

Feel the beat

Music can alter brain activity. Depending on the rhythm, it may make you calmer or more alert.

Studies have shown that tunes with a strong beat fire up the brain and prompt brainwaves to resonate in time with the rhythm. Slow beats cue slow brainwaves, such as those that occur in hypnotic or meditative states. Faster beats rev up faster brainwaves that result in more alert and focused thinking. So the Foo Fighters' 'No Way Back' would be good to rock out to before a test or presentation, while Adele's 'Someone Like You' might be best before bed.



Learn to daydream

Daydreaming often gets dismissed as a waste of time. But if done correctly it sparks creativity and makes you better at planning and goal-driven thought.

Daydreaming helps your brain access information that's normally out of reach. It works best when you envision a goal, as well as the obstacles you must overcome to reach it. So don't just dream, 'I'm going to win the marathon!' and wallow in the glory. Instead, think, 'I'm going to win the marathon, and here's how I'll do it.' Psychologists estimate we daydream for up to half of our waking hours, so spend at least a few minutes of that daydreaming productively.

