

Defense Acquisition University

Managing Your Student Habits

7 Tips for Online Learning:

1. **Break Away**

Whatever you can do to avoid feeling isolated is extremely important. Participate in online conferences—via Discussion Forum, Facebook, or Twitter or other social media—with other students in the course or similar programs. Don't work alone all the time. Contribute to online discussions by contributing an example of what is being studied from your work experiences or start a new thread by asking for a definition or example from someone else. You may find a list of AT&L knowledge sharing resources by accessing: http://www.dau.mil/images/Pages/Knowledge_Sharing.aspx.

2. **Ask Questions**

If you don't understand something, your Instructor, a colleague, or another student may be able to help you. If another student can help you, he or she probably will; you can do the same for others. Helping someone understand reinforces your own understanding. However, your course Instructor(s) will always be willing to help you understand your lesson materials before you move on to taking your exam.

3. **Speak Up**

Your professor cannot see you, so there are no visual cues that faculty often rely on to identify comprehensions—or lack of it. If you are having technical difficulties, or problems with understanding a concept, you must speak up. Reach out to your Instructor(s) for content assistance or contact our Help Desk if you need help accessing the online resources.

4. **Apply It**

If you can, take what you learn in your online course today and use it in your workplace tomorrow. Using what you learn as you learn it helps you remember it more readily.

5. **Think and Write**

Online students communicate with their faculty (and sometimes their peers) through writing. Additionally, writing what you learn helps reinforce information as it's presented to you. If you are not comfortable writing, consider taking some writing classes or tutorials before you take an online course. Try writing as you think, then going back and editing the writing to be exactly what you want to say. Don't try to write and edit at the same time.

6. **Enjoy the Difference**

Enjoy the advantages of being invisible! You can't see other people look bored and they can't see you roll your eyes. The online environment gives you time to think before responding and to be in a "classroom" with no visual barriers. That frees you to express your ideas and to open your mind.

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7. Do the Word

An online student is expected to be able to use the technology properly, be able to meet the minimum standards set forth by DAU, to complete assignments on time, to enjoy communicating in writing, to work with others in completing projects, and to participate in the virtual classroom.

Find out all you can about the course and its navigation, such as the expiration date(s), number of lessons and exams, and how to progress through the course.