

A Have you ever had trouble focusing when you're studying? What did you do about it?



Are you studying the "right" way?

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You may study differently from your friends, but your study habits are probably not wrong!

Kelly and Maria are best friends with a lot in common. They love doing things together, such as going to movies and concerts, shopping, or just sitting at a local café. Since they take a lot of the same school subjects, they would love to study together, but they find this impossible. Their working styles are so completely different that they can't be in the same room while they are studying!

Kelly would rather study in a clean, open space, whereas Maria works best by surrounding herself with books, papers, and other clutter. Kelly prefers to study in a totally silent room, but Maria loves to play music or even have the TV on. Kelly can sit for hours without moving, and often gets all of her homework done in one sitting. Maria, on the other hand, is constantly getting up, and claims that she thinks best when she's on the move.

You might be asking yourself, which way of studying gets better results? Many people assume that a silent, uncluttered setting is the way to go, but it seems that is not necessarily the case. Some research has even shown that outside noise and clutter help some people concentrate because it makes them form a mental "wall" around what they are doing and improves their focus. So, if you're a student who chooses to study while sitting at a table in a busy shopping mall, don't worry about it. And if you work in total silence, that's OK, too. Judging from Kelly and Maria's study habits, the best way to study is the way that works for you. With their very different approaches, both of them do extremely well in school, and both finish their work in about the same amount of time as well.

One curious fact about the two friends: Despite their opposing studying styles, they have almost identical ambitions. Both are planning to go to law school – Kelly with the idea of becoming a human rights attorney and Maria hoping to become a public defender. But will they be study buddies? Not a chance!



B Read the article. Find the words in *italics* in the article. Then match each word with its meaning.

- | | |
|-----------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| 1. <i>clutter</i> _____ | a. focus attention on something |
| 2. <i>sitting</i> _____ | b. exactly the same |
| 3. <i>concentrate</i> _____ | c. period of activity without a break |
| 4. <i>approach</i> _____ | d. way of doing something |
| 5. <i>identical</i> _____ | e. objects in a state of disorder |

A. What makes studying together challenging for Kelly and Maria?

1. They attend different schools
2. Their study habits are completely different
3. They dislike each other's company
4. They have conflicting class schedules

B. How does Maria prefer to study compared to Kelly?

1. Surrounded by books and papers with background noise
2. In a clean, open space
3. Without moving from her seat
4. In a completely silent room

C. What is the main point about study habits in the text?

1. Students must study with friends
2. There is only one correct way to study
3. Everyone should study in total silence
4. The best study method is the one that works for the individual

D. What future career goal do Kelly and Maria share?

1. Studying together
2. Becoming teachers
3. Working in law
4. Shopping together

E. According to the text, what can outside noise potentially do for some people's concentration?

1. Always distract them
2. Help them create a mental focus barrier
3. Make studying impossible
4. Reduce their study time

F. What inference can be made about Kelly and Maria's academic performance?

1. Kelly is a more successful student
2. They struggle in school
3. Maria performs better than Kelly
4. They perform equally well despite different study methods

G. What does the text suggest about study environments?

1. A quiet, clean space is the only effective study setting
2. Music always helps students focus
3. Different people concentrate better in different environments
4. Studying in a busy mall is always counterproductive