

Guide to Online Learning Success

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Learning online is a unique experience to be sure, but with a little preparation and the right technology, you're sure to be a success. You may even find that online classes enhance your study and time management skills.

[Use this guide to find out what you'll need to do to get prepared for online success in the fall.](#)

Topics covered include:

- [Technology requirements for online classes](#)
- [Finding the right space and time for online learning](#)
- [The TOP tips for online learning success](#)
- [Building and using your support network](#)

You can begin by clicking a topic or scroll through the guide.

But, before you jump in let's get started by explaining some common language used when talking online classes at KU.

Online Hybrid Zoom

What does it all mean?



ONLINE

- Can be completed from a distance
- Does not require you to be on campus
- All online classes are taught through Blackboard
- Blackboard is your virtual classroom: find your syllabus, assignments, readings & videos all right here

"ONLINE KULC"

"ONLINE KUEC"

Online courses are labeled like the above in the Schedule of Classes
(KULC = Lawrence Campus)
(KUEC = Edwards Campus)



ONLINE ZOOM

- Fully online courses
- Can be done from a distance
- Required class meetings at a certain day and time through Zoom
- Some ONLINE Zoom classes will meet occasionally in person. In the schedule of classes it might look like the below:

M 11:00-12:15PM Lawrence

W 11:00-12:15PM ONLINE

ZOOM - Lawrence

This class meets Mondays on campus and Wednesdays on Zoom.

HYBRID

- Blends both in-person and online learning
- Some are more in-person than online and vice versa

NOTE: If you're not planning to be on campus or near campus, avoid hybrid classes that meet on campus.

RESOURCES

- [Learn more about Blackboard](#)
- [Learn more about Zoom](#)
- [Get in touch with your advisor](#)
- [Schedule of classes](#)

You got this.

Get equipped for online success

To truly be successful at online learning the right equipment is key.

Computer vs. Phone. (No contest.)

It is highly recommended that you DO NOT rely on your phone to take online classes. You will need a desktop or laptop computer that you can access regularly and connects to the internet. A tablet is not ideal, but may work in a pinch.

Need assistance with accessing a computer?

Check out: <https://remote.ku.edu/access>

Internet speed.

Recommended internet with 15 mbps download and 5 mbps upload speed. A minimum of 5mbps download and 1mbps upload will work, but you may have connectivity issues.

Need help accessing a good internet connection?

Check out: <https://remote.ku.edu/access>

Software & Hardware.

All the programs you need are available through KU IT. [Here](#) you can learn about the programs most commonly used in online courses and how to **access and download** them.

Programs include: Blackboard, Zoom, Virtual Lab, Microsoft Office, and Adobe Creative Suite. <https://remote.ku.edu/student-tech-how>

If possible, *a webcam is recommended*. If you do not have a webcam, but if you have a smartphone you could use it for Zoom or other videoconference meetings. Be sure you download the appropriate app and login well before your session starts.

Manage time on task

It is a common misconception that online classes are easy or “self-paced,” but the opposite is typically true. As with all learning, how successful you are online and how much you get out of it depends on what you put into it. Make your class time a priority, and make time for organization.

Here are a few ways class time looks different when online:

Replace time spent in class with new learning tools.

The time you would have spent sitting in a classroom is not just replaced with more study time. Instead online courses use other learning assessment tools such as low-stakes quizzes or discussion posts to make sure you are engaging with the class, picking up on the right information, and generally understanding the course content.

Learn more about common online learning activities and how faculty have designed them for optimal learning and engagement.

Check out: <https://flexteaching.ku.edu/group-discussions>

The college lecture lives online.

Don't forget about time spent watching videos or video lectures. You are getting your education from a research university which means your professors are often making the very discoveries you are learning about. Video lectures are a great way for professors to speak to you directly as an online learner.

Get the most out of video content and recorded lecturers with these tips.

<https://www.themetalearners.com/how-to-learn-from-video-courses/>

Follow your own clock.

Night owl or early riser? Online classes are flexible. If you find you're sleepy or overly distracted when trying to work on your classes, try to find another time in the day that works better for concentration. *Speaking of sleep. Don't forget to do that, too.*

The TOP tips for online learning success

Being in an online class may not have been your first choice, but it doesn't mean it's a bad option. Online learning allows you to learn on your own time, re-review lecturers as often as needed, and be more intentional in finding ways to engage and connect with faculty and peers.

