

Wellness

Wednesday



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Scents Can Secretly Boost Your Productivity.

Here's How It Works.

When it comes to productivity, we often rely on external stimuli like music or a specific outfit to get in the zone. But have you ever considered the power of scent? Believe it or not, certain fragrances can actually enhance your mood, sharpen your focus, and improve your cognitive abilities. In this Wellness Wednesday, we will explore the science behind the impact of scents on productivity and provide you with practical tips on finding the perfect scent to unleash your full potential.

How Smells Affect Our Brain

The connection between our sense of smell and brain function is profound. The olfactory bulb, located behind the nose, has more projections into the brain than any other sense organ. When we inhale a scent, the volatile compounds in the aroma are passed into the lungs, enter the bloodstream, and are delivered straight to the brain. These molecules can cross the blood-brain barrier and directly influence our brain's neurochemical systems.



Pleasant Smells and Improved Performance

Research conducted by Mark Moss, head of the psychology department at Northumbria University, suggests that pleasant smells are associated with better performance due to improved mood. On the other hand, unpleasant smells can impair performance, likely due to negative mood. So, if you want to boost your productivity, it's important to choose scents that elicit positive emotions and enhance your overall mood.

Herbal Scents for Concentration

When it comes to enhancing concentration and focus, certain herbal scents have shown promising results. Peppermint, for example, has been recommended by experts like Mark Moss for its ability to enhance focus. Rosemary and sage, with their memory-enhancing compounds, are also great choices for those looking to improve cognitive abilities. On the contrary, sedative aromas like lavender and chamomile are not recommended for productivity-boosting purposes.

Personal Preferences and Individual Responses

While there are scents that are generally associated with increased productivity, it's important to remember that scent preferences are highly individual. What works for one person may not work for another. Your early experiences with certain odors can shape your brain's subsequent responses, making your reactions to scents unique. Therefore, finding the best productivity scent is truly a personal journey.

Exploring Different Scents for Memory and Focus

If you want to improve memory recall and focus, expose yourself to a variety of scents on a regular basis. A study published in *Frontiers in Neuroscience* found that older adults who were exposed to a rotating group of pleasant smells experienced significant improvements in learning and memory. So, don't limit yourself to just one aroma. Embrace the world of scents and discover the ones that resonate with you.

The Power of Novelty

Tracy Wan, a Toronto-based writer and scent consultant, believes that smelling something new can sharpen attention and positively impact work performance. By regularly encountering interesting and novel smells, you can train your brain to be more alert and focused. Pay attention to the scents you encounter each day and embrace the power of novelty to boost your productivity.

Scent and Emotional Connections

Our sense of smell has a strong connection to our emotions and memories. Certain scents can evoke powerful emotional responses and trigger positive associations. Caroline Stern, a Boston-based content creator, recalls how scents associated with cupcakes, strawberries, and passion fruit made her feel confident and put-together. Your own emotional connections to scents can play a significant role in enhancing your productivity.

Finding Your Perfect Productivity Scent

With countless scents to choose from, finding your perfect productivity scent may seem like a daunting task. To narrow down your options, consider using *Fragrantica*, a platform that offers information on perfumes and fragrances. Identify the specific scent notes that appeal to you and explore perfumes that contain those notes. Remember, the belief and expectation that a scent will have a certain effect can also influence its actual impact on your productivity.

Creating Rituals for Productivity

Building associations between specific scents and tasks can create powerful productivity rituals. Just as listening to a specific song can trigger a productive mindset, using a particular scent consistently during a certain task can help you get into the zone. The repetition of the ritual reinforces the association between the scent and productivity, making it easier for you to enter a focused state. Experiment with different scents and find the ones that work best for your productivity rituals.

Harnessing the power of scent can be a game-changer when it comes to productivity. The science behind scent and its impact on our brain function is undeniable. By choosing the right scents, we can enhance our mood, sharpen our focus, and improve our cognitive abilities. Remember, finding your perfect productivity scent is a unique journey, influenced by your personal preferences and emotional connections. Embrace the world of scents, experiment with different aromas, and create rituals that unleash your full potential. Let fragrance be your secret weapon in the pursuit of productivity.



CROCK POT PORK ROAST



INGREDIENTS

Equipment

- crock pot

Ingredients

- Olive oil spray
- 2 pounds lean boneless pork sirloin roast, aka pork center rib roast, pork center loin roast
- 1 cup low sodium chicken broth
- ¼ cup soy sauce, or gluten free tamari
- ¼ cup balsamic vinegar
- 2 tablespoons honey
- 4 cloves garlic, minced
- 8 ounces sliced mushrooms, I used baby bella
- 4 ½ cups water
- 1 teaspoon kosher salt
- 1 ½ cups stone-ground polenta
- Chopped parsley, for garnish

HASSEL FREE DINNER

Are you looking for a delicious and hassle-free dinner option? Look no further than this easy Crock Pot Pork Roast with Mushrooms and Polenta. Packed with flavor and incredibly simple to prepare, this recipe is sure to become a family favorite. By slow-cooking the pork with a combination of soy sauce, broth, honey, and garlic, it transforms into a tender and tasty dish that will melt in your mouth. And when served over creamy polenta, the combination is simply irresistible.

