

Tips for Successful On-line Learning

Learning online is a great way to increase your knowledge and skills in a unique, flexible environment with its own distinct strengths and opportunities. It allows you to learn whenever, wherever, and however works best for you.

However, online learning can also present some unique challenges. You may not have been prepared for these before school closures due to COVID-19. Here are some tips and strategies to help you succeed on your learning journey.

1. Self Care

- Self-care is important to your successful learning experience. A healthy mind and body is a mind ready for learning.
- Figure out how you learn best and advocate for your learning needs
- Think about when and how you accomplish your best work. If you're a morning person, make time to work first thing. More of a night owl? Set aside time after dinner to cozy up to your computer. Ask your teacher for flexible ways of participating in the class that work for you
- Schedule breaks: Get up and walk around, go outside, schedule your distractions, don't forget to move. Plenty of apps exist to keep you on task and turn off distractions, as well as to remind you to get up and take breaks
- Maintain healthy habits: Your brain, like your body, needs rest and exercise. Get sleep, stay hydrated, go outside, and eat well

2. Create a Regular Work Space and Stay Organized

- Set up a dedicated environment for learning. By completing your work there repeatedly, you'll begin to establish a routine. Whether your workspace is your kitchen or dining room table, your bedroom, or the family room, it's important to determine what type of environment will work best for you. Experiment to discover which type of setting boosts your productivity.
- Setting up a regular workspace will also help you to stay organized. Knowing exactly where important dates, files, forms, books and assignments live will help keep you on track towards hitting your goals. When setting up your study space, make sure you:
 - Have internet connection
 - Have the required books, materials and apps for the course
 - Have headphones for listening to lectures or discussion (especially important if you are sharing a space with family members)

3. Hold Yourself Accountable and Practice Time Management

- Treat your online learning like "real" classroom/school learning. Set goals and check in with yourself daily. It's up to you to make sure you've allotted enough time to complete the work so you're not starting an assignment the day before it's due. Create a weekly schedule that you follow, designating certain hours each day to reading, watching lectures, completing assignments, studying, or participating in discussions.
- If you're having trouble holding yourself responsible, pair up with a fellow classmate as an accountability partner. By being organized, proactive, and self-aware, you can get the most from your online learning even when life outside of school becomes chaotic.

- Practice Time Management:
 - 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. At the start of each week, make a to-do list of the tasks you need to complete by the end of the week. This is an excellent way to prioritize your study plan and stay on track with your learning.
- Set Aside Time for Learning: This doesn't mean you need to find four hour blocks every day. Online learning is designed to be flexible. You may find 15 minutes to watch a short video lecture and write a three-sentence reflection post and then take a break. But of course, there will be other learning activities that will require more time.
- Track Deadlines: add important due dates to your calendar so you don't miss them
- Minimize distractions: From Netflix to social media to video games, you'll be faced with many distractions that can easily derail your studies. As much as you can minimize distractions both in your physical environment and your digital environment. Close web browser windows not relevant to your learning; keep the TV off, etc.

4. Actively Participate

- Participation in online chats/discussions helps you better understand course materials and engage with fellow classmates. This might involve commenting on a classmate's assignment or flip grid or posting a question about a project you're working on. Read what other students and your teacher are saying, and if you have a question, ask for clarification. Set a goal to check in on the class Team or site every day.
- And if you do feel yourself falling behind, speak up. Don't wait until an assignment is almost due to ask questions, email your teacher and be proactive about asking for help.

5 Community and Social Learning

- Keep your teacher informed: Ask your teacher for help when you need it – let them know if you are ill, experiencing family issues, unable to long on, etc.
- Virtually meet and interact with your classmates
- You are not alone! You and your classmates can connect, share information and interests, and support each other. Answer questions posted by the teacher in the discussions and respond to your peers' posts
- Create virtual study groups: keep the line open and find ways to connect with your learning peers in small study groups. Video chat apps are a great way to do this
- Give and expect respect: an online learning environment has the same behaviour expectations as face-to-face learning in a classroom. Do your part to foster a respectful, supportive community.