

3 Ways to Prevent Web-based Brain Damage, Time Wastage, and Mindless Data Consumption

1. **Dodge the hyperlinks, they're distracting.** Copy your article into Word (for example) and read it there, having removed all hyperlinks. You'll be more likely to remain focused, avoid distraction, and ultimately retain more information than reading with the hyperlinks.
2. **Don't try to "multi-task."** Multitasking brings with it cognitive penalties in the form of lowered comprehension and memory retention. It also causes information to be stored in the wrong parts of the brain. It additionally triggers the release of endogenous opioids and creates a dopamine-addiction feedback loop that encourages more multi-tasking and thus more cognitive penalties.
3. **Eliminate external/environmental distractions.** Glenn Wilson, former visiting professor of psychology at Gresham College, London, found in his research that "being in a situation where you are trying to concentrate on a task, and an email is sitting unread in your inbox, can reduce your effective IQ by 10 points." Clearly, if we need to work on a computer, that work is well served if we close all windows featuring social media tabs! After you've swept out potential distractors, get focused and knuckle down!