention symptoms](#)
- overall academic performance

[Clutter](#) and chaos in your environment can both add to your stress and serve as distractions, but these ideas can help you find a more orderly middle ground:

- **Folders are your friend:** Folders give you a general idea of what assignment goes where, so you don’t have to flip through every single paper you own to find what you need. You can also label folders with the class or project name so you don’t need to keep track of what goes in the green folder and what goes in the yellow one.
- **Keep a planner:** As soon as you get your assignment, write the due date in the planner. It may also help to highlight the most urgent assignments.
- **Start each day’s notes on a new page:** If your notebook is nonstop text with no line breaks, you may have trouble finding where one day’s notes end and the other’s begin. Using dates, headings, and extra space between your notes can help you set each day’s work apart.
- **Put away finished projects:** Once your teacher returns a graded assignment, put it aside in a “completed” folder or box at home. That way, you have the assignment if you need it, but it doesn’t take up space in your binder or backpack.
- **Pack your bags in the evening:** It often proves much less stressful to pack your bags at night when you aren’t racing against the clock. If you try to cram everything in your backpack while rushing out the door, you might leave an important assignment behind.

5. Revisit your daily routine

Ever read through your to-do list and just sat there, staring, unable to get started? You know you should start something, but you have no idea where to begin?

This kind of [executive dysfunction](#) is common enough in ADHD to have its own unofficial name: [ADHD paralysis](#).

Creating a regular routine could make it easier to get started. If you have classes every morning, you might create an afternoon schedule along these lines:

1. Lunch (30 minutes)
2. History (30 minutes)

3. Break. [Get up and stretch!](#) (10 minutes)
4. History (20 minutes)
5. Chemistry (30 minutes)
6. Break. [Snack time!](#) (10 minutes)
7. Math (30 minutes)
8. Break. [Take a walk!](#) (15 minutes)
9. Math (30 minutes)

You can even set timers with an alarm clock or your phone to remind you when to transition to the next activity.

A routine may not completely erase [executive dysfunction](#), but it can help. ADHD paralysis has its roots in indecision, and knowing you'll do the same thing at the same time every day frees you from having to make choices about what to do when. So, your brain may click over into work mode more smoothly.

You may need to practice your new routine [for a while](#) before it feels automatic. But habits generally become easier [the more you practice them](#).

Keep in mind

When building your routine, it's important to follow your own natural rhythms.

[Research from 2017](#) suggests many people with ADHD are "[night owls](#)," or more alert in the evening. If that's the case for you, then you may find evening study sessions more productive than morning or afternoon study sessions — just as long as you set aside [enough time](#) for [quality sleep](#).

6. Turn up the noise

For some people, absolute silence makes an ideal studying soundtrack. But if you have ADHD, some background noise could help [improve your focus](#).

One [2020 study](#) had preteen students study with and without music. For students with ADHD, music added extra stimulation to keep them engaged, so they had improved reading comprehension and focus.

But students with typical development — those without ADHD — found the music overstimulating. They had worse focus and reading comprehension while listening to music.

A [2022 study](#) found similar results for [white noise](#). In fact, students with ADHD performed even better on cognitive tasks with white noise than they did with music. Students with typical development, on the other hand, worked best in silence.

7. Avoid the procrastination trap

Nearly everyone [procrastinates](#) on occasion, but — as noted above — you might procrastinate [even more often](#) [Trusted Source](#) if you live with ADHD. [Procrastination](#) doesn't

just keep you from getting things done. It can also add to your stress and make it harder to get started.

You might put off studying for your midterm, sure, but the date of the test probably still lurks in the back of your brain. As the test draws closer, you might worry about how little time you have to study, and [anxiety about your performance](#) can make studying feel even more daunting.

Try these tips to break the cycle:

- **Divide big assignments into chunks:** The idea of reading a 300-page novel may feel intimidating. Reading the 15 pages of the first chapter, less so. But if you read 20 of those chapters, you'll eventually finish the book.
- **Gather all your materials ahead of time:** Nothing ruins the flow of work like having to get up every 10 minutes to search for another book, pencil, or notepad. Gather everything you need in one place so you can access it easily.
- **Follow through on missed work:** If you put off an assignment, do it first thing the following day. This teaches your brain that it can't avoid difficult tasks indefinitely.
- **Give yourself permission to make mistakes:** No one, not even Shakespeare himself, ever wrote a flawless first draft. Remember, you can always go back and edit your errors later. It's usually much easier to find and fix mistakes typed on a page than to edit ideas floating half-formed in your brain.

8. Treat yourself

If you live with ADHD, you may have a [looser sense of time](#) than people without ADHD. The future might feel a little less solid for you, so you might find it harder to motivate yourself to do boring, difficult homework in order to earn a good grade several weeks or months down the line.

