

# Success Strategies for Online Learning



Online learning can pose many challenges, such as being distracted, low motivation, and desire for social interaction. It may be a new experience for you and your study habits may need to change. Here are some strategies and tips to help you thrive with remote learning.

## Create a dedicated learning space!

Having a dedicated workspace assists with establishing a routine and shifting to a worktime mindset. Try to find a comfortable space with high speed internet that can be separate from the space you use for free-time. Make sure you have everything you need nearby (i.e. pens, books, notes, etc.).

- Try to eliminate both physical & digital distractions
  - Face a wall or window or create a divider with cardboard or books
  - Clear your workspace of distracting items.
  - Utilize digital tools (i.e. SelfControl, StayFocused, RescueTime, etc.) to help keep you focused while on your computer
- Tips for shared spaces:
  - Utilize headphones for listening to online lectures and meetings
  - Inform roommates, friends, or family of when you have class or plan on studying
  - Position your workspace away from other people (face a wall or window)



## Schedule and structure your day!

Creating a new normal is essential to managing stress & helps prevent you from falling behind.

- Keep normal routines - get up, brush your teeth, and get dressed as you would if you were going into school
  - Set your alarm and wake up at the same time each day
  - Include simple routines to transition in and out of "schoolwork mode"
  - Eat meals at your normal times
    - If you are having difficulty with unnecessary snacking, pack your lunch as if you are going to school or meal prep
- Be specific with your schedule! - schedule classes, study times, breaks, meal times, etc.
  - Schedule study times for when you focus best (i.e. morning, evenings, after a workout, etc.)
  - If you have housework to complete (dishes, laundry, cleaning), try to do this before starting schoolwork or after, or use it as an intentional break
- Set a daily intention to assist with prioritization
- Once you set your schedule, stick to it!



Kortschak Center for Learning and Creativity		USC University of Southern California						
		Week of:						
	SUN	MON	TUES	WED	THURS	FRI	SAT	
8AM			Run		Run			
9AM	Breakfast	Breakfast	Breakfast	Breakfast	Breakfast	Breakfast		
10AM	Study Group	Class (listen to lecture)	Study Group	Class (listen to lecture)			Breakfast	
11AM			Facetime with Mom		Work on Essay			
12 PM		Class (on Zoom)		Class (on Zoom)				
1PM	Lunch w/Nat via Zoom	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch		
2PM	Yoga		Class		Class		Lunch	
3PM	Take dog for a walk	Study	Take dog for a walk	Study Hall Via Zoom	Facetime with Friend			
4PM								

For KCLC's Weekly, Monthly, & Semester Calendars & more: [Click Here](#)

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## Adapt class & study time

Even though class and study time will look different, try to follow classroom norms. Take notes as if you were there in person and do not utilize social media during class time.

- Know when class is - are you now in a different time zone? Is the class recorded or live?
  - If your classes have recorded lectures:
    - Try to complete lectures during the normal class time (or assignments & readings specific to that class)
    - Or schedule a set time every week to listen to the lectures (i.e. Tuesdays at 4pm, etc.)
- Reduce distractions -
  - Turn your phone off or put it in another room
  - Close distracting browser windows/tabs/apps
  - Try to be in a room alone with the door closed
- During Zoom classes -
  - Check if you are on mute? Is your camera on?
  - Ensure you are dressed appropriately & in an appropriate environment
  - Utilize a Virtual Background if you are in a busy or distracting environment



- Attend virtual office hours - communicate with your professor or TA if you have questions
- Create virtual study groups - talk through a tough problem with classmates, keep social connections, and keep each other accountable
- Try virtual study hall - create additional accountability for studying at a set time with limited talking
- Schedule study breaks - to keep your mind sharp you need adequate time away from your workspace
  - Consider utilizing the [Pomodoro Technique](#) to help you focus
  - Try [Flow Time Technique](#)- focus on one task at a time & take a break between tasks
  - Utilize a timer to help keep study/work breaks from getting too long (i.e. apps like Tide, Forest, Focus Keeper, etc.)
- If you're registered with DSP, check-in with them if any of your accommodations need to be changed or adjusted

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## Get moving!

Be intentional about adding movement to your day. Physical activity is good for your mood, heart-rate, and overall wellbeing.

- Take short movement breaks in between tasks or at a consistent time of day (i.e. going for a walk, stretching, etc.)
- Incorporate exercise into your agenda for the day by scheduling an online exercise class, going for a run or bike-ride, or exercising with friends virtually for additional accountability
- The World Health Organization recommends 30min/day of physical activity for healthy adults
- [USC Virtual Engagement: Fitness](#) - exercise resources including zoom workouts



## Set aside time for self-care

Effective self-care reduces anxiety, raises mood, and can help make you more productive.

- Start/explore a new or old hobby
- Eat healthy study [snacks](#)
- Practice [relaxation techniques](#) to reduce stress (i.e. deep breathing, [meditation](#), yoga, etc.)
- Focus on the things you can control, and the positive aspects of life
- Make a [gratitude list](#) - research has shown that gratitude can increase happiness, strengthen relationships, and improves mental health, stress management, & quality of sleep



## Stay Connected

Working remotely can feel lonely. Reach out to friends, family, classmates, etc.

- [Schedule meaningful online activities](#)
  - Calls/video chats with friends or family to catch up or seek social support
  - Over video chat you can share a meal, cook together, play an online game, craft, dance, sing, etc.

## Resources

- [Kortschak Center for Learning & Creativity](#)
  - [Online Drop-in Hours and live workshops](#) with Academic Coaches
  - Explore [Tools & Resources](#), [On-Demand Workshops](#), and more!
- [USC COVID-19 updates](#)
- [Mental Health Support for Students](#)
- [USC Disability Services & Programs](#)
- [USC IT Services](#)

Remember working from home has a learning curve. Be kind to yourself if you get distracted or have difficulty adjusting to new surroundings or schedules. You'll get the hang of it soon. Do your best, be safe, and wash your hands.

## Fight On Trojans!!