



# STUDY TIPS FOR REMOTE LEARNING

*We'll get through this together.*

You may be finding that the study habits you have relied on in the past are no longer working quite as well as you had hoped. Here are some tips for improving your study habits. These tips will hopefully help you study more effectively while at home, stay on top of assignments and deadlines, remain engaged in your work, and sustain what is most important as you strive to meet your academic and professional goals—your health and well-being! Making a plan and adjusting your studying may help you feel more in control at a time when things feel out of control.

***In this Guide, Find Tips for:***

***Getting & Staying Organized***

***Avoiding Multitasking***

***Setting a Schedule***

***Trying New Strategies***

***Making the Most of Online Learning***

***Working with a Group or Team***

***Staying Connected to Other People***

## Getting & Staying Organized

With so many things changing in your courses, you might be reliving that first-week of class-confusion at finals-week pace. To help you stay organized, think about the unique needs and adjustments for each class and consider the following:

- **Communicate with your instructor about changes and expectations for class...**
  - Not sure about an assignment or what was covered in class? Ask to hop on a quick Zoom with your instructor for clarification, support, or assistance.
  - Confused by something during class, but worried about asking a question? Write a private note in the Zoom chat to your instructor.
- **Use your NYFA Google Calendar to help you stay organized...**
  - You can: SET reminders, ADD your classroom Zoom Meeting number to class meeting times, NOTE due dates, SCHEDULE virtual meet-ups with friends or family, KEEP UP with [NYFA Student Life Events](#)



## Avoiding Multitasking

If you're doing more work on your own and your time is less structured, you might be more tempted to multitask. But research shows us that only about 2% of the population can multitask. Even if you feel like you're multitasking, you're probably not... really, you're switching between tasks very quickly (and some call this "micro-tasking").

**The downsides of multitasking & microtasking:**

- **Assignments take longer.** Each time you come back to an assignment (like, from Instagram), you have to get familiar with it, find your spot, remember 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 (*[because it doesn't get encoded properly into the brain](#)*).

**What to do instead:**

- [Consider the Magic of Monotasking](#).
- Focus on one thing at a time.
- Take a break between tasks.
- Consider the "[pomodoro method](#)" to help you focus for 25- or 50- minute periods and then rewards yourself with 5- or 10-minute break.

## Making the Most of Online Learning

- **Stick to your instructor's schedule as much as you can.** Staying on schedule helps you have a feeling of normalcy and can prevent you from falling behind.
- **Ask questions.** Use the Zoom chat feature or ask your instructor for a consultation.
- **Take notes as if you would in person.**
- **Challenge yourself to stay engaged.** Practice professionalism by "arriving" to class on-time, find a location in your living space where you can sit up, and stay focused on the discussion.
- **Avoid distractions and distracting others.**
  - Close distracting tabs and apps.
  - Studying in a shared space can be challenging, but do your best to avoid distractions in your living space.
  - If you need to step away (like to use the restroom), send your instructor a Zoom chat and temporarily turn off your video.
- **Participate as much as you can.** Remember, you get out what you put in. If you ask questions, make comments, and connect with others during class, it's easier to stay focused and to retain information.
- **Lacking motivation?**
  - **Get dressed!** It sounds silly but dress as if you were going to 'real-life' classes; this can help you return to the 'rise and grind' mindset.
  - **Create a workspace.** Creating a physical space for school and work allows you to focus and concentrate more in that space. When you're done, you go back to your routine.
- **Struggling to pay attention?**
  - **Be patient with yourself** and do your best to stay engaged. Remember this is new for everyone.
  - **Request the recording.** Instructors keep recordings to class meetings for up to 30 days. If you feel like you missed something, make a request to view the recording.
- **Watch recordings at normal speed.** Research shows that playback speed of 1.5x can lower your retention and can result in lower scores on assessments. Faster playback speeds are worse for complex, multi-step material. Remember: this is about 1.5x; there hasn't been research on 2x playback speed, which is probably worse.



*Adapted from the [Center for Academic Innovation](#) at the University of Michigan, and tips found on [Mental Health America](#).*



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## Setting a Schedule

As the situation unfolds, you may have fewer social-commitments, group meetings, or work hours. Setting a schedule for yourself can help provide structure and keep you motivated. If you don't already keep a weekly or daily calendar, use your NYFA Google Calendar or try something like the example below. Include time for self-care (exercise, meals, relaxation, connecting with friends, things that make you happy).

You can use this [scheduling template](#).

	Scheduled Activity	Class Tasks	Personal/Self-Care
7am			Exercise Shower Breakfast
9am	Zoom Class		
11am		Prep for Next Class	Lunch
1pm	Zoom Classmates for Group Project		

## Trying New Strategies

Your routine may have to adjust during this time. Look for ways to adapt your habits or form new ones.

- **If you usually study in a coffee shop or library,** ask yourself what kind of environment helps you study. See if you can recreate that at home. Maybe it's studying in a chair, rather than on your bed or couch, or moving to or creating a new spot when you change tasks. If you feel you need background noise, consider a white noise app.
- **If you always study in groups,** try coordinating a virtual or phone-based study session with your classmates.
- **If you thrive on tight timelines,** but now have a more open schedule, think about how working with others or setting up a schedule can recreate that for you. When that gets hard, see if you can even do 15 minutes at a time.

## Be Kind to Yourself and Others

This is an unprecedented time. You are doing the best you can to overcome the many obstacles you are encountering. It's okay to mess up, to get frustrated, to be sad or angry, and to have many emotions all at the same time. Be kind to yourself and others. Don't push yourself too hard. Your physical and mental health need to be your priority.

Take breaks, practice self-care, express your feelings, reach out to your loved ones for support, and know that we WILL get through this.



## Working with a Group or Team

- **Try not to procrastinate.** That group project may be "out-of-sight / out-of-mind" if you aren't seeing each other regularly. Resist the urge to put it off. Make small progress and stay in touch.
- **Meet regularly,** especially if you usually touch base during class. Consider a quick text on your group chat about progress, and have real conversations over video when you can.
- **Set a purpose for meetings and use a shared notes document.** Meetings might feel different when using video, even if your team was really good at working informally in the past. Try to set the purpose of your meeting in advance. Take notes in a shared document so everyone can contribute and follow along.
- **Check on each other and ask for help.** If someone has been absent from your group meetings or chat, gently ask them how they are doing and why they have been absent. If you aren't getting a response, let your instructor know. Taking this action demonstrates care and concern for your classmates.
- **Keep videos open when you can.** As long as you can see whatever you need to collaborate, aim to keep the video visible on your computer screen. It'll help you see the expressions of your teammates and stay connected to each other.

## Staying Connected to Other People

Social distancing doesn't mean social disengagement. Connecting with family and friends is more important than ever. Staying in touch with instructors, classmates, and group-mates is essential for continued classwork.

Here are a few ideas:

- Schedule video calls with friends and family, and connect with those with whom you can laugh freely and who provide wise and hopeful guidance.
- Set up Zoom with instructors or classmates.
- Connect with other NYFA students through [NYFA Student Life Events](#).
- Learn something new, that's just for you and just for fun!



## Additional Resources

- NYFA Accessibility Services: [LA](#), [NY](#), [SB](#)
- NYFA Counseling Services: [LA](#), [NY](#), [SB](#)
- [NYFA Writing Center](#)
- [NYFA Health Alerts](#)
- [NYFA Well News](#)
- [NYFA Student Life Events](#)
- NYFA Campus Updates: [LA](#), [NY](#), [SB](#)

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