

Eliminating Distractions

Working notes from Alex Hormozi's YouTube Short *How I Eliminate Distractions*, plus screen-time habits and app picks

The core idea

The whole clip rests on one reframe: focus is not a willpower problem, it's an environment problem. Most advice treats distraction as something you resist in the moment. His answer is to make the distraction physically unavailable, so there is nothing to resist. Asked how he does it, he answers: "I eliminate it by eliminating it."

Part 1 — Six tips from the video

1. Kill the visual noise first.

His office has no outside light. You don't need a bunker — face a blank wall instead of a window, close the blinds, and clear the desk down to the one thing you're working on. Your eyes pull your attention before your phone does.

2. Wear the sound barrier, don't just play music.

He uses earplugs *and* headphones. Layering them makes the point physical: putting them on is a start signal, taking them off is a stop signal. Music alone is still a stimulus.

3. Put a lock on the phone, not a promise.

He uses an app that blocks the phone so nothing gets through. The point is that turning it off has to cost you something. See the app picks on page 2.

4. Add distance, not just intent.

His phone lives somewhere that requires walking across the building to reach. Distance beats discipline every time — another room, a drawer downstairs, the glovebox. If reaching for it is a 20-second walk, you mostly won't.

5. Set a physical timer for the task.

He uses a kitchen timer set to how long he expects the task to take. A physical timer beats a phone timer because it doesn't require unlocking the thing you just banned. It also forces you to estimate the work up front, which is half the focus battle.

6. Decide the one task before the block starts.

He goes in with a clear idea of the work to be done. Choosing the task while the timer runs is itself a distraction. Pick it the night before, or in the 60 seconds before you sit down.

Part 2 — Screen-time habits the video skips

His setup protects a work block. These protect the other fifteen hours of the day, which is usually where the time actually goes.

7. Audit before you fix anything.

Open Screen Time on iPhone or Digital Wellbeing on Android and look at last week's numbers cold: total hours, top three apps, and pickups per day. Pickups matter more than hours — 80 pickups means 80 interrupted trains of thought. Write the number down; you'll want the before-and-after.

8. Cut notifications to the ones a human sent you.

Turn off every badge and banner that isn't a person contacting you directly. Everything else (likes, promos, app suggestions, most email) becomes something you check on your schedule, not theirs. This is the single highest-leverage change on the list and takes about ten minutes.

9. Kill the feeds, keep the apps.

Most of the damage is three or four infinite feeds, not the phone itself. Set a hard daily limit on those specific apps, delete them from the home screen so opening one requires a search, and turn on grayscale during work hours — the color is doing more work than you think.

10. Protect the first and last hour.

Charge the phone outside the bedroom and use a real alarm clock. Scrolling in the first waking hour sets your attention baseline for the day, and scrolling in the last hour costs you sleep, which costs you tomorrow's focus. Schedule Downtime or Bedtime Mode so this happens without a decision.

11. Close the tabs, not just the apps.

Desktop distraction is quieter but just as expensive. One task, one window, everything else closed — and a blocker running on the browser, not only the phone. Slack and email are apps you open twice a day, not surfaces you live inside.

Part 3 — Apps that do the blocking for you

Start with what's already on your phone before paying for anything. If you keep bypassing the built-in limits, that's the signal to add real friction.

App	What it's for	Cost
Screen Time (iOS) / Digital Wellbeing (Android)	Built in. App limits, Downtime, and the usage report you need for the audit above. Weakness: you can tap through your own limits.	Free
ScreenZen screenzen.co	Best free upgrade. Adds a forced pause and a cap on how many times you can open an app per day, which targets pickups rather than minutes. iOS and Android.	Free (donation)
Freedom freedom.to	The one to buy if the problem spans devices. Start a session and the same block lands on Mac, Windows, iPhone, Android, and Chrome at once. Locked Mode stops you ending it early.	Free tier; ~\$40/yr
Opal opalapp.com	Deepest analytics and the strictest phone-side blocking (Deep Focus locks the session). Polished, iOS-first, and the priciest of the three.	Free tier; paid Pro
Brick or a similar NFC blocker	The nuclear option, for when you cheat every software lock. A physical tag you have to walk to and tap to unblock — the same principle as Hormozi's across-the-building rule.	~\$59 one-time

Pricing and features in this category change often — check the current plan before you subscribe. Note that Freedom and Opal ask for a VPN profile or Screen Time API access, so read what you're granting.

A setup you can run tomorrow

The night before	Pick tomorrow's one task. Write it on paper. Phone charges outside the bedroom.
Before you sit down	Blinds closed, desk clear, facing away from the window.
Phone	Blocker session on, phone in another room.
Desktop	One window. Everything else closed. Browser blocker running.
Ears	Earplugs, or headphones with no lyrics.
Clock	Kitchen timer set to your estimate. Start it.
When it rings	Stop, stand up, note what you actually finished.
Sunday	Check the Screen Time number against last week's.

Source for Part 1: Alex Hormozi, "How I Eliminate Distractions" (YouTube Shorts, April 2025), paraphrased. Parts 2 and 3 are additions. App details checked September 2026.