

# LEARNING TO LEARN ONLINE



# LEARNING TO LEARN ONLINE

Bailey Csabai, Bilal Sohail, Jykee Pavo, Kristen Swiatoschik, Maryam Odeh,  
and Nitin Ramesh



Learning to Learn Online by Bailey Csabai, Bilal Sohail, Jykee Pavo, Kristen Swiatoschik, Maryam Odeh, and Nitin Ramesh is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-ShareAlike 4.0 International License, except where otherwise noted.

## CONTENTS

Introduction	1
1. What is Online Learning?	3
2. Becoming an Effective Online Learner	5
3. Acting Professional in an Online Environment	7
4. Staying Motivated	9
5. Who is Alongside Me in My Online Journey?	11
6. Online Resources	13
Concluding Statements	17
Credits	19
<i>Appendix</i>	20



## INTRODUCTION

Welcome Learners!

Learning to Learn Online was created by students to help ease the shift from a traditional classroom setting to an online environment. You will explore a total of six unique chapters that will help you successfully prepare for online learning.





## CHAPTER 1

### WHAT IS ONLINE LEARNING?

---



Due to the unexpected transition to online learning, student life as we know it has been severely impacted. The majority of challenges encountered by students when starting their online learning journey stems from a lack of understanding as to what online learning is. In this chapter, we will be exploring some differences between online learning and in-class learning, and some challenges that online learning may present to students.

Students often make the mistake of attending an online course and expecting it to be exactly like a traditional in-class course. The diagram below will illustrate some of the differences between in-class learning and online learning.

**AN INTERACTIVE OR MEDIA ELEMENT HAS BEEN EXCLUDED FROM THIS VERSION OF THE TEXT.  
YOU CAN VIEW IT ONLINE HERE:  
[HTTPS://ECAMPUSONTARIO.PRESSBOOKS.PUB/LEARNONLINE/?P=5](https://ecampusontario.pressbooks.pub/learnonline/?p=5)**

Now that some of the differences between in-class learning and online learning have been established, we can discuss some of the issues that you may face as you start your online journey.

### **1.1 PROBLEM OF TOO MUCH FLEXIBILITY**

A lot of students often forget about the responsibility that comes with having a very flexible schedule. The illusion of “having a lot of time to spare” can lead to students procrastinating with their school work. This procrastination can cause students to start struggling with their commitment to their study schedule and prevent them from finishing online assignments. These habits can have a negative impact on your grades. A proper time management strategy and discipline can easily remedy this problem.

### **1.2 LACK OF SOCIAL CONNECTION**

Some students find it harder to make connections with their classmates and professors in an online learning environment since online learning lacks the physical face-to-face connection. This lack of social connection can negatively affect a student’s online learning experience by making students feel bored or alone while attending their classes. Students can help themselves connect with their peers by joining clubs and societies, participating in online discussion boards, and organizing online study groups. Even connecting with just one student can help keep you motivated, updated on class information, and prevent you from missing deadlines.

### **IN CONCLUSION...**

While several students may find online learning challenging due to the lack of face to face interaction, it can still be beneficial. If you are willing to put in the work, then online classes can be an overall positive experience and present a new way of learning. If you are worried about this new experience, continue reading further to understand how to be an effective online learner.

## CHAPTER 2

# BECOMING AN EFFECTIVE ONLINE LEARNER

---



Online learning allows you to learn whenever and wherever works best for you, making it easier to earn a degree while balancing other commitments. However, courses taken online can require just as much, if not more, time and energy as traditional classroom courses. It also requires specific tactical and technical skills (i.e. time management and communication) in order to succeed. Upon developing these skills, you will find that online courses can be an excellent alternative to courses in the traditional classroom setting.

### 2.1 TIME MANAGEMENT SKILLS

One of the biggest benefits of online learning is flexibility, but too much freedom can pose new challenges. To stay on top of your university workload and achieve your goals, it is recommended to use these two approaches:

**Term Schedule:** On a 4-month calendar, plot your course work, due dates, and other personal commitments.

**Weekly Schedule:** Set up a practical study schedule for yourself and stick to it. Students who succeed are those who follow their schedule and make progress every day. This is especially important after the novelty of online classes starts to wear off.

