




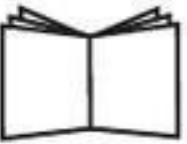
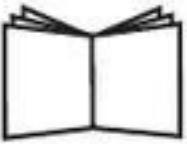
# How to improve your concentration?



Study Smart  
Skills that you need for academic success

# Yourself

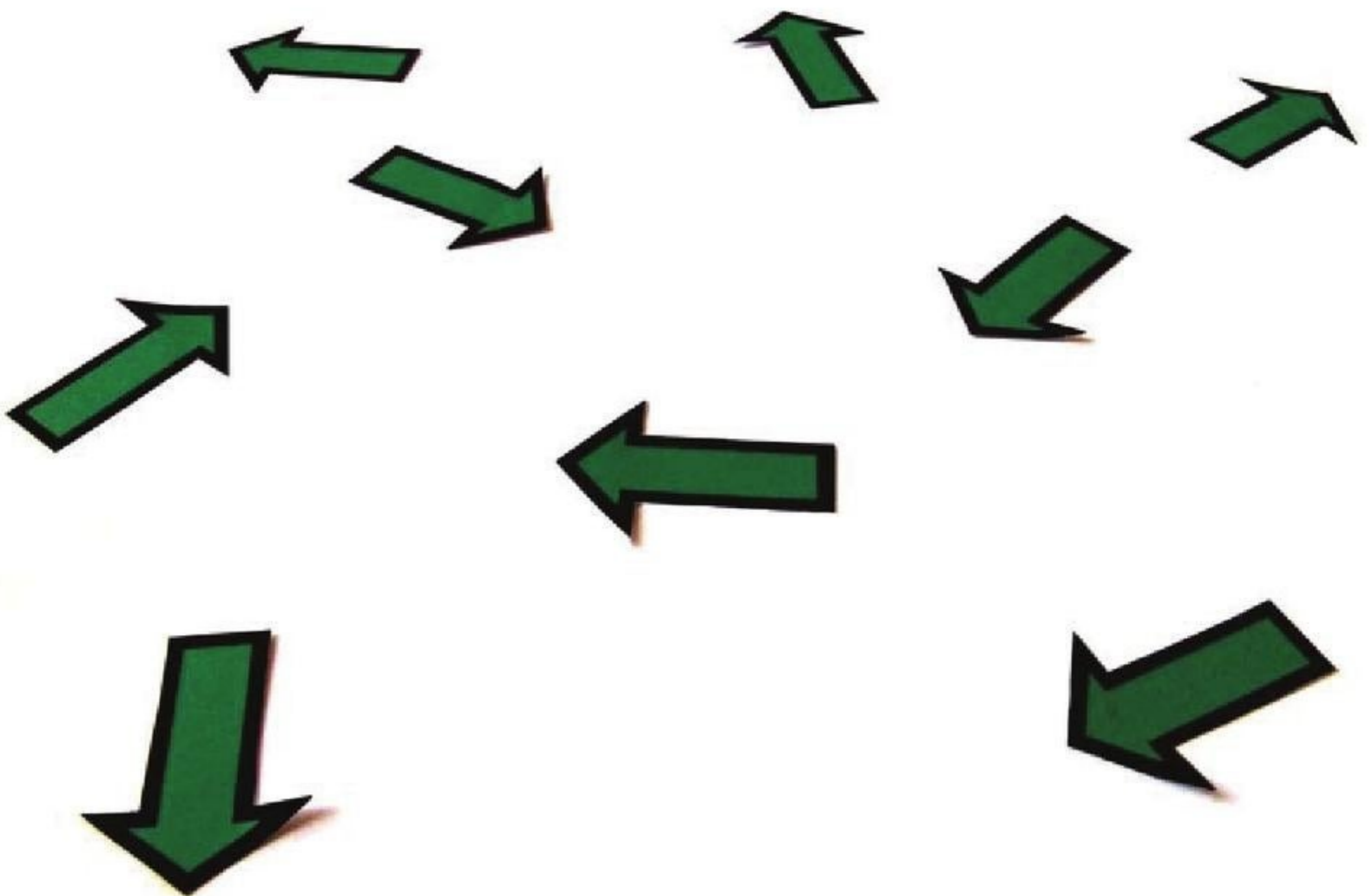
## TEST

-  I spent much time on my studies but eventually found my efforts were in vain.
-  I just could not stop myself from checking emails and mobile texting during studies.
-  As I study, my mind wanders.
-  I had trouble getting back to my work after interruptions.
-  I could not stop thinking about my unfinished business during study time.

