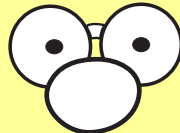


LEARNING STYLE TIPS

If you read the section on learning styles in *Entryways*, you probably have a good idea of how you learn best. Find your learning style below, and discover ways to make your style work for you in all of your classes. Remember, though, not to get hung up on learning styles' labels. The important thing is to experiment to find out *what works for you*. The great thing about being an adult college student is that you can take control of how you learn best!

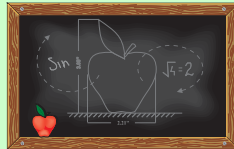
VISUAL LEARNERS



- Seek out courses in which professors use textbooks, give handouts, present information in PowerPoint presentations, use overhead projectors, show films, do demonstrations, write notes on the board or on a computer-linked Smartboard, incorporate online resources such as an online learning center that accompanies the text, related websites, etc.
- Sit near the front of the class so that you can see well and take advantage of any visual aids used in class. This will also enable you to see the professor's face and body language. It will cut down on other visual distractions and help you stay focused.
- Create concept maps, diagrams, sketches, etc., to capture important information; include color if you find it helpful. (Also, see ORL Module 2, *Outlining, Study Maps, and Review Cards*.)
- Create review cards and summary sheets. Make flash cards for important terms, concepts, names, formulas, etc. (See ORL Module 2, *Outlining, Study Maps, and Review Cards*.)
- Consider taking courses offered in an online format.
- Before you read an assignment, preview it. Turn through it and look at any visual aids or organizers (illustrations, graphs, diagrams; the sizes of headings and subheadings; special print such as bold, color, or italics).
- Close your eyes and visualize a difficult-to-spell word, paying special attention to the tricky part of the word. Visualize that part in color, in capital letters, etc., to create a mental image of a word (or a picture, for that matter), close your eyes and move them up and to the right. Move only your eyes, and not your face or head. (See Chapter 4.)
- Try writing the word with different spellings in order to see which spelling "looks right." Look for familiar affixes and roots. (See ORL Module 1, *Word Structure Analysis*.) You may also want to consider buying a handheld Franklin electronic dictionary or other PDA (handheld device) that uses dictionary software.
- Study in a study carrel or somewhere there are few visual distractions (don't study facing a window, for example). You may also find that you study better alone since listening is not a way you prefer to learn.
- Find a place where the light is right. Some learners like bright light; others prefer less brightness.
- If you can often anticipate some of the essay test questions, practice writing out answers ahead of time. Making an outline may also be helpful. (See ORL Module 2, *Outlining, Study Maps, and Review Cards*.)

- In math classes, when appropriate, draw a “picture” of the problem before you start. List the information that is given (known) and what is unknown. Write down the steps to follow in solving the problem.
- To aid in the recall of a stored image of a word (access picture memories), close your eyes and look up and to the left. Move only your eyes, and not your face or head.

VISUAL-SPATIAL LEARNERS



In addition to the suggestions above,

- When you are reading and you come to a punctuation mark, stop and visualize what you are reading about.
- Make a schedule; time management probably isn't a strength of yours. (See Chapter 3.)
- Keep an assignment notebook; update it daily. Write down the assignment and the due date. Then set deadlines for yourself for completing each assignment. (See Chapter 2.)
- If handwriting is problem for you, learn to type. Keyboarding (typing) may be easier for you than handwriting. If handwriting and typing are both difficult for you, consider using voice-activated (speech recognition) software that “types” what you say aloud. (*Dragon Naturally Speaking* software seems to be a good one. Besides being able to dictate to the computer, this software can read emails, etc., aloud to you. Go to a website such as VoiceRecognition.com for descriptions of various speech-recognition software programs.)
- When you must use handwriting, write on graph paper rather than regular notebook paper if it helps you make your writing more uniform and easy to read. Choose graph paper that has big enough squares and pale lines. If you have trouble lining up numbers when you do basic operations (add, subtract, multiply, divide) in math problems, use graph paper. You can also turn notebook paper sideways and use the lines to help yourself line up the numbers.
- Once you have finished writing, use the spellchecker and grammar checker features of your word-processing program. If seeing wavy red or green error lines beneath words interferes with your concentration, simply turn off the monitor while you are typing the first draft. Then turn it on and check it.
- Look for relationships among concepts and in the material you are learning. (See Chapter 11.)
- Pay attention to details; you may tend to focus on the big picture and miss the details. (See Chapter 9.)
- Picture important terms and difficult-to-spell words in your mind. Visualize certain letters in color or in huge letters. “Look” at the picture of the word in your mind, and then spell the word from back to front by looking at the picture. When you can do that, you have a clear image of the word in mind, and you know how to spell it. You can also create a picture to go with the word or the letters of “spelling demon” words. (See Chapters 4 and 5.)

