

# Tips and Tricks for Successful Online Learning



## ORGANIZATION

- Treat your online course like an in-person course. Pick specific days and times to “go to school.” Although you can access online course content anytime, knowing that there are specific days of the week and times you will be working can help keep you organized.
- Create a notes document or a bookmark folder for each course (or course module), so you can take notes, and gather links and resources to return to easily.
- Use a physical calendar to write down due dates. Keep it at your workstation. If possible, list as many future dates as you can so you have an understanding of how much time is needed each week for specific tasks.
- Give yourself progress due dates. For example, if you have a paper due in three weeks, write down ‘checkpoint’ due dates after one week and during the next week so you can hit mini-milestones and not have large chunks of work due near the official due date.

## TECHNOLOGY TIPS

- Make sure you have access to reliable technology and keep your device charged.
- Always keep a backup of work offline just in case of technology problems.
- Speed up videos! Most videos have the ability to speed up the run time. Increasing run time slightly (e.g., 1.25x or 1.5x) can help save a few minutes. Be sure you can follow the content and narration at the speed you choose.
- Enable closed captioning if you are in a space where volume is a concern for others.
- Put your phone on “Do not disturb” and close any tabs not related to coursework to minimize distractions as you work.
- Take technology breaks every 20 minutes and focus your eyes on something in the distance.

## STUDY TIPS

- Develop a study schedule. Designate specific days and times you will check into the LMS, study, read and work on assignments. Try to do something daily related to each course.
- Don't wait until the due date to start projects.
- Have a dedicated, quiet study space which puts you in a “school” state of mind.
- Tell family members you are taking an online course! Just because you are home doesn't mean you are always available. Consider creating “cues” that indicate to your family that you are “in class” and shouldn't be disturbed.
- Invest in a fidget spinner! As you are watching online videos or reading materials, having something to fiddle with will keep you from reaching for your phone.
- Use a timer while you work. Set a timer for a short duration (e.g., 15, 30 or 45 minutes). Once it starts, work uninterrupted until the timer goes off. At that point, take a break or add more time. We are more likely to stick with deep work time if we know a break is coming.
- Break down tasks into small chunks and schedule these on your calendar in manageable allotments. Include small chunks to read materials, write out discussion responses, post responses, read other responses, log in, take quizzes, work on projects, etc.
- Tell yourself the due date is one day before the actual due date to build in time for emergencies.

## COURSE CONTENT TIPS

- Log in the first day the course is available to determine how much time is needed each week. After, log in daily so the course stays ‘front of mind’ and you don't miss important announcements.
- If the instructor sends a video prior to the start of the course, watch it! It will help you understand expectations and it may provide some tips for success.
- Handwrite notes instead of typing them to engage with the content in a different modality.

## COURSE COMMUNITY TIPS

- Look for common connections with classmates and bring these up in discussion posts to begin to build a professional learning network.
- Find an “accountability partner” that you can check in with to stay on track while doing the same for them.
- Be active in the discussions even above the minimum requirements.

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