

How to Be a Successful Online Learner

In many ways learning online is similar to learning in the classroom. Your teachers provide quality readings, exercises, assignments, discussions and quizzes. However, as with regular classes, what you get out of it is related to how much you put into it.



Good Study Space

Create a dedicated study space

- Having a dedicated space at home to take online classes can make your learning more effective.

Minimize distractions

- As much as you can, minimize distractions both in your physical environment and your digital environment. Remove any distractions from the space, and if possible, make it separate from your bed or sofa. A clear distinction between where you study and where you take breaks can help you focus.

- Close web browser windows not relevant to your learning, keep the TV off, etc.

Light

- A dark room or space can lead to faster eye strain and fatigue. If you have a dark home consider adding extra sources of indirect light.

Ergonomics

- Sit in a comfortable and ergonomic chair. If you sit on the floor with your laptop balanced on your knees, you are going to wind up with a stiff neck and aching shoulders.

Ambiance – Figure out how you learn best

- Some students need absolute silence while others need to listen to music or keep the television on in the background. Experiment with different environments to figure out how best you work.

Attendance and participation

Work regularly in your Teams virtual classrooms

- You are expected to **log into Teams every day**.
- Plan your time in such a way that you work on classes that are scheduled for the day and that you manage to meet all deadlines.
- **Check your email frequently**.
- You are required to **complete your school assignments uploaded in the virtual classroom by the deadline** posted by the teacher.
- All your work is monitored and considered equal to their work at regular lessons.

Actively participate in the video conferencing lessons (Zoom/Skype/Google Meet)

- Video conferencing lessons are a great place to ask questions about assignments, discuss topics and share resources.
- Join the meeting **on time**.
- You are expected to participate in the video conferencing lessons on a regular basis according to the schedule. **Attendance is obligatory unless the teachers specify the lesson is optional such as Help Maths or ELS**.
- **If you are not able to join the video conferencing lesson** due to some technical issues and other valid reasons, please **report it to the subject teacher immediately**.
- Your teachers will assess your attendance and participation in an online class in the same way they do in a face-to-face course.
- You are required to **obey the video conferencing security instructions**:
 - Students are not advised to have Zoom accounts to join a virtual class but to use the Meeting ID and Meeting Password provided by the teacher.
 - Students are not allowed to post/share meeting links on social media.
- Be aware of the netiquette. **Netiquette describes how you should act when online**.

Netiquette DO's when in Web Meetings

- ✓ Be respectful, polite and kind
- ✓ Use academic language
- ✓ DO be dressed for school
- ✓ DO turn on your camera
- ✓ DO find a quiet place when possible
- ✓ DO use the chat function to let your teacher know you have a question
- ✓ DO turn off your microphone unless you are speaking in the meeting

Netiquette DON'TS when in Web Meetings

- Be rude, mean or cyberbully
- Use text speak (LOL...)
- DON'T dress inappropriately or have inappropriate items in your background
- DON'T leave your microphone on when you are not speaking
- DON'T talk or chat about off-topic items
- DON'T interrupt when others are speaking
- DON'T multitask (for example: no texting or playing games while in a meeting)

Time Management Skills

One of the biggest benefits of online learning is flexibility, but too much freedom can pose new challenges. Find ways to structure and optimize your time for when and where you learn best and keep your learning on track.

Set daily goals for studying – Create a daily schedule

- Establish a daily routine and a daily schedule.
- Ask yourself what you need to accomplish each day.
- Setting clear goals can help you stay motivated and beat procrastination.
- The goals should be specific and easy to measure, such as “First I will complete the Maths assignment”.
- **Break up your workload into chunks.**
- Don't forget to reward yourself when you make progress towards your goal!

Write detailed To-Do Lists

- **Create a list of things you should do every day and tick each of them as you finish them.**

Track deadlines

- In addition to a daily schedule **make a weekly schedule of your deadlines.**
- **Mark important due dates on a calendar using coloured pencils** so you know what has to be done and by when.
- **Set reminders for yourself to complete the tasks.**
- You can use an electronic calendar or a paper one.
- Do your best to meet the due dates.

Take your own notes by hand

- Taking notes by hand in a notebook can help you remember things better in the long run as compared to typing.
- Taking notes can promote active thinking, boost comprehension and extend your attention span.
- It is a good strategy to systemize knowledge whether you are learning online or in the classroom. So, grab a notebook or find a digital app that works best for you and start synthesizing key points.

Do one thing at a time

- Multitasking is less productive than focusing on a single task at a time.
- Stay focused on one thing at a time. You will absorb more information and complete assignments with greater productivity and ease than if you were trying to do many things at once.

Be self-motivated and self-disciplined

- With the freedom and flexibility of the online environment comes responsibility.

