

## MULTITASKING – OR, HOW TO AVOID IT!

Having online classes can mean that your time is less structured, and you might be more tempted to multitask. While multitasking can seem like an efficient solution, research shows us that only about 2% of the population can multitask. Even if you feel like you're multitasking, you're probably not... really, you're switching between tasks very quickly (some call this "micro-tasking").

### The downsides of multitasking and microtasking:

- **Assignments take longer.** Each time you come back to an assignment (from Instagram for example), you have to get familiar with it, find your spot, remember what you were going to do next, etc. The time it takes to re-focus on the task can really add up over the course of an assignment, project, or a day.
- **You're more likely to make mistakes.** Distractions and switching between tasks tires out the brain, making it more likely to make errors.
- **You'll remember less.** When your brain is divided, you're less able to commit what you're learning to long-term memory, because it doesn't get encoded properly into your brain.

### What to do instead?

When you need to study something important, consider *monotasking*.

- Focus on **one thing** at a time.
- Take **breaks** between tasks. In your break, give your brain something else to think about, but don't do anything that you'll have trouble stepping away after 10 minutes. This is a great time for self-care!
  - Stretch
  - Color or journal
  - Do some dishes
  - Take a walk around your house
  - Play with your pet
  - Step outside for some fresh air
- Consider using the [pomodoro technique](#) to help you focus. Work for 25 or 50-minute periods and then reward yourself with 5- or 10-minute breaks. You will be creating intervals referred to as pomodoros. After about four pomodoros, take a longer break of about 15 to 20 minutes.
- Use a timer to keep you on track!