## 2.2 COMMUNICATION SKILLS

Communication skills are vital in online learning. Instructors are willing to help their students, but they are unable to pick up on non-verbal cues, such as a look of confusion on a student's face in an online environment.

Here are some points to keep in mind:

- Use the tools provided by the school to communicate with your instructors
- Use appropriate language in chat rooms and emails
- Join active classroom discussions to keep yourself up to date on what is happening during classes

## 2.3 TECHNICAL SKILLS

Most online schools have student orientation programs. These teach students how to use the school's Learning Management System (LMS) and other online tools. It is important to familiarise yourself with the LMS that your university uses.

Online learners need basic technical skills to succeed. These include the ability to create new documents and navigate the internet to look up information. There are a variety of tutorials online that can help you develop basic technical skills.

## IN CONCLUSION...

Implementing these skills throughout the semester will help you in becoming a more successful online learner. Remember, perseverance is needed to succeed in online learning. Students who do well are those who work through technical problems, seek help when needed, set aside time to study each course and persist through challenges.

An interactive or media element has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view it online here:  
<https://ecampusontario.pressbooks.pub/learnonline/?p=66>

## CHAPTER 3

### ACTING PROFESSIONAL IN AN ONLINE ENVIRONMENT

---



Faculty expect as much from you in an online space as they do in a face-to-face environment. Professional behavior is necessary for the long-term success of an online student. The basis of this chapter will be learning the fundamental behaviours in an online environment, such as effective communication with your professors and peers. Moreover, you'll learn how to exhibit respect in your online lectures, and maintain academic integrity. Following this chapter, you will be confident, prepared, and excited about your online journey.

#### 3.1 BEING PROFESSIONAL ONLINE

Professionalism during in-person interactions must be equally represented in the online environment. Professional online behavior includes using the proper tools (e.g. headphones, microphones, camera) to interact with others. This can also include ensuring that you use the “raise

your hand” feature, allowing the professor to call on you before speaking. It is common courtesy when in your online lectures is to mute yourself until it is your turn to speak.

### 3.2 ONLINE DISCUSSION BOARDS

In an online environment, discussion boards or chat rooms are a common form of communication between yourself and your peers. We often don’t realize how important it is to maintain a professional relationship with our peers in our in-person interactions. As we move towards online school, being professional and establishing a social contract helps build a finer community for online learners.

### 3.3 IMPORTANCE OF COMMUNICATION SKILLS

Communication skills play a vital role in an online environment. The most efficient way of communicating with your professors and Teacher Assistants/Graduate Assistants (TA/GA) is by email. Some tips which can help you build a formal relationship include:

- Using a proper subject line to summarize your email
- Using the proper salutation when addressing your professors
- Briefly explain your question/inquiry in the body paragraphs
- Include a proper closing statement (Regards, Sincerely, etc.)

### 3.4 ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

One of the biggest concerns in the online environment is academic integrity. Academic integrity is the commitment to honesty while exemplifying moral behavior in your studies. Universities have a very strict policy regarding plagiarism and failure to obey these policies could result in expulsion from your institution.

### IN CONCLUSION...

Professional behavior in an online environment will allow you to improve your communication skills and create professional relationships with both your peers and professors. Maintaining these relationships, along with being respectful and exhibiting academic integrity, are integral to your success. It is crucial to build professional connections that allow you to stay motivated while learning online.

An interactive or media element has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view it online here:  
<https://ecampusontario.pressbooks.pub/learnonline/?p=76>

## CHAPTER 4

### STAYING MOTIVATED

---



Staying motivated throughout the academic year can oftentimes be one of the hardest challenges students face when learning online. Working towards building healthy and sustainable study habits, inspiring internal motivation, and understanding your needs and limitations are as important as any other steps you plan to take in preparation to learn online. This chapter will explore some of the measures you can take to feel more prepared.

