



CHAPTER 5: YOUR VIRTUAL CLASSROOM

Your virtual classroom need not be big. It should provide a quiet space to think, study, and participate in teleconferences. You will need the following basics:

- A computer
- A desk
- A chair
- A lamp
- Organizational supplies

Tips for Setting Up Your Virtual Classroom

Consider the following tips when setting up your virtual classroom:

1. **Set aside a space for your virtual classroom.** This is your dedicated work area. It doesn't have to be in a separate room, but distractions—like television—should be minimized.
2. **Set a schedule.** Everyone has a peak productivity period. Knowing this will help you be proactive and productive toward meeting your deadlines. Write your study time on a calendar. Sticking to a schedule helps other people who live with you respect your classroom time. For tips on setting up a schedule, see the Chapter 1 Tips.

3. **Set some rules.** Rules could include taking breaks to stretch or eat. You can set reminders on your computer to prompt you. You can set minimum and maximum classroom time to avoid procrastination and overload.
4. **Know your learning environment.** Knowing your preferred learning environment will help you set up your home classroom. For instance, students who flourish in externalized learning environments may want to add a webcam. Students who prefer internalized learning environments may want to add headphones to block out background interaction. For more tips on knowing your learning environment, see the Chapter 5 Tips.
5. **Get organized.** Organize your computer desktop and your real-world desktop. To organize your computer desktop, separate files for work and play into separate folders from your schoolwork. Consider setting up a separate user account for school—one without access to distracting software such as games. For books and papers, get some file folders or a small cabinet. This will keep your virtual classroom tidy.
6. **Ensure ergonomic compliance.** Your working environment should be comfortable, supportive, and well lit since you'll be spending a lot of time there. For a complete guide to ergonomics, see the Chapter 3 Tips.