One way to get around this issue? Offer yourself smaller rewards more frequently to keep your motivation high. For example, after every page of math equations you finish, you might reward yourself by:

- calling or texting a friend
- playing with your pet
- scrolling through your social media of choice
- watching a funny video

If you tend to get wrapped up in an activity, setting a timer can help remind you when to get back to work.

The bottom line

Studying can pose ongoing challenges when you live with ADHD. But making adjustments to your homework routine and trying out a few new approaches to studying may help you manage your workload more effectively.

If you consistently find it difficult to stick with a routine or keep up with your schoolwork, a mental health professional can offer more personalized guidance. They can help you explore options for [addressing ADHD symptoms](#), which can help reduce their impact on your everyday life.

How ADHD Affects College Students

College students often face more responsibilities, less structured time, increased distractions, and new social situations—all while lacking access to many of the support systems they had in high school. Impaired executive functioning can make handling these changes a bit harder for students with ADHD, resulting in:

- **Poor academic performance and achievement:** Students with ADHD frequently report feeling dissatisfied with their grades. They may struggle in their classes due to difficulties starting and completing tasks, disorganization, problems remembering assignments, difficulty memorizing facts, and trouble working on lengthy papers or [complex math problems](#).
- **Troubles with time management:** Students with ADHD often have irregular lifestyles that result from poor time management. This can create problems with being on time, preparing and planning for the future, and prioritizing tasks.
- **Difficulty regulating and managing emotions:** Students with ADHD also often struggle with social issues, negative thoughts, and poor self-esteem. Some [ADHD symptoms](#) can make friendships and other relationships more challenging while worrying about these issues contributes to poor self-image.

The good news is that these areas of executive function can be improved. For most college students with ADHD, the problem isn't in knowing what to do, it's getting it done. Developing strategies that focus on this goal can lead to positive academic and social effects.

Tips for Succeeding in College With ADHD

There are several strategies you can use to help stay on track if you are a college student with ADHD. Here are seven that Wright suggests.

1. Take Steps to Start the Day on Time

There are three main factors that contribute to being late in the morning: Getting up late, getting sidetracked, and being disorganized.

If Getting Up Late Is an Issue

Set two alarms to go off in sequence. Put the first alarm across the room so you have to get out of bed to turn it off. Put the second where you know it will bother your roommates, increasing the consequences if you don't get out of bed and turn it off. Set both alarms to go off early so you can take your time getting ready.

If Getting Sidetracked Is an Issue

If certain actions tend to derail you, like checking your email or reading the news, make it a rule that those activities must wait until later in the day so you can [stay on task](#). Also, figure out how much time you need to dress, eat, and get organized, then set alarms or other reminders to cue these tasks.

Three options are:

- **Use a music mix as a timer.** If you have 30 minutes to get ready, the schedule might look like this: wash and dress to songs 1 to 3, eat breakfast to songs 4 to 6, get your stuff together during song 7, and walk out the door by song 8. This option works best if you use the same mix every morning.
- **Use your phone** or buy a programmable reminder watch so your alarms are always nearby.
- **Put a big wall clock in your room where you can easily see it.** If your room is part of a suite with a common room and bathroom, put wall clocks in those spaces as well.

If Being Disorganized Is the Issue

Create a "launch pad" by your door. Collect all of the things you'll need the next day the night before (like your backpack and keys), and put them on the pad so you can grab them and go. Include a note to help you remember important events for the day, such as an appointment or quiz.

2. Work With Your Urge to Procrastinate

Though it may sound counterproductive, if you feel the [urge to procrastinate](#), go with it. When you have ADHD, sometimes things only get done right before they're due. At that point, nothing has higher priority, increasing the urgency and consequences if you don't do them now. These qualities are what can finally make a task doable, so work with them.

If you plan to procrastinate, it's important to stack the deck so you can pull it off. For example, if you have to write a paper, make sure you've done the reading or research in advance and have some idea of what you want to write. Next, figure out how many hours you'll need, block those hours out in your schedule, and then, with the deadline in sight, sit down and do it.

Recap

Understanding your [tendency to procrastinate with ADHD](#) can help you plan ahead so you won't be left scrambling to finish projects at the last minute.

3. Study Smarter, Not Harder

Boredom and [working memory issues](#) can make studying a bit more challenging for students with ADHD. Rather than trying harder to force the information into your head, get creative with the learning process.

If you're wondering how to study with ADHD, research shows that multi-modal learning or learning via a variety of different methods can be helpful.⁴ Ideas include:

- Highlight text with different-colored pens.
- Make doodles when taking notes.
- Record notes as voice memos and listen to them as you walk across campus.
- [Use mnemonics](#) to create funny ways to remember facts.
- Stand up while you study.
- Read assignments aloud using an expressive (not boring) voice.
- If you can, get the audio version of a book you need to read and listen to it while you take notes and/or exercise.
- Work with a study buddy.

These won't all work for every person, but try mixing up your strategies and see what happens. Taking study breaks every couple of hours and [getting enough sleep](#) are also part of studying smarter, not harder.