#### 4.1 BEFORE THE TERM

As students, we are oftentimes limited in our course selection we have (having to adhere to program requirements). Nonetheless, with the room we do have to choose courses, it is important to pick courses that will interest you and may even challenge you (especially in the case of electives). Research

all your class options, speak to an academic advisor and ask what your options are. This will help stimulate you academically and support you when tackling the courses that you may have had less choice in choosing or find particularly difficult.

While preparing for the online learning space it is also essential to try to understand and reflect on how you work best and in what environment. If you prefer to work alone in quiet spaces, try to ensure that you have that accessible to you before your start date. If you work better with a group, reach out to peers with similar schedules, and try to coordinate online sessions together.

#### **4.2 THROUGHOUT THE TERM**

When scheduling your courses and planning the time you will spend studying, it is important to incorporate study breaks throughout. If you are feeling overwhelmed, look into the mental health resources accessible to you. If you feel like you're falling into bad study habits, take a step back and try to reorganize your study plan. There is no concrete 'right' way to study, we have to be willing to adapt and modify our study habits when necessary.

Set realistic goals for yourself and implement benchmarks to allow you to reflect on that goal. When goals are achieved, reward yourself for the work you put in. When goals are not achieved, take it as a learning experience and move forward with the knowledge you gained as a result.

#### **IN CONCLUSION...**

Preparation for online learning does not need to commence when the semester does. Look for opportunities to develop yourself and your habits before your classes begin. Throughout the semester reflect on your progress and wellbeing, take the time to assess your growth and limitations, and do not be afraid to ask for help or support when you are feeling lost or overwhelmed.



## CHAPTER 5

### WHO IS ALONGSIDE ME IN MY ONLINE JOURNEY?

---



Online learning has its fair share of unique challenges, but it is important to know that you are not alone on your journey. If you require assistance, there are various members of faculty and staff that are just one email away. Creating connections by reaching out to available services on campus will be beneficial to you. Lastly, it is important to keep in mind that your peers are going through the same experience. This chapter will review these various connections and how each of them can assist you.

#### 5.1 TALK WITH FACULTY AND STAFF

The online academic journey will be different for every student. At the beginning of your online journey, you may not think you will need help, but as the semester passes, you may find yourself in need of support. Your main contacts for academic assistance, those who know the material the

best, are your professors, teaching assistants (TAs) and graduate assistants (GAs). If you find yourself struggling with a concept, they are all just one email away!

Furthermore, there are several staff members on campus who are there to support you through your academic endeavors. Finding those faculty members and staff on campus who are specific to your faculty will give you an advantage. These staff members include librarians, academic advisors, undergraduate/graduate coordinators and more!

## 5.2 DISCOVER TUTORING OPTIONS

If you require extra help, it is wise to find yourself a tutor who can provide further assistance with a certain class. Discovering tutoring options on or off-campus will provide you with more individualized assistance. This also allows you to create your schedule, rather than having to attend the structured office hours provided by professors, TAs and GAs.

## 5.2 REACH OUT TO PEERS

Lastly, it is important to know that your peers are going through the same experience as you. Forming connections by creating study groups or collaborating on assignments will be critical during your university experience. If you have the opportunity, consider joining a club, society, or sports team, as those are various avenues to meet new people.

## IN CONCLUSION...

Creating connections with your professor, peers and others will make your online semester easier. Additionally, when you attend on-campus classes in the future, you will already have made those important academic and personal connections. Not only can you utilize these face to face connections, but it is also important to take advantage of online resources that you have access to. Keep in mind, the more you reach out, the better off you will be!

An interactive or media element has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view it online here:  
<https://ecampusontario.pressbooks.pub/learnonline/?p=91>

## CHAPTER 6

### ONLINE RESOURCES

---



**R**esources are key to success! Within this chapter, you will discover that there are many online resources that you can use to improve your academic grades, as well as, your overall university experience.

