



Top 5 Tools to Sharpen Your Mind

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If you want to stay sharp well into your eighties and nineties, you need to be consistently and actively using your brain. By using your brain, I don't mean a mental debate on what TV show to watch tonight, but rather a true challenge that keeps it functioning at its best.

Here are 5 ways you can keep your brain sharp:

1. **Puzzle games.** Everyone loves a good game, and the ones that actually make you think about what you need to do next are the best ones for exercising your brain.
 - Games like Sudoku, crosswords and word jumbles all serve to entertain but, secretly, they accomplish much more than that. ***They're making you think, which is keeping your mind sharp.***
2. **Listen to music.** Listening to music helps you focus. As we listen to the same songs repeatedly, we hear subtle nuances in the music. This means we're concentrating on the sounds and forms behind the lyrics. This type of listening is more active and stimulates your thinking.
3. **Read a book.** When you read a book, you create the imagery of the words in your head. This not only improves your concentration, focus and reading comprehension, but it also fuels your imagination to a level no picture on a screen could ever do.
 - ***Set aside 30 minutes a day to read a good book.*** You'll be entertained, and more importantly, you'll also be exercising your brain.

4. **Write.** Whether you're blogging online or writing your autobiography, you're keeping your mind active. As a writer, you're always looking for something to write about, and you become a critical thinker about the world around you. ***Critical thinking keeps your brain in an active state.***

5. **Travel.** See the world or, at least, more of the area outside your own home. ***Exploring new places activates your mind through excitement and learning.***

- You don't need to head to another country to see something new and exciting. A day trip is a great way to experience new things and still be close to home.
- Go to an historical town and learn about its history.

In addition to these five simple tools to sharpen your mind, ***let learning be a constant companion.*** Stay informed on what's going on in the world. Pay attention to current events, both close to home and on a global basis. Pick up the newspaper every day or read the news online.

Go to the library and pick out a book about something you know nothing about. Learn about green house gasses, fossil fuels, and renewable energy. All of these are great ways to keep your mind sharp and keep yourself informed about things going on around you.

Lastly, question everything you hear. Don't let yourself just accept something because someone else says it's true or because you've always thought that way. This is the quickest way to let your mind slip into a state of dormancy. ***When we stop asking questions, we stop learning.***

Learning is something we should all strive to do on a daily basis. ***The best way to keep your mind sharp is learning something new every day.*** Life is filled with experiences and knowledge. Take it all in and keep your mind sharp.