- Use color (pens, highlighters) to color code ideas or information of various types in your textbooks. You might use purple for information related to one topic and green for another, or you might use one color for major concepts and another for the details that go with it. You might use color to show where one section of material ends and another starts. You can also record information on different color vocabulary cards.
- Use your imagination: create a story, make a mental videotape you can watch in your head, draw a picture, make a three-dimensional model or object to represent a concept; create a game to help yourself learn and remember the material.
- If you usually need more time on tests, ask if you can take the test in your college test center (if it has one), or see if you can sit outside the professor's office and take it (or to finish it).
- If you have difficulty creating outlines, use "Inspiration" software to help you organize your ideas visually. You can move information around as you organize your thoughts. (Go to www.inspiration.com for information and for examples of how the software can be used. There is also a good section on visual learners.) (See ORL Module 2, Outlining, Study Maps, and Review Cards.)
- It may help you to make enlarged copies of pages or to use a larger point size when you print out pages from your computer. You may also find it helpful to print the pages on colored paper, such as light yellow or green. Experiment to see which fonts are easier for you to read.
- If reading is difficult for you, find a simpler book on a subject (preferably one with lots of pictures and illustrations) and read it first. Then go back to your textbook.
- If you type up your notes or papers, turn off the hyphenation. Leave the right margin unjustified. In other words, do not set the right margin so that all the lines end at the same place. It makes paragraphs into hard-to-read blocks of print.
- If it helps you, use your finger to guide you when you are reading. You can also place an index card beneath the line you are reading, or even cut out a frame that allows you to see only one line of print as a time.
- Try using a picture dictionary, such as *The Macmillan Visual Desk Reference*, or a simpler dictionary that includes lots of pictures.

AUDITORY LEARNERS



- Sit near the front of the class so that you can hear well.
- Whenever possible, write out information in your own words. Then read it aloud.
- Repeat important information and definitions out loud.
- Read aloud your textbook assignments, or even just especially difficult passages.
- Set information to a familiar tune; create a rap or rhyme you can say aloud.
- Find or form a study group so you can hear material being discussed. Be sure that you are prepared ahead of time so that you are ready to contribute to the group.

- Record class lectures on a tape recorder. Remember that you must use the tape once you've recorded it!
- When reviewing for a test, record information in your own voice. Listen to the tape in your car or on a Walkman when you are walking, jogging, commuting, or doing household activities that do not require full concentration (such as washing dishes).
- When you look up a word in the dictionary, pay attention to its pronunciation; say it out loud. Buy a Franklin handheld dictionary that gives the pronunciation of words aloud.
- Pronounce a word aloud or in your mind before you try to spell it. Sound out the parts of the word or recite the letters aloud when you are learning to spell a difficult word. (See Chapter 4.)
- If noise bothers you when you study, find a quiet place to study. Turn off the CD player, TV, radio, cell phone, etc. Use earplugs if you cannot find in a quiet place.
- If you like background music, try some of the slower classical music by Handel, Bach, Mozart. Music with a certain number of beats per minute, such as Baroque music, seems to help the brain focus when it does certain types of thinking tasks. Use instrumental music only—no songs.
- Have someone call out key terms or questions to you when you are reviewing for a test.
- Look for professors who emphasize lecture, discussion, collaborative (small group) learning, and question-and-answer review sessions.
- Work with a tutor through your college's tutoring center; you will benefit from discussing material with a knowledgeable person and from hearing your questions answered aloud. Tutor someone else; you will learn by explaining the material to another person.
- Create questions and answer them aloud as a way to review for tests.
- When you encounter a picture, graph, or any other visual in a textbook, describe aloud to yourself the information it is designed to convey.
- To lock a word in auditory memory, say the letters while looking to the right.
- To help recall something that you said or heard, look to the left. Move only your eyes, not your face or head.

