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**DYK**  
DID YOU KNOW SERIES

## BRAIN BOOSTER

WHY WRITING ON PAPER IS GOOD FOR YOUR BRAIN

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# DID YOU KNOW?

## THE MANY BENEFITS OF WRITING ON PAPER

Smartphones, tablets and computers have become critical to our daily lives, and there's no doubt that the convenience of these technologies has made life and work easier. In fact, most workplaces today are set up so that it's almost impossible to accomplish tasks or communicate without the help of some sort of electronic device, and more than 298 million people<sup>1</sup> in the U.S. alone have a smartphone where they talk, text, stream and write down important information.

### WHEN TO PUT DOWN THE PHONE AND GRAB A PEN

While technology has made life easier in myriad ways, we're also missing out on some of the benefits of good old fashioned pen and paper. When was the last time you wrote something by hand, other than a quick note here or there? According to science, we should all get back on board and

enjoy the brain-boosting benefits of writing by hand. "Mindless scrolling" is a real thing — many of the tasks we complete on our devices have become automatic and habitual. But writing something by hand is one of the best ways to tap into both sides of the brain — analytical and creative.

Writing in a notebook, doodling on scratch paper or composing handwritten letters to friends and family are all activities that are great for you. Here's why.



#### STIMULATES THE BRAIN

Our brains have something called the Reticular Activating System (RAS)<sup>2</sup>, which helps us by prioritizing anything that requires immediate focus while filtering everything else out. Writing activates your RAS to process knowledge into your memory, and it's been shown<sup>3</sup> that people retain more information when writing things by hand.



#### INCREASES EFFICIENCY

One study found that in a test group of 48 volunteers, the brains of students who used analog methods for taking notes "featured higher levels of brain activity in the hippocampus, as well as in the regions of the brain responsible for language and imaginary visualization. They also scored better on simple memory recall questions."<sup>4</sup> Researchers hypothesized that because paper "offers more complex spatial information and tactile feedback," it enhances brain activity and boosts the memory formation process, making your thoughts more efficient.



#### IMPROVES MEMORY

Writing by hand has also been found to help improve memory in general.<sup>5</sup> It stimulates areas of the brain that help improve comprehension skills and, as an added bonus, it also involves more senses and motor neurons compared to using keyboards or screens. Sure, it's often quicker to type than to write, but sometimes the additional effort is worth it for the additional knowledge you gain — and retain.

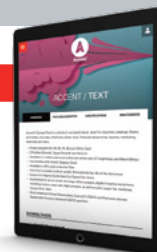


#### FACILITATES STRESS RELIEF

Last but not least, writing just makes you feel good! If you keep a handwritten journal, getting your thoughts out on paper — rather than typing them out — has been found to help reduce stress and trauma.<sup>6</sup> So while it might be tempting to pick up your phone and text a friend when you're feeling frustrated, try paper and pen first. You might just find you experience increased creativity, improved comprehension and a new sense of productivity — all thanks to paper.

#### LEARN MORE

For everyday journaling, notetaking and handwritten correspondence, we recommend Accent® Opaque Text. Check out all the basis weights and finishes at [www.accentopaque.com/text](http://www.accentopaque.com/text)



#### SOURCES

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