# Indicators for Concentration Problems

Many students find it difficult to concentrate on their studies. Even they have invested invaluable time, they may find that they don't actually accomplish much.

The most common indicators for concentration problems are **external distractions** and **internal distractions**. It is important for students to identify the distractions that take them away from concentration.



# External distractions

1. Uncomfortable study environment (e.g. noise, furniture, lighting, temperature)
2. Phone calls, e-mails, and instant messaging (e.g. SMS, Whatsapp, Facebook, etc.)
3. Interruptions from roommates and friends
4. Television programmes, computer games



# Internal distractions

1. Tiredness, inadequate sleep, illness, hunger
2. Daydreaming
3. Preoccupying thoughts on personal matters
4. Boredom, lack of interest, and motivation



# Checkpoint 1

**What is the cause of your concentration problems?**

**Please identify and list out the distractions of your studies.**

**External distractions**

**Internal distractions**

# Strategies for Improving Concentration

## 1. Creating a favourable study space



Noises, lights, and temperature are some common distractions in study environment. Optimize your study space to make it comfortable for you. For details about how to deal with these distractions, please refer to Study Smart series “How to get the most out of lectures?” Page 3 to 7.

Avoid falling into a relaxed position, like lying on your bed. You will easily fall asleep! It is often helpful to separate your study space from resting place. Find a chair that helps you sit comfortably upright. It enhances your alertness and maintains your concentration level.

Finally, make your books, notes, and stationery readily available on your desk before you start studying. If you need to look back and forth for materials and resources needed for your studies, you may find it hard to get back into concentration.