Communication Skills

Now that you don't see your teachers and classmates in person, it is critical to make sure you are communicating with them. Your teachers can't see that confused look on everyone's face and realize that a point needs to be explained in a different way, so you will need to reach out when something doesn't make sense.

Communication isn't just about course content, though. We are all encountering new and changing barriers that might affect our ability to succeed. The teachers can't possibly anticipate all of the barriers that might arise for their students, so it is important for you to let them know when you need an extended deadline, when you are unable to access course material or when you are struggling to stay on top of things.

Be an active participant and stay connected

- Don't be afraid to reach out to your teacher to ask questions.
- Focus on acquiring and using teacher's feedback for future coursework.
- **Don't wait until an assignment is almost due to ask questions or report issues.** Email your teacher and be proactive in asking for help.
- If a teacher emails you or send a message through the Teams chat, respond in a timely manner.

Be able to communicate through writing

- In the virtual classrooms nearly all communication is written, so it is important that you feel comfortable in expressing yourselves in writing.

Ask for help when you hit a wall

- Don't hesitate to ask questions, clarification or guidance from your teachers. By doing this you avoid confusion, become more engaged with the content and expand your knowledge.
- Post the questions through the Teams chat channel or by email.
- **When you get teacher's feedback on what needs to be improved, react quickly!**

Give and expect respect

- Be respectful.
- Many students are used to a very informal style of writing, but you should use formal and appropriate style and language for school. When communicating with teachers and other students, you should **write in full, grammatically correct sentences and have correct spelling.**
- Consider how your communication "sounds" to others. Remember they cannot hear the inflection in your voice or see your expression. Show others the same amount of respect you want from them.
- Avoid posting or sharing negative and offensive comments, posts, messages, photos and inappropriate material.

Email Etiquette



At a minimum, a formal email should contain all of the following elements:

1. **Subject line:** Be specific, but concise so the reader knows right away what the message is about.
2. **Salutation:** Address the recipient (Dear Teacher...)
3. **Body text:** This section explains the main message of the email.
4. **Signature:** Your email closing should be formal. It is common courtesy to thank someone for his or her time and help. End your email with a 'Thank you', Best regards/Kind regards/Sincerely' and your full name.

Check your email regularly and respond as soon as you are able

Handle attachments and files

- Make sure you have attached any important files or included any necessary links.

Be clear and polite

Proofread and spell check your work carefully

- Emails are quick to create, but leave a lasting impression. Review your work and use the spell-check feature to reduce errors.
- Check that your key message is perfectly clear, without typos, wordy phrases or anything that can be misunderstood.
- Check that all names and titles are correct.

Academic Honesty

- Complete assignments with integrity and academic honesty, doing your best work.

Basic Technical Skills

- You need basic technical skills to succeed. These include the ability to create new documents, use a word processing program, file organization, navigate the Internet, use multiple browsers and download software.

Affective skills - Motivation and Persistence

- To be successful, an online student has to want to succeed. Online learning requires independence, internal motivation and responsibility.
- Persistence is perhaps the biggest key to success in online learning.

Online safety

- Never post your full name, age, address, email address, phone number, picture or school name anywhere online without checking appropriate privacy settings.
- Do not share personal information or photos that would allow a stranger (including “online friends”) to locate you or pretend to know you. They may not be who they say they are.
- Be sure to use private (not public) settings on social media. Do not share information with “friends of friends.”
- Remember anything (text or photos) you share can be forwarded and altered.
- Report any uncomfortable situation to an adult.
- Share your passwords, screen names and email addresses with your parents.
- Be aware of messages from unfamiliar persons and be cautious in opening and responding to them.

Take breaks

- Resting your brain after learning is critical to high performance. If you find yourself working on a challenging assignment without much progress for an hour, take a break.

**ESTABLISH A DAILY ROUTINE TO
SUPPORT YOUR LEARNING**



**IDENTIFY A COMFORTABLE, QUIET SPACE SO YOU
CAN WORK EFFECTIVELY AND SUCCESSFULLY**

**CHECK ONLINE COMMUNICATION
REGULARLY**



**COMPLETE ASSIGNMENTS WITH
INTEGRITY AND ACADEMIC HONESTY,
SHOWING YOUR LEARNING**

**COMMUNICATE WITH YOUR TEACHERS
REGULARLY**



**USE OUR VALUES TO HELP YOU MAKE
DECISIONS AND CHOICES**

**COMMUNICATE AND SUPPORT YOUR
FRIENDS AND CLASSMATES REGULARLY**



TAKE BREAKS, PLAY, BE ACTIVE

**SPEAK WITH ADULTS AT HOME OR
THROUGH SCHOOL IF YOU NEED
SUPPORT OR HELP**

