

## Finding Focus: Tips for Students Learning at Home

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Thursday, 09 April 2020 15:48 - Last Updated Monday, 13 April 2020 14:35

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As classes transition online due to the COVID-19 pandemic, many students are creating a school-like environment in their home. It can be very tempting to sleep in later or watch “just one more” episode of your favorite Netflix show instead of starting class work. However, during this time it is crucial to create a functional daily plan to be as productive as possible while learning from the comfort of your home.

### Get organized

We’re all spending much more time at home, so it’s easy to keep track of everything now, right? Not necessarily! To maximize success with learning at home, practice two key organization tips. First, have all learning materials in one place, whether having a binder for school, or a desk/room where you study, to help your brain keep track of all the critical pieces. Second, establish a routine where you create a calendar for the week with due dates/deadlines so you can see all of the pieces you’ll need to tackle that week.

### Keep your morning routine

Sleeping in is tempting, and getting those extra few hours of rest might seem like a good idea in the moment, but before you know it your entire day is gone or too much sleep may leave you sluggish or unfocused. To stay on track with online learning at home, it’s best to keep your normal routine or create a new one that helps your productivity throughout the day. Instead of staying in pajamas all day, put on some comfy casual clothes to help you get in the mindset of being in the classroom for an effective learning day. See below for how to give your brain a boost to start your day with more energy & focus!

### Take a break to exercise

Did you know your brain actually is more effective when you schedule breaks? Slouching over your computer all day while working to get class assignments and lectures completed can be hard on your lower back. It can be easy to overcompensate when working from home, but everyone deserves a break. Give yourself at least a 30-minute break or a few 15-minute breaks throughout the day to exercise. Even though gyms are closed, you can still get your heartrate up with at-home workout videos on YouTube or a light jog around your neighborhood. This also helps your brain stay focused by changing your concentration and alleviating the cognitive burden of work.

### Fuel your body with brain-boosting snacks

To keep your mind sharp and focused throughout the day, fuel your body with snacks such as blueberries, nuts, oranges, pumpkin seeds, and even dark chocolate. These nourishing snacks help your brain function, while filling you up with healthy fats and nutrients to keep you satisfied enough to not reach for high-calorie, processed foods. Moving the jaw helps the brain sustain focus, so foods that require more chewing like baby carrots, pretzels and gum are also great to have on hand.

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