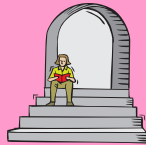
TACTILE/KINESTHETIC LEARNERS



- Write down important information. The motion of writing it is the important aspect. Keyboarding (typing) may also work for you.
- Mark your textbooks since this is one form of physical involvement. Underline, annotate, etc.
- Consider taking courses that have a hands-on component, such as technical courses, science courses that have a lab component, drama classes, music and applied arts classes, courses that feature field trips, or other experience-based courses.
- Create three-dimensional models.

- Use your index finger to write difficult-to-spell words and important terms in the air or on a tabletop. You can also trace the letters with your finger. Review the word and look up and to the left.
- When you study, take breaks every half-hour or so. Stand up, stretch, run in place for a few minutes, etc.
- Gesture as you are rereading or saying material you are trying to learn.
- Walk back and forth while you are trying to learn information. Review information by repeating it aloud as you jog, walk to class, clean house, or work out.
- Chew gum if it helps you deal with nervous energy.
- Review material using a question and answer format; change your body position as you switch from question to answer and back again.
- When you study, change subjects rather than trying to study the same subject for a long period of time. For example, read only part of a long reading assignment, shift to some math homework, and then return to the reading assignment.
- Create a game or act out concepts you need to remember.
- Relate material to a football game or some other activity.
- Sit in the front of the room to help you stay focused and involved.

ANALYTICAL/SEQUENTIAL LEARNERS



- Seek out instructors who are organized and present material in a clear, organized, step-by-step fashion and who give out an assignment calendar. (Ask other students who have taken a course you are planning to take.)
- Create outlines of material you need to learn. (See ORL Module 2, Outlining, Study Maps, and Review Cards.)
- Ask for clear written or verbal directions, whichever works better for you.
- Write or repeat aloud down the steps in any important procedure or process.
- Break a process down into separate steps. Break information down into smaller pieces and put them in an order that makes sense to you.
- Trial-and-error learning may work well for you.
- You are probably well-organized and aware of time. If you have not already done so, create a study routine, make a schedule, use a calendar, To-Do List, and other organizing aids. (See Chapter 2.)
- Repetition is usually an effective way to reinforce your learning.
- You may do better reading and studying in a place where the light is bright.
- You may find it more productive to study in the morning or early evening; staying up late probably does not work well for you.
- Eating a good breakfast and having regular meals are likely to work better for you than skipping breakfast or snacking while you study.
- You may be able to concentrate better when there is silence.

GLOBAL/INTUITIVE LEARNERS



Global learners like to get the big picture first. *Intuitive learners* are often spontaneous in their decision-making, and often go with what feels right.

- Before you read an assignment, preview it to see what it will be about. If there is an introduction or a summary, read it first. Turn through the chapter to see what it contains and how the topics are organized.
- Ask for or find several examples so that you can see what they have in common.
- Find out what the goal or end product is before you begin.
- Start with the end product and work backwards to see how the parts fit together.
- Read your course syllabus (description) to see what the overall goals of the course are. (See Chapter 1.)
- Read the introduction in your textbooks to get an overview and to find out what the overall goals are.
- You may do better reading and studying in a place where the light level is very low.
- Some background sound may be helpful to you when you study. If you play music, play it at a low level. Use instrumental music rather than songs with lyrics.
- Snacking while you study may help you. Choose high-protein snacks rather than sugary or high-fat ones.
- You may like to study on the bed or the floor.
- Similes and metaphors may help you learn, since you like to see similarities and connections.
- Wear a watch since you may tend to run late.
- For school, use a planner or organizer and an assignment notebook since your normal tendency may be to go with the flow rather than to plan. (See Chapter 2.)
- You will benefit from working with others. Find a study buddy or study group.
- If possible, sign up for courses in which there are opportunities to discover the answers rather than being told them.
- Before you begin assembling something, study a picture of the way it will look when it is complete.
- You may find it more comfortable to study in the afternoon and evening, or even very late at night.