



EFFECTIVE HOMEBOUND LEARNING

Because of the corona (COVID-19) outbreak, most of us have been confined to our homes for a while now. While the university and especially the teachers attempt to keep education running in online formats to the best of their abilities, many students struggle with the challenges thrown at them. We would like to refer both of these groups to some sources that may be of help!

FOR STUDENTS

Our **students**, who are suddenly spending so much more time at home, with -often- so much less structure and clarity about when to learn what and how: the Learning Scientists have come up with a few useful sources (<https://www.learningscientists.org/blog/2020/3/19/digest-142>). The core of most of the resources revolve around **planning** and how to fill your days (*preventing procrastination*), creating a suitable **workspace**, **actively engaging** in the education that is being offered, and importantly: **mental health**. For planning, many resources are available (see <https://docs.google.com/document/d/1FynbEOVNxMcD39-wgTfSc1o4hRSNbzJEzlvWjsLHEy0/edit>). For remaining active while learning, some of the 'Study Smart' strategies apply:

- start **creating and answering exam questions** (possible via flashcards: <https://lifehacker.com/8-flashcard-apps-to-make-your-study-session-less-analog-1796882400>)
- **explain** the materials to yourself or friends from university by videoconferencing (which is also greatly helpful for mental health),
- create useful **summaries using the Cornell method**, and
- get involved in the teaching that is happening (reply on discussion boards, post on fora, follow blogs, watch vlogs and webinars, and so on).

And most of all: let's help each other and work together. Not just with your peers, but also your teachers.

FOR TEACHERS

And for our **teachers**, suddenly thrown into the unknown depths that is online teaching, we understand that there is a lot coming at you all at the same time. This is why we would like to help you by providing an overview of a few resources. For a good overview, look at this tool-wheel, created by Maastricht University: https://tutorials.library.maastrichtuniversity.nl/Tool_Wheel/. For the Dutch teachers amongst us, the Open University is being so kind as to share their expertise in online learning with us, via <https://youlearn.ou.nl/web/hulp-bij-online-onderwijs/online-sessies>; <https://www.scienceguide.nl/2020/03/toolgericht-of-doelgericht/> and through this free book: https://www.scienceguide.nl/wp-content/uploads/2019/09/Wijze_Lessen_digitaal_160919.pdf.

These are very useful and relatively entry-level resources from experts in the field. Tips from the OU are, first and foremost: **structure**, clarity and therewith peace of mind. Help students to develop important new routines: attend all online teaching moments (as long as you're healthy) and complete specific tasks each week. Next, creating a feeling of 'us', showing **empathy** for students, involving them, and replying quickly. Make sure they experience successes, these are trying times for them as much as for us. Furthermore, they emphasize that **active learning** is especially important in an online environment, and teaching should support this, for example by requiring elaboration or self-explanation, having students create and answer questions, coming back to previous subjects at a later point in time, and supporting them in creating better summaries using the Cornell method. Especially the opportunities regarding **formative assessment**: forget about the exam for a minute, and have your students try '*retrieval practice*' – test their knowledge without including summative assessment.

Furthermore, there are a few 'mistakes' that are easily made, which are worth attempting to prevent (<https://www.scienceguide.nl/2020/03/toolgericht-of-doelgericht/>). First, don't let the emphasis of your education move from content to tools: 'constructive alignment', alignment between intended learning outcomes, teaching activities and assessment/feedback is paramount. Second, don't forget who your target population is, always keep in mind what works for **your** students and remain aware of their study/learning strategies. And last, don't overload your students: a lot of what's happening is new for them too, focus your (and their) energy on what really matters.

For our international teachers, there are also resources which have already been gathered by the Learning Scientists (<https://www.learningscientists.org/blog/2020/3/19/digest-142>). These resources focused mostly on having a very clear structure and managing students expectations very explicitly (<https://medium.com/@elizabethonline/learning-to-teach-online-understanding-optimizing-an-online-learning-experience-e26cbd0fa460>). There is also a resource providing a checklist you can follow when going online in a hurry: <https://chroniclevitae.com/news/2315-going-online-in-a-hurry-what-to-do-and-where-to-start?cid=VTEVPMSED1>, which may prevent forgetting or skipping a step. And remember, we're all in this together: ask you coworkers but also your students for help if needed, include everyone, and ask for and accept help.

And for everyone, stay safe, stay healthy, and good luck!