

Staying Focused at Work

A distraction interrupts your attention or draws attention away from a task. Distractions at work can lead to costly errors, lower productivity, damage to property or products, and even injury or death.



Factors that can cause workplace distractions



Time pressures



Fatigue



Electronic and physical clutter



Juggling school and work



Mundane tasks



Multi-tasking



Stress



Use of technology



Conflicts with family, friends or co-workers




Daydreaming



Substance use

What employers can do

- ⚙️ Follow federal, provincial and territorial labour laws that apply to young workers, paying attention to hours worked, and health and safety for your industry or work environment.
- ⚙️ Address fatigue through changes to shift scheduling, shift rotation, and assigned tasks. Check for adequate lighting, comfortable temperatures, and reduced noise levels.
- ⚙️ Set realistic deadlines. Plan work to avoid the need to rush or multi-task.
- ⚙️ Organize work to allow for variety – a change in tasks or positions can limit a distraction's impact.
- ⚙️ Schedule time for workers to clear clutter from their desks and emails.

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- ⚙️ Clearly communicate hazards at work, and the policies, procedures, and precautions to reduce risk of harm.
 - ⚙️ Set guidelines for device use at work, including phones, tablets, and music players.
 - ⚙️ Talk with workers to identify and address distractions on the job.
 - ⚙️ Provide hands-on health and safety training, including how to handle potentially hazardous equipment or chemicals.
 - ⚙️ Supervise and mentor young workers so they are comfortable completing their duties safely.
 - ⚙️ Encourage workers to speak up, ask questions, and report hazards, injuries or anything else they feel is unsafe.
 - ⚙️ Consider other distractions, such as financial and personal issues or education commitments.
 - ⚙️ Address substance use with workers and review related workplace policies.



What workers can do

- ⚙️ Be aware of the risks of being distracted.
- ⚙️ Follow all safe work procedures, including when to use devices.
- ⚙️ Pace your work and focus on one task at a time.
- ⚙️ Take breaks to reduce boredom and repetition.
- ⚙️ Raise any concerns with your employer about your ability to perform tasks safely.
- ⚙️ Participate in education and training provided by your employer.

What parents can do

- ⚙️ Talk with your young workers about their jobs and ensure they feel comfortable.
- ⚙️ Encourage them to speak with their supervisor, health and safety representative or committee member if they feel a task is unsafe.
- ⚙️ Monitor their work hours for proper school- and work-life balance.