THE MAGIC OF CROCK POT COOKING

Crock pot dinners are a godsend for busy individuals and families. The slow and gentle cooking process allows flavors to meld together while tenderizing the meat. Plus, you can set it and forget it, allowing you to go about your day while the crock pot does all the work. If you're a fan of pork, you'll love this recipe, which combines the convenience of crock pot cooking with the rich flavors of a well-seasoned pork roast.

Nutrition Information

1 Serving; 3 ounces pork + mushrooms + 1/2 cup polenta:
Calories: 361 kcal, Carbohydrates: 37 g, Protein: 33 g, Fats:9 g,



INSTRUCTIONS



HOW TO MAKE IT

1. For the pork: Heat a large skillet over medium-high heat. Lightly spray the pan with oil and brown the pork on all sides, for about 7 to 8 minutes.
2. Add the broth, soy sauce, vinegar, honey and garlic to the crock pot. Stir to combine. Add the pork and set the slow cooker to 8 hours on low.
3. Thirty minutes before the timer goes off, remove the pork and set it aside to rest for at least 10 minutes. Add the mushrooms to the crock pot, cover and cook on low for the remaining 30 minutes.
4. Meanwhile, make the polenta.
5. For the polenta: Bring water and salt to a boil in a medium pot. Add polenta and reduce heat to low. Cook for about 5 minutes, stirring occasionally, until liquid is absorbed and polenta is creamy. Remove from heat, cover and let stand for 1 to 2 minutes.
6. While the polenta is cooking, shred the pork using two forks. When the time is up, add the shredded pork to the crock pot and mix well.
7. To serve: Spoon ½ cup polenta onto a plate, top with pork and mushrooms and garnish with parsley.

VARIATIONS AND SERVING SUGGESTIONS

While this Crock Pot Pork Roast recipe is already delicious as is, you can always experiment with different variations to suit your taste. Here are a few ideas to get you started:

Use a pork shoulder roast, pork butt, or boneless pork shoulder for a more tender cut of meat.

If you prefer a leaner option, try using pork tenderloin instead.

Swap out the polenta and serve the pork roast with creamy mashed potatoes for a classic pairing.

If you're not a fan of mushrooms, substitute them with roasted carrots or another vegetable of your choice.

FEATURED EXERCISE

<https://www.self.com/gallery/beginner-workout-at-home-with-no-equipment>Featured Exercise ► **Hands-Elevated Push-Up**

HOW TO DO IT:

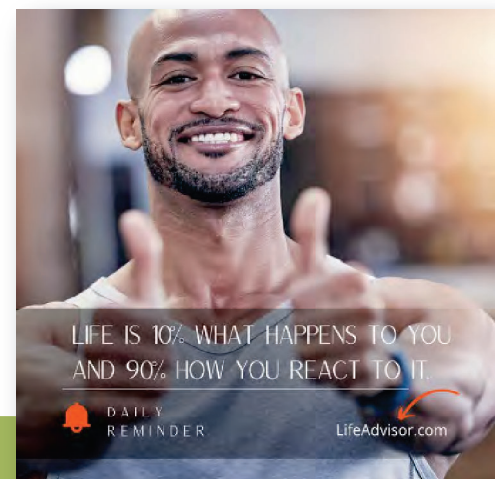
1. Place your hands shoulder-width apart on a low box or step and assume a high plank position with your feet, knees, hips, and shoulders in a straight line. Brace your core and keep your elbows tucked in close to the sides of your torso. This is the starting position.
2. Bend your elbows and pull shoulder blades together to lower your chest to the box.
3. Press through your palms to straighten your arms back to starting position. This is 1 rep.
4. Complete 10–15 reps.

BENEFITS:

Elevated push-ups specifically target the main chest muscles, the pectoralis major and minor, while putting less stress on your elbows and reducing the amount of body weight you are lifting. This makes it an ideal exercise for beginners, individuals undergoing upper body and shoulder rehab, as well as seniors looking to improve their quality of life and independence. In addition to working your chest, the incline push-up also engages the shoulders (deltoid) and arms (triceps).

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Regular exercise can help you control your weight, reduce your risk of heart disease, and strengthen your bones and muscles. But if it's been awhile since you've exercised and you have health issues or concerns, it's a good idea to talk to your doctor before starting a new exercise routine.



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