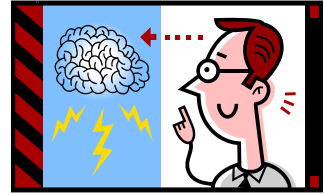


# Learning Styles



## What is a Learning Style?

Learning styles focus on how your brain receives information. No one else learns or processes information exactly the way you do! If you discover how you process information, you can learn things more efficiently and in less time. Who wouldn't want to cut their study time in half and still learn as much?

After you take the Learning Styles Inventory (VARK) you will learn study strategies for both in and out of the classroom that will compliment your learning style. When learning something new or difficult, you naturally tend to use the learning style you prefer. It is good to know what this learning style is so that you can respond most effectively to the material being presented. Even when the material is not being presented in the way you prefer (which happens often in a college setting) you can use this knowledge of learning styles to adjust and be flexible, no matter who your instructor is or what the topic might be.

Everyone has one learning style that is dominant. A key word is that our dominance is a **preference**, not an absolute. When learning is new, difficult, or stressful, we PREFER to learn in a certain way.

## The VARK Categories

### **Visual (V):**

This preference includes the depiction of information on charts, graphs, flow charts, and all the symbolic arrows, circles, hierarchies and other devices that instructors use to represent what could have been presented in words. Students who have this preference usually like to learn from pictures and powerpoints and like to use colored markers to mark texts and notes.

### **Aural (A):**

This perceptual mode describes a preference for information that is "heard." Students with this learning style report that they learn best from lectures, tutorials, and tapes and from talking to other students.

### **Read/Write (R):**

This preference is for information displayed as words. Not surprisingly, many academics have a strong preference for this learning style.

### **Kinesthetic (K):**

This learning style refers to the "perceptual preference related to the use of experience and practice (simulated or real)." Although such an experience may invoke other learning styles, the key is that the student is connected to reality, "either through experience, practice or simulation."

You will take the VARK Inventory either on-line at [www.vark-learn.com/english/index.asp](http://www.vark-learn.com/english/index.asp) or complete a paper copy. This inventory will give you insight into how you learn as well as tell you about your study strategies that will compliment your style!

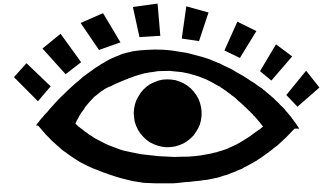
## Hints for the Tactile/Kinesthetic Learner Senses Preferred: Touch/Muscular



1. Keep your desk clear of distracting objects.
2. Cover the page you aren't reading.
3. If you are distracted by noise, turn off the radio; wear earplugs or wear an earphone in the learning center to block out the noise. If you want sound, listen to soft music.
4. Divide your work into short study sections. Get a timer. After 20 minutes or when a task is completed, give yourself a reward (a cookie, a walk around the block, a few minutes to listen to a song).
5. Sit as close to the instructor as possible or sit in the center of the room by quiet students.
6. When studying, use a multi-sensory approach (hearing, seeing, touching, and doing) as much as possible.
7. Get plenty of sleep.
8. Eat a nutritious breakfast and lunch. Snack on fruit or nutritional food if you need extra energy.
9. Study in a room where there is a desk for your textbooks and notebook.
10. Use models, real objects, and materials that can be touched and moved. For example, learn geography through handling and studying a globe.
11. When possible, **draw** what you are learning.
12. Trace spelling words as you practice them.
13. Record in writing information to be learned. Keep a supply of paper on hand.
14. When possible, role play, type, take notes, or construct models to learn the information.
15. Realize that your lecture notes may be poor because the topics were not "concrete" or "relevant."
16. Put plenty of examples in your note summaries. Use case studies and applications to help with principles and abstract concepts.
17. Use pictures and photographs that illustrate an idea.
18. Talk about your notes with another "K" person.

# Hints for the Visual Learner

## Sense Preferred: Sight



### GENERAL

1. Take notes and make pictures, graphs, and charts. Use flashcards and highlight key details.
2. Sit close to the teacher so that you can watch his/her face and gestures.
3. Take notes or make lists as you listen to directions.
4. Carefully check instructions written on the chalkboard and on handouts.
5. As the teacher lectures, pay attention to visual aids such as the following:

drawings	films	books	flashcards
maps	graphs	filmstrips	pictures
charts	cartoons	transparencies	diagrams
posters	bulletin boards		
6. Imagine pictures of the information you are supposed to remember.
7. Use color coding as cues to important information.
8. When possible, read assignments silently.
9. Maintain class notes and outlines of important information to study.
10. Try to read and study in a well-lighted, quiet place.
11. Record homework assignments in a date book, on a note pad, or on a specially designed assignment sheet.
12. Keep a note pad with you at all times. Write out everything for frequent and quick visual review.

### Writing

1. Jot down ideas as they form in your mind.
2. Outline your ideas.
3. Make a rough draft, skipping lines. Correct/revise your work.
4. Re-copy your paper.
5. Essay Tests: Make quick outlines on scratch paper or in the margin of the test before writing your answer.

## Hints for the Auditory Learner

### Sense Preferred: Sound



### General

1. Attend classes!
2. Leave spaces in your notes for recall and filling in additional information.
3. Put your summarized notes on tape and listen to them.
4. Read your summarized notes aloud.
5. Say aloud the information to be learned or have someone read the information to you.
6. Listen to the audio-cassette tapes of your textbooks--English literature.
7. Read your work out loud.
8. Say words inside your head silently.
9. When possible, brainstorm ideas with others.
10. When possible, learn information through tapes, television, oral reports, rhymes, songs, radio, lectures, book reviews, panel and group discussions, guest lecturers, and oral questions and answers.
11. Take part in class discussions.
12. Ask questions in class, and ask for clarification if you do not understand something.
13. Talk about assignments with someone or form a study group.
14. Sit near the front of the classroom so you can clearly hear the instructor without auditory distractions.
15. Use a straight-edged marker or guide to assist you in keeping your place while you are reading or working with printed material.

### Writing

1. Plan each sentence you want to write by saying it out loud or silently in your head.
2. Say each sentence several times.
3. Write each sentence as you say it or talk into a tape recorder, dictating each sentence of your paragraph; then play the tape back--one sentence at a time--and record your paragraph in writing.

# Hints for the Read/Write Learner

## Learns by reading and writing information



### **GENERAL**

1. Convert your lecture "notes" into a learnable package by reducing them (3:1).
2. Write out the words again and again.
3. Read your notes (silently) again and again.
4. Rewrite the ideas and principles into other words.
5. Organize any diagrams and graphs into statements, for example, "The trend is..."
6. Turn reactions, actions, diagrams, charts, and flows into words.
7. Imagine your lists arranged in multiple choice questions and distinguish each from the others.
8. To take in information, use lists, headings, dictionaries, glossaries, definitions, handouts, textbooks, library resources, and lecture notes (word for word). Choose instructors who use words well and have lots of information in sentences, notes, essays, and manuals.

### **Writing**

1. Write exam questions.
2. Practice with multiple choice questions.
3. Write your lists (a, b, c, d, 1, 2, 3, 4).
4. Arrange your words into hierarchies and points.

Adapted and copied from VARK by Neil D. Fleming, Christchurch, New Zealand, and Charles C. Bonwell, Green Mountain, Colorado.