

1.6: Understanding Your Learning Style

Learning Objectives

1. Understand different dimensions of learning styles.
2. Diagnose your own learning style.
3. Explore strategies for working with your preferred learning style.

Learning Styles

In order to maximize your learning in this course and in any learning situation, it's important to understand what type of learner you are. Some people learn better by seeing information. For example, if you notice that you retain more information by reading and seeing diagrams and flow charts, you may be a [visual learner](#). If you primarily learn by listening to others such as in lectures, conversations, and videos, you may be an [auditory learner](#). Finally, if you have a preference for actually doing things and learning from trial and error, you may be a [kinesthetic learner](#). If you are unaware of what your primary learning style is, take a moment to diagnose it at the Web site listed below.

What Is Your Learning Style?

Take the following online learning style quiz to find out what type of learner you are:

www.vark-learn.com/english/page.asp?p=questionnaire

Now that you have established which type of learner you are, let's go through some recommendations for your style. Here are some learning recommendations.^[1]

- If you are a *visual learner*,
 - draw pictures and diagrams to help you understand;
 - take careful notes during class so you can refer back to them later on;
 - summarize the main points of what you learn using charts.
- If you are an *auditory learner*,
 - join study groups so you can discuss your questions and ideas and hear responses;
 - write down any oral instructions you hear in class right away;
 - consider taping lectures if your professor says it is OK and view online lectures on topics you are interested in.
- If you are a *kinesthetic learner*,
 - schedule your homework and study sessions so you can take breaks and move around between reading your notes or chapters;
 - take good notes during class—this will force you to pay attention and process information even when you feel like you are “getting it”;
 - don't sign up for long once-a-week classes—they normally require too much sitting and listening time.

For various reasons, using flash cards seems to help with all three learning styles. For example, for an auditory learner, saying the answers aloud when using flash cards helps to solidify concepts. For a visual learner, seeing the answers written down on the flash card can be helpful. And for the kinesthetic learner, the act of creating and organizing flash cards helps the concepts stick.



Figure 1.6.5: While individuals tend to have a dominant, or primary, learning style, being able to adapt to different learning situations is a big plus, so anytime you get a chance to learn in a new way, grab it. The more you practice, the better you will become at learning to process information in different ways. Kozminski University – [Group Work](#) – CC BY-NC-ND 2.0.

Key Takeaways

People tend to have a preferred learning style. Visual learners see things to learn them. Auditory learners hear things to learn them. Kinesthetic learners do things to learn them.

Exercises

1. Were you surprised by your primary learning style? Why or why not?
2. How does your learning style affect the kinds of classes you take?
3. Try out a few of the suggestions for your learning style over the next week and see how they work.
4. Now that you've learned more about your own learning style, are there some things you might consider doing to expand on your other styles? If so, what steps might you take to do this?

1. Adapted from recommendations by Jennifer Yeh at San Francisco State University. Retrieved June 1, 2008, from the Center for the Enhancement of Teaching, San Francisco State University: oct.sfsu.edu/introduction/lea...les/index.html. ↵

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