

Time Management & Study Strategies

This document offers some resources for time management and study strategies to help address challenges in online learning. We encourage you to try these strategies and explore what study habits are most effective for you. At the end of this document, there are additional links if you would like to read more about specific study strategies in depth.

For more information about strategies specific to online learning, please visit the Counseling Centers [Tips for Virtual Learning page](#).

Time Management Strategies

Use a Calendar/Planner: At the beginning of the quarter, it is important to read through each of your course's syllabi, making note of the course policies and due dates. Using a monthly calendar or planner can be an easy way to track upcoming due dates and schedule your week. Additionally, breaking an assignment into smaller tasks and scheduling them into your week can help you avoid completing assignments at the last minute and make completing assignments feel more manageable.

Make a Schedule: Each week, use a visual schedule to block out time for courses, studying, downtime, and self-care. After adding the times your course meets, you can estimate the number of hours you need to study for each course using this [worksheet](#), provided by the University of Washington's Academic Support Program. Planning in daily time to study is more effective than cramming for a quiz or exam. Some resources that work well for visual schedules include Google Calendar or a template like this [blank weekly planner](#).

Identify & Reduce Distractions: Distractions can greatly reduce the efficacy of time set aside to study. When studying, focus on identifying things that are distracting and ways you can remove them from your environment. This could include setting your phone away from your study space, utilizing apps that lock your phone during a study session, or installing browser extensions that prevent social media usage when enabled.

Attend Classes: If your course offers live sessions (online or in-person), attending them gives you the opportunity to ask questions and engage with the material at a scheduled time each week. If your course is asynchronous, schedule a set time each week to watch the lectures at normal speed. It has been shown that increasing playback speed decreases retention of the material.

Study Strategies

Developing better study habits is often one of the most challenging parts of coming to college. Ineffective study habits include studying for long periods of time, passive techniques like rereading textbooks, multitasking, or mass memorization of material. However, there are many ways to make study sessions more productive and effective:

Learning Types: There are four primary types of learning, and it is important to understand how you learn to find the best way to study. You may identify with more than one learning type:

1. **Visual (Spatial) Learners:** You learn better when material is presented with pictures, diagrams, and written directions. These learners tend to need more time to process material as they work through understanding the visuals. You may find illustrating complex concepts,

creating flashcards with symbols, making structured outlines, and creating your own practice tests effective ways to learn material.

2. **Auditory Learners:** You learn best by listening to course material rather than by reviewing written notes. Auditory learners may find reading notes aloud, talking through problem solutions, and converting visualizations into verbal descriptions as effective ways to understand material.
3. **Kinesthetic Learners:** You learn better when you can be hands-on and learn through experience. Kinesthetic learners may require more breaks from studying because it is challenging to focus for long periods of time. Teaching others, the material in a study group, moving around and engaging in activity, listening to music, and utilizing physical flashcards tend to be the most effective ways to study for this learning type.
4. **Reading/Writing Learners:** You understand material best when learning through written material like articles and books, as well as writing essays. These types of learners tend to take exhaustive notes in class, prefer to study in a quiet, individual setting, and like course material that contains a lot of information. Some things that can be effective study habits include rewriting notes into material outlines, writing important course concepts in your own words, turning diagrams and charts into text descriptions, and distilling each lecture into a list of succinct key concepts.

Active Studying: There are two broad types of studying, active and passive. Passive studying includes re-reading notes and slides and solving problems while looking at examples and answers. On the other hand, active study strategies challenge you to manipulate and apply course material in new ways. Active study strategies help you move material into long-term memory faster than passive studying, and research shows that high-performing students engage in active study techniques. Some active study techniques include:

- **Lecture Notes:** Identify important concepts and write them in your own words, create charts and diagrams to group information and concept, and utilize a study group to answer practice questions about lecture material.
- **Readings:** Identify the learning objectives for the reading, underline key pieces of information and write notes and questions next to the text, and summarize material in three sentences every few pages you read.
- **Assigned Problems:** Attempt a problem individually without lecture examples or reviewing the answer key and meet with a study group to work through challenging problems.
- **Lecture Slides:** Print or utilize an e-reader to take notes directly on slides during lecture and utilize tools like Quizlet or flashcards for any key terms and definitions in the slides.

Designate a Study Space: While it can be tempting to attend classes or study in bed, having a designated study space has been proven to increase productivity. Pick one location, such as a desk or table, to sit at during online classes and while studying. When you sit down in this same spot, it helps your brain understand that it is time to focus on classes.

Form a Study Group: Find a small group of people in each class to work with and pick at least two hours each week to meet to review material and complete assignments. You can also set aside time each week to study with friends, which can help keep you accountable for finishing the work you wanted to complete.

Ask for Help: Utilizing office hours and discussion boards regularly can help you clear up misconceptions and confusion about course material. If you are struggling in a course and need extensions or support, don't hesitate to reach out to your professor early. Professors

understand that online learning comes with unique challenges and want to support you in any way they can.