Sleep impacts learning in two main ways. First, sleep deprivation has a negative impact on [short-term memory](#), which is what you use to learn the materials when you study. Second, sleep is needed to move short-term memories into long-term memory, which is what you rely on when it's time to take the test.

Sleep is important for both short- and long-term memory, making it critical for both learning new material and recalling what you've learned.

4. Schedule Your Study Time

Many students with ADHD are highly intelligent.⁵ They can pull off a passing grade, or even a good one, in high school by cramming their studies in the night before a test.

This strategy doesn't work as well in college since cramming reduces your ability to [retain what you've learned long-term](#).⁶ This can make it harder to remember what you need to know once you enter your field of choice.

One good rule of thumb for college students is to study two to two-and-a-half hours per week for every course credit hour. Put this time into your schedule to make sure you have it.

5. Plan and Prioritize Your Time

It may sound strange, but it's important to plan time to plan. If you don't develop this habit, you may find yourself always being reactive with your day rather than proactive—the latter of which can help you [take more control over your schedule](#).

Set aside time on Monday mornings to develop a high-level plan for the week, using Friday mornings to plan for the weekend. In addition, do a daily review of your plan over breakfast—possibly adding pertinent details—to make sure you know what's coming your way that day.

When making your plans, differentiate between what you *need* to do and everything that *can or should* be done. Prioritize what needs to be done first, taking care of these items before moving on to lower-priority tasks on your list.

6. Implement Strategies to Stick to Your Plan

With ADHD, sticking to a plan is often difficult.⁷ If you like rewards, use them to assist with this. For instance, you might tell yourself, "I'll read for two hours, then go to the coffee house." Having something to look forward to can make it easier to muster through your studies.

If you're competitive, use this [personality trait](#) instead. Pick another student in your class whom you want to do better than and go for it. If you know that you respond to social pressure, make plans to study with classmates so you won't let them down. Or hire a tutor so you have structured study time.

Research suggests that focusing on skills related to [time management](#), target planning, goal setting, organization, and [problem-solving](#) can all be helpful for students with ADHD.⁸

Hiring a coach can also be beneficial. There is growing evidence, both research-based and anecdotal, that supports [ADHD coaching](#) as a vital strategy in helping students learn to plan, prioritize, and persist in following their plans.⁸

This type of coaching is sometimes described as a form of life coaching influenced by [cognitive behavioral-type therapy](#), which helps people develop behaviors, skills, and strategies to better deal with ADHD symptoms. It can lead to greater self-determination and direction, reduced feelings of overwhelm and anxiety, and increased self-confidence and self-sufficiency.

7. Manage Your Medication

One study found that only around 53% of college students with ADHD adhere to their medication plan.⁹ Poor medication adherence can have serious consequences, contributing to poor academic performance and decreased graduation rates.

Steps you can take to stay on top of your [ADHD medications](#) include:

- **Find a local healthcare provider:** Regularly monitoring your medications helps ensure that you are at the best dosage for you.¹⁰ If you're going to school a long way from home, find a local healthcare provider to meet with regularly. You can also schedule regular visits with your university's health services.
- **Find a local pharmacy:** Determine where you'll order and pick up your medication. Set reminders on your phone so you know when to refill your prescription. You may also be able to sign up for text reminders.
- **Store medications safely:** [Abuse of ADHD medications](#) is on the rise on college campuses, even though this can result in high blood pressure, increased feelings of anger and distrust, trouble sleeping, and even strokes.¹¹ Keep your ADHD medications in a safe location and never share them with others.
- **Set reminders to take your medication:** If you are struggling to take your medication as prescribed, consider using a reminder app or setting reminders on your phone.

Research points to medication as the most effective and available [ADHD treatment](#) option.¹² However, it's important to talk to your care provider to decide the best treatment approach for your individual situation and needs.

Social Strategies for Students With ADHD

Interpersonal challenges are also common for college students with ADHD. While being out on your own for the first time can be exciting, this mental health condition can lead to difficulties in [building and maintaining friendships](#).¹³

CHADD—which stands for Children and Adults with Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder, an organization funded by the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention—offers these tips:¹⁴

- **Remember that you aren't the only one who feels the way you do.** Other students may be feeling just as excited (and overwhelmed) as you. During orientation, help them feel more comfortable by being friendly and listening when they share their concerns.
- **Look for opportunities to meet and interact with others.** You might make new friends in class, in your dorm, at the school cafeteria, or at other places on campus. View each of these locations as an opportunity to [expand your social network](#).
- **Find activities or clubs to join.** Colleges and universities are great places to explore hobbies and meet people who share your interests. Check out bulletin boards on campus or look at your school's website to learn more about the options that are available.
- **Stay in contact with your current friends.** Don't let your high school friendships fade into the background just because you're at college. While you're busy with new things and might not see each other every day, stay in touch by phone, text, social media, or email. Your current friends can be great [sources of social support](#).