

A DEDICATED TOOLKIT

This guide was created to help students transition to an online learning environment that is consistent with COVID-19 safety measures.



ADAPTING TO ONLINE LEARNING



TIPS FOR ONLINE LEARNERS

PREPARING FOR ONLINE LEARNING

Self-care is key for our physical, emotional, and mental health. While this may sound obvious to some of you, it is worth repeating here as a reminder for when you are feeling overwhelmed, stressed, or anxious. Remember to take care of yourself and those around you.

We understand the collective efforts required to transition to remote learning and we are here to support you! Your professors and instructors are working hard to modify your courses, programs and services during these fast-changing times. Many are working on converting

their courses to fit an online platform, and many are also learning how to deliver the content to their students in engaging ways.

You might have experience with online learning from your current courses or co-curricular activities. If so, you likely already have knowledge and strategies that you can use to help you adapt to your new and evolving circumstances.

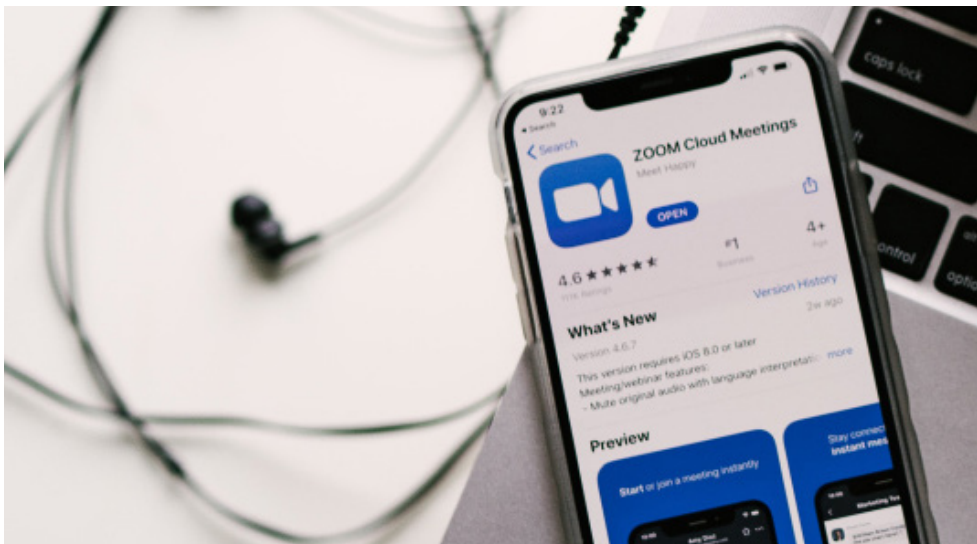
Use this guide to learn practical tips and resources that will help you adjust your study habits and get the most of out of online learning.

TIP 1: PRACTICE UNDERSTANDING

Your professors and instructors are adapting to daily changes, just like you are. Developing a quality online educational structure will take time. Please remember that our community as a whole is shifting and reorganizing quickly in order to serve SFU students in the best way possible.

TIP 2: EMBRACE ONLINE LEARNING

Online learning will become more and more common in the future, so this is a great chance for you to develop skills that will help you succeed throughout your academic career.



TIP 3: IMPROVING COMMUNICATION SKILLS

There are so many different communication channels to choose from (e.g., Canvas, email, discussion boards, social media, and webinars). We recommend using the same communication guidelines you would use in an in-person setting in all of these. Be professional and respectful, and don't be afraid to show your personality!

TIP 4: TROUBLESHOOTING

If you're experiencing any challenges, contact the troubleshooting person identified in your course syllabus or program communications. This will help you get your problem solved more quickly.

SFU RESOURCES

For information about remote study, work and research resources please visit the [IT Services website](#).

To find out more about learning and studying strategies for distance education classes and courses, visit this [Library resource](#).

For additional tips on how to achieve success while studying remotely at SFU, check out these videos from [Continuing Studies](#).

As an online student, you are still responsible for your academic conduct and engaging with your learning and with other students with integrity.

“ACADEMIC INTEGRITY IS A CORNERSTONE OF THE DEVELOPMENT AND ACQUISITION OF KNOWLEDGE.”

—SFU Code of Academic Integrity and Good Conduct

SFU RESOURCES

GET ANSWERS to your **questions** about **COVID-19** and how we are responding at SFU.

If you require accommodation, connect with the **Center for Accessible Learning (CAL)**.

"SFU IS COMMITTED TO CREATING A COMMUNITY CHARACTERIZED BY HONESTY, CIVILITY, DIVERSITY, FREE INQUIRY, MUTUAL RESPECT, SAFETY AND FREEDOM FROM HARASSMENT AND DISCRIMINATION."

