



What You Need To Know Before Taking an Online Class



There are many benefits to online learning. Students have greater flexibility to determine when and where they complete their assignments and the academic content is often more personalized. To benefit from greater flexibility and personalization, and to succeed in an online learning environment, there are some things you need to know.

1. Online classes are NOT easier than in-seat classes.

While it is true that online courses will provide greater flexibility, the quantity and quality of the work is similar. The flexibility of online classes can be extremely helpful but that same freedom also creates additional pressure to create and implement a schedule to keep yourself on track. You should plan to **spend at least one hour each day working on each online course.**

2. You will be required to meet with your teacher in person, on a weekly basis.

SVUSD Virtual Academy students complete the majority of their coursework online but are required to attend a physical class for weekly face-to-face learning sessions with a teacher. The weekly meetings allow teachers to quickly assess student understanding and progress, provide personalized academic support for each student, and engage students in individual and group activities to promote deeper understanding of the content. Full-time students must attend class for 2 hours, twice a week. Students enrolled in one or two classes must attend class for one hour per week. Additionally, all science classes require students to attend in-seat labs twice a month.

3. You will need and use technology to be successful

The SVUSD Virtual Academy online classes are web-based. This means that you can use any device that allows you to access the internet to complete your course. However, you will want to take some time to become acquainted with the Edgenuity and/or Google Classroom platform as well as other online programs your teacher may use (ex: Flipgrid). Having a reliable internet connection and checking your @mysaddleback.org email on a regular basis is also critical to academic success.

4. Time management is the KEY to online academic success.

The reason most people struggle with an online class is not because the work is more difficult, it is because it is now up to the student to create and implement an academic schedule. Without the structure of the classroom environment, it is very easy to procrastinate and fall behind (way behind) on your work. It's your responsibility to take the initiative to keep up with your work when enrolled in online classes. Many students underestimate the amount of time they'll spend studying for class. You should plan to **spend at least one hour each day working on each online course.**



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5. You will still need to work with other students.

Taking an online course does not mean you work solely in isolation. Your course may use internet based tools such as Google Docs or Flip Grid for you to collaborate and share your work or thoughts. Additionally, you may also be required to meet in-person for group discussions and/or science labs.

6. Don't wait to ask your teacher for help.

Just like in a physical classroom, your teacher is available to provide you with academic support and answer your questions (both online and in person). One of the reasons that the SVUSD Virtual Academy uses a blended model of online learning is to provide weekly opportunities for you to meet with your teacher. But you do not need to wait for your scheduled appointment time to call, email, or physically drop in to meet with your teacher. The SVA classroom is open from 9am - 2pm, Monday - Thursday. Additionally, the classroom is also open from 3:30pm - 5:30pm on Tuesday.

7. This will not be your last online course.

In 2016, 6.3 million undergraduate and graduate student enrolled in an online class. Most students will take at least one or more online classes during their college career. Additionally, more workplaces are relying on online courses to provide professional development for their staff. To maximize your learning and prepare for your future, it is important that you acquire and implement the skills necessary to do well in online courses.