

## How to Study From Home

So, you have enrolled in a distance learning course. All your course material has arrived. You have cleared a space in the spare bedroom and your new shiny pencils are sharpened and ready to go!

Deciding that you are going to undertake a home study course is a big step in itself. It requires commitment and an ability to self-motivate.

Firstly you need to find a quiet corner where you can study and keep all your course materials. Maybe in the home office, spare bedroom or even your kitchen table- just as long as it works for you. If you are unable to find a quiet space in your home then try your local library or even a coffee shop for a couple of hours a week.

Before your course is due to start make sure that you have all the equipment (stationery and course materials) that you will need for the months ahead. Get to know what level of support is being offered by the course team. Do you have an online tutor who you can email frequently if you have any questions? Does your course have forums or facebook groups where you get support and discuss issues with your peers? What other resources are available to you?

Make a timetable of what hours you are free to study on a weekly basis and what tasks you intend to complete in this time. However, do not worry too much if this timetable goes a little askew! Let yourself be flexible, just because you didn't read that chapter on Tuesday afternoon because your friend popped round it doesn't mean that you are completely out of sync! If you have some downtime, read ahead. You will find that you enjoy your studies in a rewarding way if you are not under pressure from time constraints.

It can be difficult to stay motivated when studying from home. You perhaps do not have the same level of peer support that you would have in a college or university. It is important to visualise what you want to get out of this opportunity and understand your goals from the beginning of your study. There will be times where you feel like giving up- perhaps because you are a few weeks behind schedule or an essay deadline is approaching. It is tough but try and be reflective. Think about what you want to achieve in the long term. This can be an incredible motivational tool and hopefully enough to get you back on track.

Equally, try not to think about everything too much. Just get stuck in! Study is rewarding and exciting if you just plough into it (active learning is the key: interact with your resources). Don't be afraid of what you do not understand, the more enthusiastic you are, the easier it will become.

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