# Strategies for Improving Concentration



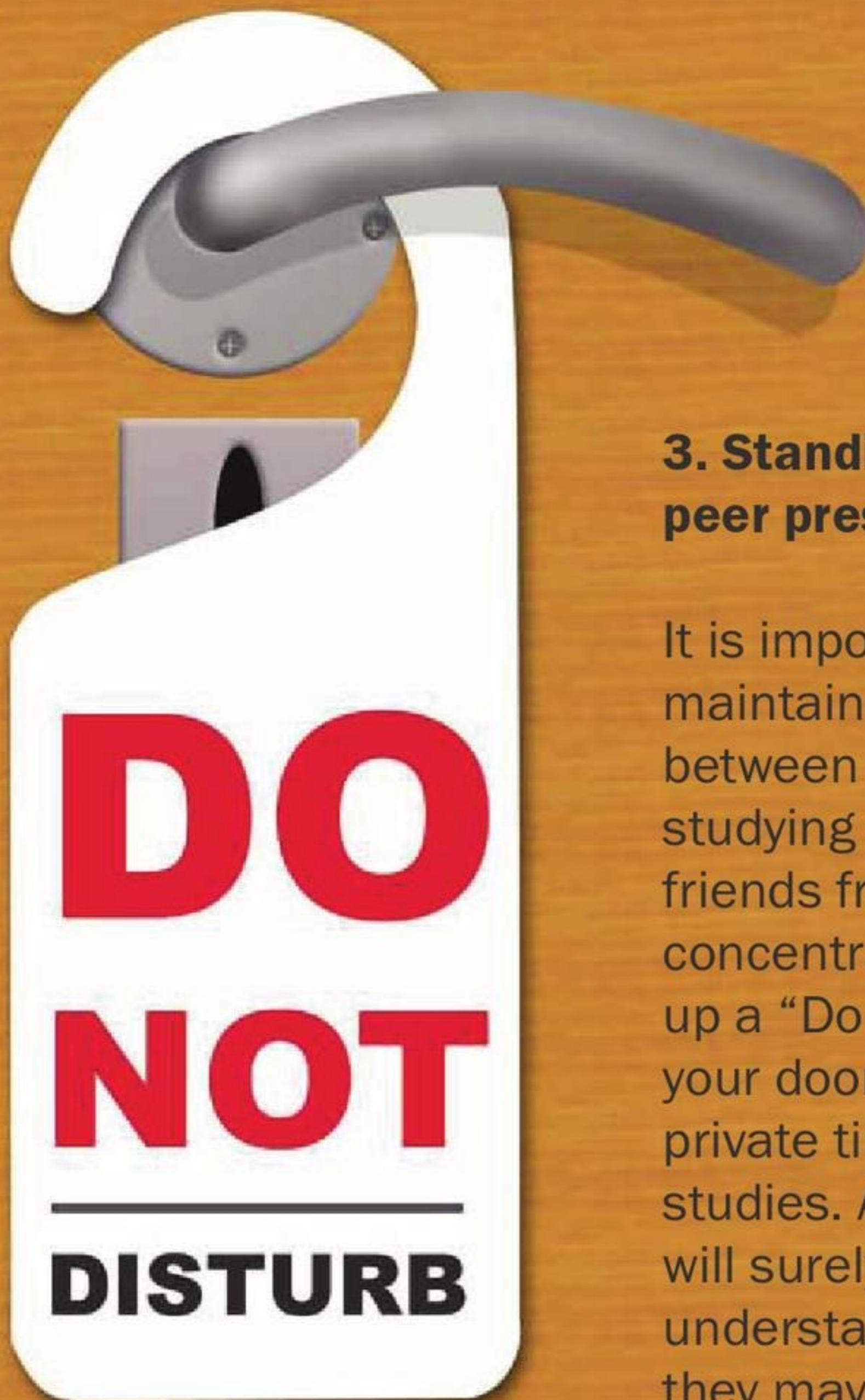
## 2. Resisting temptations

There are lots of temptations from television, computers and mobile phones that may distract you from your studies. It is often hard to resist yourself from watching your favorite shows on television, answering messages when you see a flickering notification or hear an alerting sound.

Before you begin with your studies, eliminate or at least minimize such distractions by turning off the devices and applications that you do not need. Do the right thing at the right time. Set aside other time for settling your emails / messages / phone calls, and having fun activities.



# Strategies for Improving Concentration



## 3. Standing firm against peer pressure

It is important for you to maintain a good balance between socializing time and studying time. Tell your friends frankly if you need to concentrate on your work. Put up a “Do Not Disturb” sign on your door if you need some private time and space for studies. A supportive friend will surely be considerate and understanding – and indeed, they may also need that too at another time!

