VIRTUAL SCHOOL VICTORIA

Strategies for Online Learning

Completing a VCE subject online can be a challenge. Students often find it hard to juggle their subjects and the demands of assessment tasks.

Whether you're studying online full-time or just completing one online subject, there is a lot to juggle.

Skills to master for VCE and online learning:

- ➔ Planning, scheduling and creating routines
- ➔ Prioritisation and self-motivation
- ➔ Taking breaks and rewarding yourself
- ➔ Asking for help

Try some of the following strategies to help you with your studies.
Some might work, some might not. It's about finding what's right for you!

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Organisation

‘Brain dump’ all of your tasks

Before you start your school work, sit down and write out everything that you’d like/’need’ to get done (school, home, personal). Get it out of your mind and onto paper. This will help you focus on what you need to do. Then organise your list into priorities.

- Template: How to prioritize your to-do list: The Eisenhower Matrix

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Create a routine or schedule

Develop a routine that suits you and your commitments including rest and leisure, change it as needed.
If it fails or you don’t follow it, don’t give up. Reflect on it and start afresh the next day/week.
You may need to treat study like it’s an appointment that you can’t miss.

Ask yourself the following questions:

- What time of day are you most productive?
- Do you have any commitments that limit your time?
- How do you want to organise your week? One subject per day?
- What are your priorities for each day?
- How will you stick to your schedule? Calendar alerts? Digital template? A paper planner?

Organise your email inbox

If your inbox is very full and it’s confusing you, make a filter for emails from ‘VSV Online’, then make them skip the inbox and go into a labelled folder. This will depend on the email address, look for other videos online to help you.

- Gmail tutorials: Automatically Move Emails to Folders in Gmail & How to use Gmail Filters (Tutorial) - YouTube

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Break down your tasks into achievable steps

Decide on one section to do at a time.
Completing 1 small action towards a bigger task can be all it takes to get you on track.

These steps could look like:

1. Read resources and make notes
2. Read information about weekly tasks
3. Download or create a template
4. Write ideas/plan down in dot points
5. Turn dot points into sentences

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Accountability and Procrastination

If you find it hard to get regular work done, you might need to think about how you can solve this issue and trick yourself! We procrastinate because we're either bored, overwhelmed, or confused.

Give yourself deadlines

Tell a teacher/family member/friend what you want to get done and by when.

Get this person to check in with you and hold you accountable for the deadline.

Time yourself

Set a timer for 5-15 minutes and stick to one task. See what you can do in that time.

(To avoid distraction, it's best to get a kitchen timer or something other than your phone or computer!)

When the timer ends, reflect:

- Did you get any work done? Why/Why not?
- Do you want to continue working on this task or change?
- Do you need to take a break and revisit this later?

Set reminders & time limits

If you find that you get stuck just working on one thing/subject for too long, use a timer/alert to remind yourself to take a break or switch tasks.

Dedicate a set amount of time to working on it. Stop when the timer goes off, take a break and reassess what you now need to focus on.

Use the 'Pomodoro' method

This may motivate you, but also help you remember to take breaks and balance your work.

If you just work non-stop, you might be wasting time, taking longer to do tasks because your brain is tired/hungry/dehydrated. Breaks actually help you!

- Instructions: The Pomodoro Technique: Why It Works & How To Do It

Remove distractions

Put your phone on the other side of the room, turn it into aeroplane mode.

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Motivation

It's hard to choose to do your work. Act when the mood strikes!
If it doesn't, you sometimes need to trick your brain into doing the work.

Change location

Study somewhere else! Home can be distracting. If you're comfortable, study at a local library, a café, in a park with a friend… Think outside the box.

Reward yourself

When you finish what you wanted to, stop and celebrate. There might be more on your never ending to do list, but you deserve it. You have to rest and enjoy your time too. This could mean literally anything: giving yourself a sticker, going out to get your favourite food, spending a few hours watching your favourite movie, having a bath, etc.

Asking for help

Upload any attempts at weekly work *(even if it is unfinished or you're stuck)*

Teachers need to see your work to help you and give your feedback/guidance. Remember only assessment tasks are formally graded.

Reach out to your teachers when you're unsure!

Communicate what you need to help you. Ask specific questions, if you can.
If you're meeting with teachers, make sure you have a list of questions or topics that you need help with.
Then they will know what they need to help you with specifically and you won't forget what you wanted to ask.

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