But being successful online does require a slightly different mindset and skills. Below are our top tips for getting into an online learning frame of mind.

Become a syllabus master.

Learning in a HyFlex environment means most students will have a blend of online and in-person activities even within the same class. Keeping track of where to be, what is due, and when will be a struggle without proper planning. We recommend getting a planner and plotting all important due dates for all classes. Then work backwards from those dates to plan what you need to do to meet goals.

Check out these resources on [how to use your syllabus](#), and [how to plan your semester](#).

For some great tips on staying organized as an online learner click [here](#).

Find your motivation.

Remember why your education is important to you, and remind yourself of your academic goals often. When the going gets tough remember that you've got this, and your education is a means to accomplishing a greater goal.

More on self-motivation as an online learner [here](#).

Be your own boss. Manage your time.

When you're in on-campus courses there is no mystery about when class time begins and ends. With online classes, "class time" is up to you! This can be liberating and overwhelming. Consider this autonomy as preparation for your future career.

Learning to manage your time and avoid pitfalls like procrastination is a critical skill to master while you're in college. For advice on time management visit [here](#).

Learn new tricks. Study habits and note taking.

You know how to study and take notes – you read, outline some definitions, and take notes by writing down what the professor said, right? That's what most of us are taught. But there are much more effective ways to stay and take notes. With a [few new tricks](#) up your sleeve you'll be amazed at how much easier it is to take notes and how much more effective your study time will be.

Get good at asking for help.

Asking for help is good advice, but it is going to be imperative to your success this fall. Can't find an assignment? Ask a friend. Don't understand the content of the last module of your online class? Schedule time with your professor to discuss the topic one on one or use one of the cool Blackboard tools to connect with other students.

Asking for help is not a weakness. In fact, it shows your professor that you are engaged and that you care about class and what you're learning. There is an art to [asking for help](#) in the right way. Consider the example on late assignments. Never assume you cannot submit a late assignment. This semester will be bumpy for everyone. If you need an extension ask. Not sure what to say? Lean on your advisor to help you craft your request.

Looking for non-academic support? It is always ok to start with your professor if you are struggling with your mental or physical health to find resources. When in doubt, contact [Student Affairs](#) if you are in distress. 785-864-4060

Network of support

A common concern about online learning is isolation. But KU faculty and staff will be working hard to ensure you are engaged in your classes, and taking advantage of opportunities to take your learning beyond the classroom. While your roommate or family members might not be sharing those same experiences with you, they are still very much a part of your educational success. These folks are your biggest fans! It's ok to let them peek inside your Jayhawk journey.

Using your support network.

Not everyone will have a physical space that is perfect for online learning. Your roommate might want to Tik Tok all day while you're trying to learn the anatomy of a cell. Or maybe you're at home and your guardian needs you to help out but you have homework due tomorrow.

Be sure to share your educational goals and motivations with your close network of friends and family. That way when you're feeling distracted they can remember to do their part to encourage you to get back on track. If you are living with others it will be important to let them know your class time and study schedule, so that they can honor that time as DO NOT DISTURB.

[This article](#) has some great tips for identifying what type of support you need, and how to get it.

Jayhawks support Jayhawks.

Just because you're in an online class doesn't mean campus resources aren't open to you. In fact campus is filled with folks who are ready to help you with whatever you need. Here are a few to get you started:

- **Advisors:** Your advisor is a great person to turn to when you're stuck. Advisors are well networked and know campus front and back. Let them know what you need, and they'll help you find the right office or person.

- [Academic Success Support](#): This is your first stop for any academic accommodations – [tutoring, supplemental education](#), or [accessibility requests](#). If you need these resources, or think you might, we cannot stress enough how important it is to reach out.
- [Student organizations and campus engagement](#): Visit the [Student Involvement & Leadership Center](#) for ways you can engage with your fellow students, hone your leadership skills, and find your flock.
- [Experiential learning resources](#): The following offices are open and available to help you make the most of your educational experience at KU this fall and beyond.
 - [Career Center](#)
 - [Center for Undergraduate Research](#)
 - [Center for Service Learning](#)