—SFU Student Conduct Office

If you feel an online space is not safe or you are feeling bullied or harassed, some SFU resources that you can access include:

STUDENT CONDUCT OFFICE

HUMAN RIGHTS OFFICE

SEXUAL VIOLENCE SUPPORT AND

PREVENTION OFFICE

HEALTH AND COUNSELLING SERVICES

SAFETY & RISK SERVICES

TIP 5: EMBRACE A GROWTH MINDSET

See any struggles or difficulties you might encounter as a natural part of getting better at what you are doing. When you encounter something that you haven't been able to do yet, try a different approach or a new strategy. Don't give up right away, and remember to access resources within SFU if you need assistance.



TIP 6: MAKE A ROUTINE AND DO YOUR BEST TO STICK TO IT

There are many **time management techniques**, so find one that works for you. You will likely need to complete daily and weekly tasks in addition to meeting longer-term targets and deadlines. Plan daily, weekly, and monthly schedules to manage these different time scales.

TIP 7: STAY CONNECTED

Be proactive in communicating with your peers and instructors. For example, you could start a group chat with your classmates to go over class content. You could also form small virtual study or reading groups and work through online materials together.



TIP 8: HAVE A SEPARATE DESIGNATED WORK-SPACE

Yes, you can work from bed, but this might not be the most appropriate option! Make sure you have somewhere peaceful to work: try to use a work space like a desk or table, and cut down on external and online distractions.

TIP 9: UTILIZE DISCUSSION BOARDS

If your course has discussion boards, these are great tools for discussing issues with your peers and working through learning as a group. Ask questions, comment on your peers' answers and enter into a dialogue with your classmates.

TIP 10: ONLINE LEARNING COMMUNITIES

Online communities can be as rich, supportive, and exciting as on-campus and face-to-face learning groups. We hope you will see this as an opportunity to adapt to the experience of online learning and benefit from it.

EXTERNAL RESOURCES

[Online Learning and COVID Resources](#) (York University)

[Tips for Good Study Habits During COVID-19](#) (University of New Hampshire)

[Adjusting to Remote Learning During COVID-19](#) (University of Colorado Boulder)



ONLINE ETIQUETTE

NETIQUETTE GUIDE

Use these tips as a guide to interacting appropriately with your classmates, teaching assistants and instructors in professional online contexts. You are part of an online learning community.

RULE 1: REMEMBER THE HUMAN

Online communication comes with a level of anonymity that doesn't exist when you're talking to someone face to face.

Remember, your written words are read by real people. Before you press send or submit, ask yourself, "Would I be okay with this if someone else had written it?"

Remember also that you may be exposed to some private or personal information online. Handle this information with care.

Pronouns are one way we present our identities. If someone has

shared their pronouns, use them! If you don't know someone's pronouns, don't make assumptions or use gendered pronouns; instead, use gender-neutral pronouns such as they or ze.

RULE 2: REPRESENT YOURSELF WELL

Expectations about appropriate communication can change depending on where you are in the virtual world: a written comment that is acceptable in one area might be considered inappropriate in another. What you write in a text to a friend may not be appropriate in an email to a classmate or colleague in a professional setting. Make sure you review and edit your writing before sending. What you share in an online classroom is part of a permanent digital record. It is good practice to be cautious when sharing personal information: if

your message is one you would be comfortable sharing while standing in front of a class, then it's most likely okay to share online.

RULE 3: RESPECT THE SPACE

Chat boxes and discussion boards or rooms are incorporated into many online classes as places for students to share ideas and ask questions related to the session or class. They can be a helpful resource or a major distraction; it all depends on how you use them.