The list below was created by senior-level students and contains resources that they utilized during their undergraduate careers. Enjoy!

#### 6.1 LIST OF GENERAL RESOURCES

1. [Purdue Online Writing Lab \(OWL\)](#)
  - For formatting and style guides (e.g. APA/MLA)

2. BibMe or Citation Machine
  - Free citation makers (use with caution\*→ always double-check formatting)
3. Wiley or PubMed or Elsevier or Microsoft Academic
  - Online libraries that contain credible journals and research resources
  - \*Remember to use your University's library for more information
4. Grammarly
  - Corrects grammar, delivery style, spelling and detects plagiarism
5. Creative Commons
  - Find licensed videos and pictures to freely use within projects
6. Quizlet
  - Allows students to study information via learning tools and games
7. Evernote
  - Helps students with note-taking, organization, and task management
8. Khan Academy
  - Short lessons on a large variety of subjects in the form of videos
9. Ontario Student Assistance Program (OSAP)
  - Apply to receive student grants, loans, scholarships, and bursaries
10. Genius Scan or CamScanner
  - Scan any document with your phone (download the app)
11. WolframAlpha
  - Step by step solutions for differential calculus, integral, science, finance, and even fitness equations
12. Symbolab
  - Math calculator for algebra, trigonometry and calculus problems
13. Bubbl or Coggle or MindMeister
  - Brainstorming tools – create visual diagrams of ideas for presentations
14. Desmos

- Graphing calculator – a web and mobile application
15. Wellness Applications
    - Anxiety Reliever, Happify, Mindshift, CPT Coach.
  16. Improving Technical Skills
    - Youtube videos that can assist you with improving your technical skills

## 6.2 UNIVERSITY OF WINDSOR RESOURCES

Below are specific University of Windsor resources for students in the Windsor-Essex County community:

1. Leddy Library
  - Contains credible journals and research resources
  - Contact a faculty-specific librarian for help on assignments and papers
2. Academic Advising
  - Assistance with courses, academic progress, degree requirements
3. Student Counselling Centre
  - Free confidential mental health counselling
  - Students can also utilize My Student Support Program
4. Information Technology (IT) Services
  - Assistance with technical issues
5. Student Accessibility Services (SAS)
  - Services intended to facilitate the inclusion of all students
6. International Student Centre
  - Any inquires as an international student can be answered
7. Student Health Services
  - Healthcare and dental needs, opting out services
8. MySuccess
  - Access to job opportunities, employment-related resources, appointment booking with our staff and information about upcoming events
9. Registrar's Office

- Information regarding awards, financial aid, registering for courses and more

10. Online Learning Tips

- Quick tips and tricks to help guide you through online courses

## CONCLUDING STATEMENTS

---

Congratulations on reaching the end of Learning to Learn Online! You are now one step closer to being prepared to start your online classes by putting these strategies to use! Always remember that you are not alone in this new journey, many people have the same questions and concerns as you do. For this reason, always reach out for help when needed.

“Kid you’ll move mountains! You have brains in your head. You have feet in your shoes. You can steer yourself in any direction you choose. You’re off to great places. Today is your day. Your mountain is waiting, so...GET ON YOUR WAY!” – Dr. Seuss





## CREDITS

---

This work comes out of the collaboration of Co-op students and employees inside the Office of Open Learning at the University of Windsor. It is based on the real-life experiences of senior-level students and the lessons they have learned throughout their academic careers. This eBook was created to help students transition to online learning, in hopes to prepare them for future success.

The core group of Bailey Csabai, Bilal Sohail, Jykee Pavo, Kristen Swiatoschik, Maryam Odeh, and Nitin Ramesh are all present students at the University of Windsor and collaborated to incorporate their different views and unique experiences.

In addition, we would like to thank Dave Cormier, Alicia Higginson, and all other Co-op students at the Office of Open Learning for their further ideas and help during the development of this eBook.

And as always, a big thank you to the broader Open Education Community.

This is where you can add appendices or other back matter.