# Strategies for Improving Concentration

## 4. Identifying your prime time

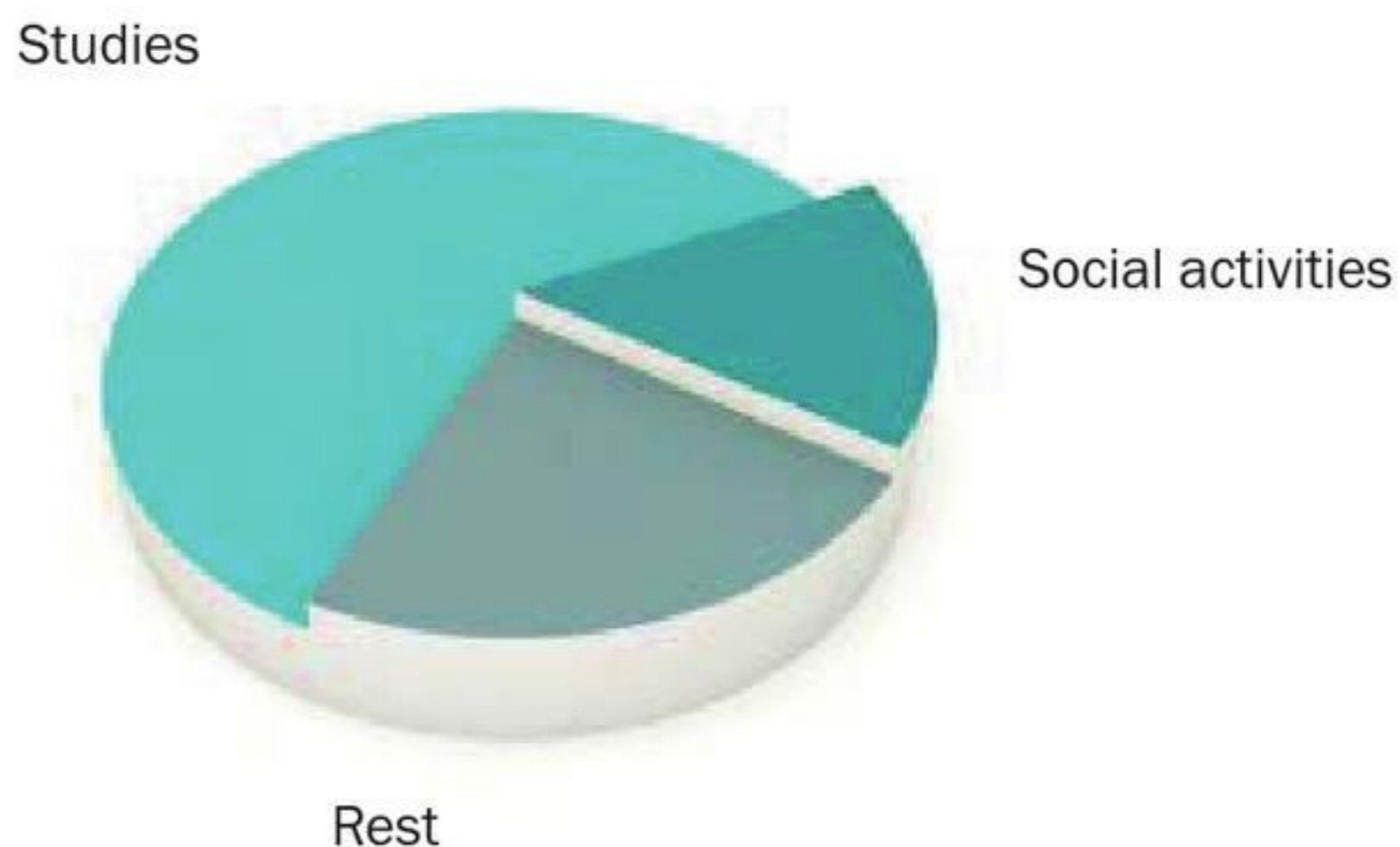
A person's concentration level varies across the day. Some people will find themselves remember better during daytime. Some may find it more comfortable to study at night time. You can chart your alertness and concentration level across the day and identify the time when you have the highest energy level. That is the prime time which you are most productive in your work.



# Strategies for Improving Concentration

## 5. Managing your time efficiently

A good balance among studies, rest, and social activities is essential for a healthy university life. Set up a timetable so that you can organize and allocate sufficient time for studies, rest, and leisure activities. It can help you focus attention on one task at a time. For details, please refer to Study Smart Series “How to manage your time efficiently?”.



# Strategies for Improving Concentration

## 6. Here and now

You may find your mind wanders or preoccupies by other thoughts during studies. Try re-focus on the “here and now” and continue with your work. Make use of some anchoring points to help you re-focused. For instance, you can focus on your breathing when you find yourself losing track of the task at hand.

If you have preoccupying thoughts that impede your concentration, jot them down and let them go for now. Remind yourself that you will attend to them later. Seek constructive ways to tackle them after the study time.

.

# Checkpoint 2

**How can I deal with my concentration problems?**

Study Tasks

Concentration Problems

Coping Strategies

# Recap

## Indicators for concentration problems

### 1. External distractions

- Uncomfortable study environment
- Phone calls, e-mails, and instant messaging
- Interruptions from roommates and friends
- Television programmes, computer games

### 2. Internal distractions

- Tiredness, inadequate sleep, illness, hunger
- Daydreaming
- Preoccupying thoughts on personal matters
- Boredom, lack of interest, and motivation

## Strategies for Improving Concentration

1. Creating a favourable study space
2. Resisting temptations
3. Standing firm against peer pressure
4. Identifying your own prime time
5. Managing your study time efficiently
6. Here and now