

15 Tips for Being Successful in a College Class

Even for the most prepared and meticulous students, college can be a bit of a challenge. While there is no standardized formula to make it through college we can offer a few proven tips for being successful in a college class academically, socially and professionally.

1. Maintain Good Attendance

Teachers pay attention to the level of involvement students demonstrate throughout the semester. These will be the same teachers you will turn to for letters of recommendation and you can't expect them to vouch for you if you've barely set foot in their classes. A large deal of college is about establishing connections and working on your abilities to network.

2. Take Advantage of School Resources

Most students overlook the vast network of readily available resources colleges have and go through the semester on the bare minimum – attending classes alone. Make it a rule to frequent the campus libraries, tutoring and writing centers, computer labs and career centers for free, valuable information.

3. Visit Your Academic Advisor Regularly

Make it a habit to meet with your advisor early and often and seek their opinion on which classes to take each semester and how to meet your academic goals. Register as early as possible for your classes – they fill quickly, and you don't want to pile on classes before you graduate. Your advisor can guide you to the best campus resources, inform you of important deadlines, familiarize you with college policies and procedures, and keep you up-to-date with campus events and organizations that could benefit you.

4. Stay Connected

Create a student account and check it regularly – this is your main source of important information. You should pay attention to the student handbook and visit the school website to ensure you don't miss anything. Important dates, deadlines and information are always posted there. Connect with other students in each of your classes and exchange numbers. This can assist you in joining study groups, clarifying information, or catching up after missing a class.

5. Maintain Balance

Missing out on even a couple of classes can set you back a month or more, so you will benefit immensely from spending your time in a sustainable way. When planning out your week, make

sure you set aside enough time each day for studying, socializing, extracurricular commitments and taking care of yourself to make sure your brain is rested and alert.

6. Set Reasonable Goals

Try to set achievable and measureable goals each semester. This will keep you motivated, acting as a record of the progress you've made as well as helping you push yourself to continue setting and achieving goals. Don't overwhelm yourself with long-term goals, but do plan ahead and think about how you see yourself in the future both personally and professionally.

7. Be Organized

Hold on to the syllabi you're handed in the beginning of the semester as they cover course expectations, assignments, due dates, grading and other class policies, as well as professors' contact information and office hours. Compile these into an organizer on your computer or phone and add homework assignments as they are given.

8. Be Consistent

There is nothing easier than delegating work at the beginning of the semester, only to suffer from lack of urgency and leave assignments until the last minute. Studying immediately before a test is the surest way to overload and fry your brain. Make it a rule to study frequently – this way you will reduce the volume of information you need to take in as well as reducing stress and being able to sleep the night before an exam.

9. Take and Review Notes

Notes taken in class are not supposed to lie forgotten on your desk. They are your single most useful tool in figuring out the pattern of teaching of every professor, which in turn will give valuable information regarding exam formats, essay questions and extra credit assignments. Reviewing notes helps you retain up to 80% of the material without any additional research.

10. Work on Your Problem-Solving Skills

Courses such as math, physics, chemistry and statistics require good analytical skills, so be sure to spend time at home working on problems. When you get stuck on a problem seek help quickly to make sure you understand what is being asked.

11. Develop Regular Study Time

Consistency is key in developing a studying routine that will maximize your term results. The rule, typically, is to factor in two hours of study time for every hour you spend in class to allow

for the material to sink in. This also helps you develop discipline and structure your day in the most efficient way possible.

12. Perfect Your Study Techniques Even successful students often need to revise their studying styles when they get to college. Ideally you want to find a specific system that works for you, but develop an approach that leads to the establishment of a routine. Consider joining a study group – peer pressure can be a great way to motivate oneself to get things done. Some colleges offer courses that can help you discover your learning style and build solid study habits – talk to your academic advisor for suggestions.

13. Reward Yourself

Motivation is the single most powerful catalyst for positive change, so be sure to take advantage of that. Every goal – small or big – you manage to complete ought to be marked in a way you see fit. Incentives are the ideal way to keep our focus on the end goal and work towards achieving it.

14. Strengthen Your Writing Skills

Writing is an essential part of the college experience and you can only benefit from working to perfect yours. Enrolling in an introductory composition course is a good idea for any student, especially those who feel they struggle to express themselves in writing. The skills you learn will help you excel in the rest of your classes, and being a strong writer will help you throughout your academic and professional career. Most college campuses have writing and tutoring centers that can help you develop your skills.

15. Learn Money Management

Managing your money can be challenging, but if you learn to do it early in college, you'll have gained a valuable skill that will serve you for the rest of your life. Learn to map out a budget for yourself, including books, food, bills and entertainment expenses, and stick to it.

The bottom line is you'll learn more in college than you think even though sometimes that learning won't be reflected in the grades you receive. As long as you follow the study advice in this article, you should be well on your way toward academic success in the long run. Remember – your professors and fellow peers make for a great support network, but ultimately it is your knowledge and your abilities that will be tested.