Starting Work

Your online courses have lots of fun, challenging, and engaging ways to show what you know as you learn and grow as a student.

While some activities like self-checks, quizzes, and discussions can all be completed within your course, many assignments need to be worked on independently, then turned in for a grade.

Before starting your assignments, take a few minutes and think about how you plan to name, organize, and backup your work. A little preplanning early on can prevent a lot of headache down the road!

First, decide where you're going to save your classwork. Lots of students choose a cloud service like Google Drive or iCloud because they're accessible from anywhere, and will automatically save and backup your work.

If you choose to keep your files on your computer, make sure that you back them up often. You don't want to lose all your schoolwork just because a hard drive crashes or your cat spills orange juice on your laptop!

Once you've decided where to save your files, consider how you'll keep them organized. Just like you wouldn't throw your homework all over your bedroom, you shouldn't clutter up your computer with random files everywhere.

Instead, create a folder tree that is logical and makes sense to you. For example, you can make a top folder named for your current school year and semester, then make a subfolder for each class you're taking. It's also helpful to change the Chrome and Firefox download settings, so that your browser will always ask you where you want to save the files you download.

When saving a file or creating a new one, make sure you give it a descriptive name. This is especially important when your teacher wants to track your changes over time, like when you're writing drafts of an essay or working on a long-term project.

As you progress through your classes, you'll find assignment pages, like this one. Sometimes, there will be an Activity button, a Print button, or a Download button. Click here to begin working on a task. It might be a worksheet form to fill out, a handout for you to print and complete, or another type of activity or project.

In this example, we'll be starting a worksheet. Click on the Activity button to begin. This will open your worksheet in a new browser tab. You can begin filling in answers right away, or you can save it to complete later.

Click the Download button, making sure to choose "With your changes" if you're using Chrome. To edit worksheets on your computer, you might have to install Adobe Acrobat, which is free. Just visit get.adobe.com/reader to download.

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If you're wondering how your work will be graded, or what you need to do to be successful on a project, make sure you check out the rubric. A rubric is a guide that tells you exactly what your teacher expects for all parts of an assignment. You can find rubrics on lesson pages, and also on the assignment dropbox. Just click View Rubric to bring up the requirements for your assignment.

Now that you know how to get up and running with your schoolwork, you're on your way to a great academic year!