

Adjusting Your Study Habits for Online Learning



Online learning is a lot different than in-person learning. You face more distractions, use more technology, and have to keep track of your time and due dates on your own.

Making a plan and adjusting your study habits will help you stay on track and keep you feeling in control of your work.

Use this guide to get started on the right foot.

In this guide, we'll talk about:

1. Staying organized
2. Setting a schedule
3. Avoiding multitasking
4. Making the most out of video lectures
5. Trading your routines for new ones
6. Working with a group or team
7. Staying connected

1. Staying organized

Here are some great first questions you want to ask for each class:

What parts of class are “synchronous” or “asynchronous?”

- Are there specific class times I need to log in for lecture or discussion (“synchronous”), and how do I access it? (live-stream, Zoom, etc.)
- Are there due dates for things I have to do, read, or watch on my own (“asynchronous”)?
- How do I submit my assignments (Blackboard, email, etc.)?
- How will I be taking my quizzes or exams?

What should I do if I need help?

- Is my instructor offering virtual office hours?
- When, and on what platform?
- How does my instructor want me to communicate with them if I have questions?

Here's one example of a way you could start to keep track of your online classes:

	Class 1	Class 2	Class 3
Important dates	Take home quiz ea. Friday	HW assigned during lecture	Mid-term paper
Any changes	No lab Zoom lecture	Discussion optional Recorded lecture	May due paper instead of group project
Important links	Lecture link Office hours link	Discussion link Lecture link	Google Drive folder link

2. Setting a schedule

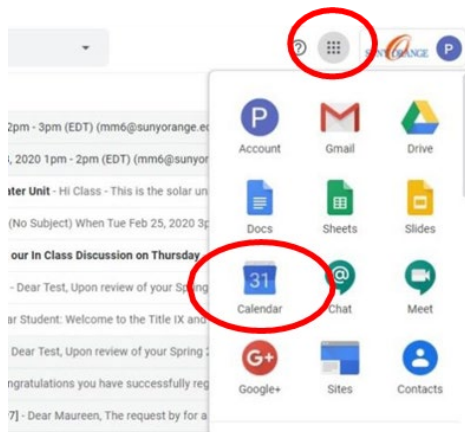
If you don't already, **now is a very important time to start using a calendar.** With online learning, your time will start to become very hard to manage alongside other commitments. Use your calendar to create weekly lists of assignment due dates and tasks you may need to complete those assignments.

How do I use a calendar? You want at least 3 ways to view your time and record your commitments:

Monthly → Weekly → Daily

Online Calendar Options

- Here's a handy [weekly schedule template](#).
- **Did you know you have a Google Calendar that's part of your SUNY Orange email?** Go to your email and click on the app locker to get started.



Not sure where to start with your calendar?
[Contact us to set up a session with a tutor.](#)

3. Avoiding multitasking

Online learning means you're working on your own and your time is less structured—which means you might be more tempted to multitask. Many people think they can do multiple things at once but research shows us that only about 2% of the population can multitask. Even if you feel like you're multitasking, what you're really doing is switching between tasks very quickly without making meaningful progress toward bigger goals (e.g. completing a project).

Why doesn't multitasking work?

- **Assignments take longer.** Each time you go between an assignment and Instagram (for example), you have to remind yourself where you left off, find your spot, recall what you were going to do next, etc.
- **You're more likely to make mistakes.** Distractions and switching between tasks tires out the brain.
- **You'll remember less.** When your brain is divided, you're less able to commit what you're learning to long term memory.

What do I do instead?

- Use [this timer](#) to structure your study sessions. Set it for a 25-50 minute period, with 5-10 minute breaks.
- Make a plan for your study time (**focused study sessions**). Not sure what that looks like? Follow the [Focused Study Sessions handout on Center for Student Success' Resources](#) page.

