



# What is a Dopamine menu?

Dopamine is a chemical messenger in the brain that helps nerve cells pass messages to each other. It plays an important role in wellbeing, particularly impacting mood and behaviour.

Most of us recognise dopamine as a reward hormone, which can motivate us, and provide a sense of satisfaction or accomplishment.

Boredom can be a difficult struggle for someone with ADHD. Creating a 'dopamine menu' can act as a positive motivator. It can help you to balance your activities and focus your time constructively, while feeding your brain the dopamine hit that it craves.

Jessica at **How to ADHD** came up with the concept for when your brain craves dopamine, but you are paralysed with indecision.

**Check out Jessica's video here:**  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-6WCKTwW6xg>

A dopamine menu can be made up of starters, mains, sides, desserts or specials:

**Starters** are quick activities that give a burst of dopamine when you are short of time, such as having a snack or dancing to a favourite song.

**Mains** are more time consuming and should be exciting, giving a bigger reward.

A **side** is an activity that can go alongside a more mundane task to make it more interesting, such as listening to music or a podcast.

**Desserts** are activities that give bursts of dopamine in the short term but are easy to overdo, such as scrolling on social media.

You can also include **specials**, which are activities that require more planning, or are expensive such as a spa day or a beach trip.

## When you create your menu:

- Make sure the menu items are realistic, doable, and activities you will want to do.
- Add a range of physical, mental stimulation, and self-care activities to benefit you in different ways.
- Prepare any 'ingredients', such as having a journal or an instrument close at hand.

Check out our template and example dopamine menus in our online resources.