

Online Learning Survival Guide: *Tips to help you succeed in your online class*

1. DO THE ONLINE ORIENTATION!

North Carolina Virtual Public School and UNCG iSchool both offer online orientation videos. Blackboard, the program used for these classes, can be overwhelming at first. Completing the orientation can REALLY make a difference in how well find your way around.

2. TAKE NOTES!

You MUST take notes to survive just about any class, especially an online class. If you learn by writing things down, then get a notebook. Composition books (cow journals) work very well. If you want to keep everything online, open MS Word every day when you start class and save your notes there. (This saves a few trees, as well!)

3. GET A FLASHDRIVE!

It will come in very handy when you are working at school and at home, so you can take your notes, assignments, etc. back and forth. It will also be a great place to save your work! (Did you know you can check out a flash drive from the media center?)

4. SAVE YOUR WORK!

You need to save EVERYTHING that you create for your online class. Sometimes, things get lost in cyberspace, and you will need to re-submit an assignment. If you haven't saved it, you will have to do it OVER! If something is lost or accidentally deleted, your instructor can't grade it. (They won't grade what they can't see!) Which would you rather do, save it or redo it?

5. READ EVERYTHING!

Online classes involve a LOT of reading. Don't skip the lesson and go straight to the questions, or you will pay for it with your grade. If you absolutely HATE to read, online classes may not be the best choice for you. You have to read the directions in order to do the work correctly. Taking notes while you read makes it less painful!

6. COMPLETE ALL ASSIGNMENTS!

In an online class, you can't afford to "pick and choose" which assignments you WANT to do. You receive a grade for everything that's assigned, so don't skip anything and do your assignments in order!

7. COMMUNICATE WITH YOUR ONLINE INSTRUCTOR!

If you are in a regular classroom and you have a question, you just raise your hand and the teacher can help you. It doesn't work that way online! Although your online instructor can't see you raise your hand, he or she wants to help you when you need it. Each instructor has preferred ways of contacting him or her. Phone, text, email, Pronto, and the Blackboard messaging system are all ways to communicate with your instructor. This is CRITICAL to your success in your online course!

8. ASK FOR HELP WHEN YOU NEED IT!

Your online instructor wants you to succeed, so start there. If you need more help, ask your online facilitator. If he or she can't help with your subject area, there is SOMEONE in your school who can! Lots of UCPS teachers also teach online courses, so don't give up!