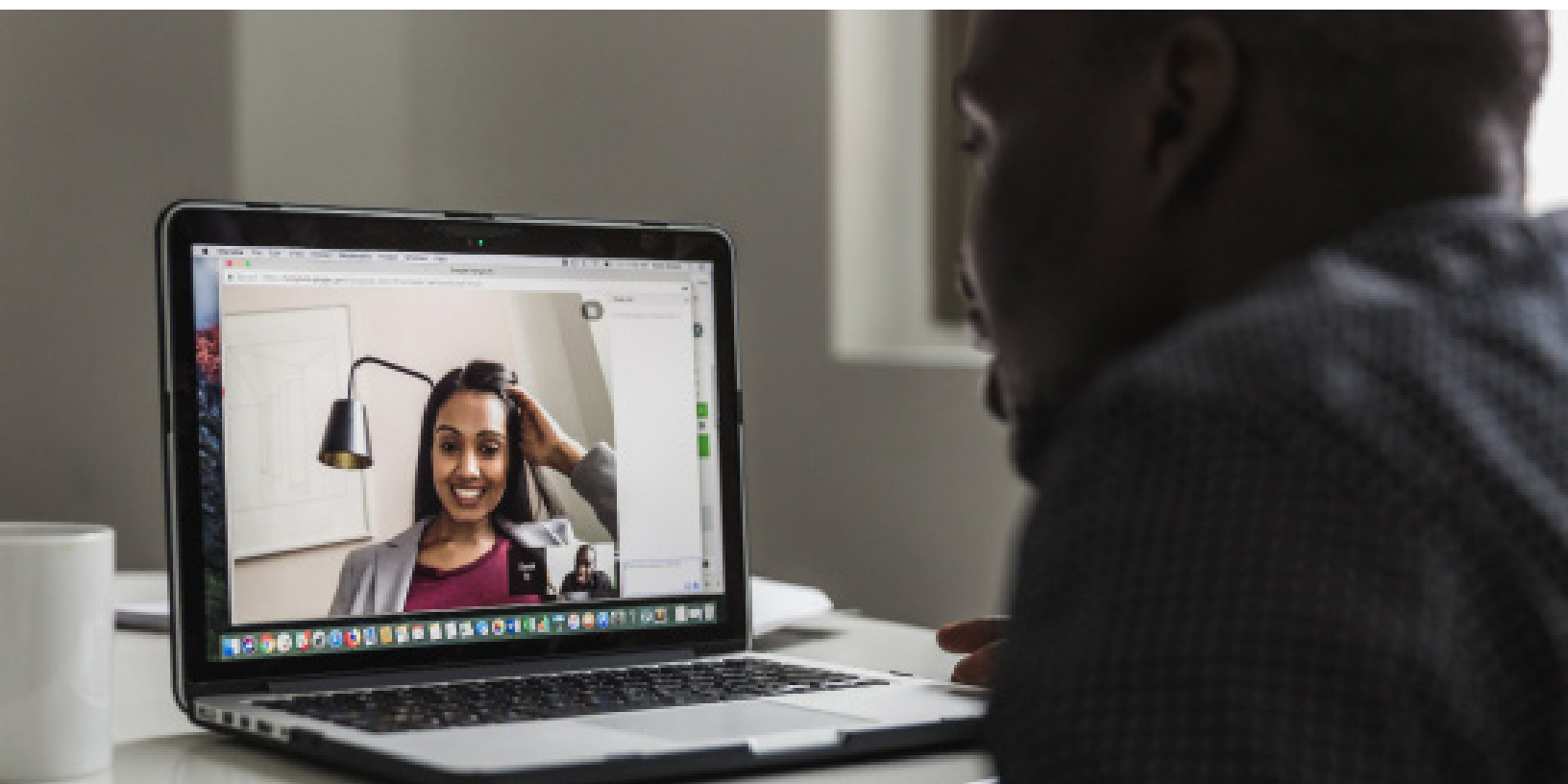
The class chat box or discussion board isn't an instant messenger like one you'd use with friends. Treat discussions boards as learning tools, and try not to distract your peers with off-topic discussions. Be thoughtful and respectful when expressing differing opinions.

COMMUNICATION TIPS

During times of change and uncertainty, communication is key. Don't be afraid to check in with your peers or instructors often due to the changing nature of this pandemic.

In a virtual environment, it may be difficult to hear multiple people talking, so remember to mute your microphone when you aren't participating and follow a one person at-a-time talking rule.

Social distancing does not mean disconnection. Stay in touch with your peers, instructors, and family using online platforms. The SFU community is here for you!





RULE 4: READ FIRST

When you participate on discussion boards, take some time to read through previous posts before you write your answer. Discussions can move fairly quickly so it's important to absorb all of the information before crafting your reply.

Be as brief as possible while still making a thorough comment. Avoid short, generic replies such as, "I agree"; instead, indicate why you agree, add to the previous point or share what you know about the topic. Make sure your written communication is meaningful and to the point.

RULE 5: PRACTICE UNDERSTANDING

Not everyone has the same level of experience working in an online environment, and not everyone knows the rules of netiquette. When you read a long response or encounter misspelled work or comments you disagree with, respond with the same kindness and understanding that you would want others to extend to you.

If the "offense" you encounter is minor, you might want to let it slide. If you feel compelled to respond to a mistake, do so in a private email or message rather than in a public forum.

WELLNESS TIPS

Make time for a stretch break! Good physical health supports good mental health. A quick stretch can improve your productivity and help increase your energy.

Plan ahead and create a balanced workflow by breaking study sessions into manageable chunks.

Remember to rest and recharge—this will help you be more effective during your work and study hours!