

8 Distance Learning Tips for Students



1. Keep a schedule.

Though distance learning may offer you some flexibility as to when you work on schoolwork during the week, you can't put it off indefinitely. When it comes to online classes, it can help to treat it like an in-person class, actually sit down and say, "I am going to work on this," and follow through with it.

2. Set goals for yourself.

Set goals and check in with yourself weekly. In a traditional classroom setting, you'll often receive verbal or visual reminders of an assignment's upcoming due date. But without a professor actively reminding you, 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 it's due. Make a calendar with all your weekly assignments on it or set up reminders/ to-do lists on your phone.

If you're having trouble holding yourself responsible, pair up with a fellow classmate virtually, or enlist a family member as an accountability partner. By being organized, proactive, and self-aware, you can get the most from your online class even when there are so many distractions around.

3. Practice time management.

Distance learning provides you with the opportunity to learn at your own pace, and spend more time focusing on an assignment to the best of your ability. But, without time management, it could be the opposite. You might easily find yourself cramming before classes or handing in subpar assignments. Here are some general tips that may help for time management.

- Look at the syllabus and **make note of major assignments**. Mark them on a calendar you check regularly so you know what workload is coming in the weeks ahead.
- Commit to making your online coursework part of your weekly routine and **set reminders for yourself** to complete these tasks.
- When working on your assignments, **try time-blocking**, allotting yourself a certain amount of time for each task before moving on to the next one and setting a timer to keep you accountable.

4. Create a study space and stay organized.

Set up a dedicated learning environment for studying. Whether your workspace is your kitchen table, a home office, or a desk in your 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.

5. Eliminate distractions.

Doing schoolwork at home can open you up to many distractions; Netflix, social media, your pets running around, your parents asking you to pick up your room, etc. It is important to stick to a routine and dedicate time to help best eliminate these distractions. Turn off your TVs, phones (if you don't need them to study), and let your family know the times you plan to work on schoolwork so they can defer to another room.

6. Figure out how you learn best.

Think about when and how you accomplish your best work. If you're a morning person, make time to study first thing. More of a night owl? Set aside an hour or two after dinner to cozy up to your computer. Do whatever you need to get into the zone and down to business.

If you're a visual learner, for example, print out transcripts of the video lectures to review. Learn best by listening? Make sure to build time into your schedule to play and replay all audio- and video-based course content.

7. Actively participate.

Participate in the course's online forum to help you better understand course materials and engage with fellow classmates. Don't just comment on classmates to comment, really engage and ask questions about their posts. If you agree with them, tell them why. If you disagree, tell them why and back it up.

And if you do feel yourself falling behind, speak up. Don't wait until an assignment is almost due to ask questions or report issues. Email your professor and be proactive in asking for help.

8. Use your virtual network.

Online classes may sometimes make you feel like you are learning on your own, but this couldn't be further from the truth. Everyone is going through the same transition as you are and would most likely enjoy chatting about that course.

Your classmates can be a valuable resource when preparing for exams or asking for feedback on assignments. Don't be afraid to turn to them to create a virtual study group chat or group text. Chances are good that they will appreciate it just as much as you will.