

Characteristics of Successful Online Learners

1. **Self-motivated** ~ Students who can direct their own learning environment, fulfill course requirements, and achieve individual academic success.
2. **Independent learner** ~ The online environment enables students to learn at their own pace, whether it's traditional, extended, or accelerated, relieving the stress of feeling rushed or pressured, and providing enjoyment in the learning process.
3. **Computer literate** ~ Although it's not necessary to have advanced computer skills, students should possess a working knowledge of electronic email, the internet, and basic keyboarding skills.
4. **Time management** ~ Students must be able to organize and plan their own best "time to learn." There is no one best time for everyone, but the key to learning is to commit the time to learn.
5. **Effective writing skills** ~ Students must use electronic mail to communicate with their peers as well as their instructors. The ability to write clearly in order to communicate ideas and assignments is very important to student success as well as a means to inform instructors of any concerns or problems.
6. **Personal commitment** ~ Since there are no bells that begin and end classes, students must have a strong desire to learn and achieve knowledge and skills via online courses. Making a commitment to learn in this manner is a very personal decision and requires a strong commitment to participate in order to achieve academic success.
7. **Seek help when needed** ~ Often students give up when faced with an assignment or activity they are struggling with. It is essential that students develop a habit of seeking help when stuck with a difficult task.
8. **Take responsibility for one's own education** ~ Too often education is something done to students and not something they are committed to. Taking responsibility for one's own education requires a significant mind shift for some students but is especially important in an online environment.
9. **Balance school and personal life** ~ An online education, like a face to face education, requires students to balance the many demands and responsibilities they have in their lives. This requires the student to plan for time needed to be a successful learner as well as time to be a healthy human being.

(Courtesy of Wisconsin and Illinois virtual schools)