

## Student Success

# 6 Tips for Online Learning

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### Set yourself up for success

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Establishing a physical space for studying is an essential first step. Make sure you have a workspace that won't put knots in your shoulders or be so loud that even headphones won't help you focus. Establish guidelines with your roommates or family. Make sure your internet speed is fast enough. And set up a workspace with sufficient light, where your computer screen is at eye level, and where your feet are flat on the ground or a footrest.

### Prepare

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Use the short window at the very beginning of the semester, which isn't yet busy with homework, to get ahead. Study syllabi, course calendars, and instructors' availability. Make note of office hours and tutorials so when you're busy and looking for help, you know where to find it. And add your course schedule, key deadlines, and dates to your calendar. Then plan your week to ensure you balance the needs of all your courses and your other commitments.

### Hold yourself accountable

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Once classes are in full tilt, hold yourself accountable to that schedule. Put in the study time each week, check for course announcements daily, stay on top of assignments, and get help or clarification when you need it. Instructors set regular office hours for your benefit, so take advantage of them as soon as you have a question. Don't wait until the last minute.

Similarly, thinking, "I'll sleep in this once and catch up on the class recording later" is tempting, but the more likely reality is that you'll fall behind. Tuning into lectures in real-time as much as possible will make you more engaged with the content throughout the semester. You'll be able to ask questions when the material just isn't clicking, feel the sense of being 'in-class,' and enjoy the experience much more.

## Contribute

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Participating in a virtual discussion isn't as natural as raising a hand and speaking in class, but it does offer more opportunities to engage — so embrace it. Add your voice to the discussion through chat or by turning your microphone on to comment. Use your video whenever it's appropriate so people get to know who you are. And engage with classmates and instructors on course forums.

Making it impossible for your instructor not to know you by name won't only add those participation marks to your grade. Contributing to class helps you better understand and retain the course content. Plus, it can lay the groundwork for a positive relationship with your instructor and classmates.

## Acknowledge your distractions

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Staying engaged with an online course for the entire semester requires a specific kind of endurance. Start building that discipline by understanding where you're most likely to get distracted and be strict with yourself for set study periods. When in-class or completing homework, close all unrelated tabs — even if they're for another course. If you need to give yourself breaks to check social media and read articles, schedule them in. Focusing on one course, one task at a time will help you complete better quality work and retain content easier.

## Be open to learn

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Learning online will bring new experiences, some of them difficult or unfamiliar. You may not know how to work on an assignment with a group over video but diving into the challenge will make your learning experience more enjoyable and successful. Remember, everyone is learning right now.

By staying open and focused throughout the course and using the resources available when you need a bit of extra support, you'll complete the class with more than positive experience and a great grade. You'll gain unexpected skills that will propel you further in your education and career.

