# 10 TOP TIPS
REMOTE LEARNING FOR PARENTS

Remote learning can be a great way to continue learning outside the classroom, particularly in difficult circumstances. For parents and carers, the idea of remote learning isn't always straightforward and there can be a number of factors they need to consider, especially around ensuring their children feel comfortable and are familiar with the whole concept. That's why we've created this guide to help parents and carers support their child in getting the most out of their remote learning experience.

1) Take an active interest in your child's learning

As a parent or carer, remote learning will be a new concept for your child and there are bound to be a few teething problems to start with. Take an active interest in their learning and help support them whenever they need a helping hand.
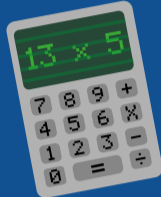
2) Monitor your child's communication and online activity

It's important to remind your child that despite being at home, the same level of behaviour and conduct exists as if they were at school. Encourage them to remain polite, remember their manners and not to post or send any negative comments just because they are behind a computer.

3) Establish a daily schedule and routine

Working from home and trying to learn in a more casual setting that children might associate more with play and a degree of freedom might take a bit of getting used to. Try to stick to a daily routine and use the timetable/schedule that schools have sent home to help children keep on top of their daily learning.

4) Encourage screen breaks away from devices

Remote learning will inevitably require more interaction with computers, laptops and tablets. Teacher's will invariably advise on screen breaks however it doesn't hurt to keep a check on their time online or encourage them to get some fresh air/exercise.

5) Ensure your learning device is in a public space in the home

It's important to consider where your PC or laptop is placed if live video is being used. Try to keep the background neutral with no personal information visible and move learning devices out of the bedroom as this could be deemed inappropriate.

6) Implement safety controls and privacy restrictions on apps and software

Dependant on how your school implements remote learning, your child may be required to download certain software or apps. Whilst these are likely to be relatively safe to use, like any other new app or platform, parents should still implement safety controls as a precaution.

7) Ensure your child only uses official school communication channels

It's important that all communication with teachers and school staff is directed through approved school channels, whether that be through the school's online portal or the relevant secure messaging site.

8) Familiarise yourself with relevant school policies

Schools should have a policy on remote learning and direction that they can share with parents. Familiarise yourself with this and ensure you know what is expected of teachers and your child during lessons, both online and offline.

9) Maintain feedback with teachers

Engage in communication with teachers where possible and try to feed back progress and development as well as any helpful suggestions around the learning process. Be transparent but remain professional and only use official channels to communicate.

10) Monitor your child's wellbeing and mental health

Remote learning will likely mean that your child won't get the same level of social interaction and might not see their friends for a while. Keep a check on their wellbeing and try to encourage them to get out as much as you can. Whilst learning from home might seem fun and exciting to start with, missing out on seeing their friends everyday might take its toll.
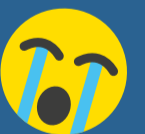
10 TOP TIPS
REMOTE LEARNING FOR CHILDREN

Remote learning can be a great way to continue learning outside the classroom, particularly in difficult circumstances. For students, it's the perfect way to ensure they still get the education they need, despite not being at school. However it also requires a level of discipline and careful planning. That's why we've created this guide to help pupils understand different aspects of remote learning and to support them in ensuring their experience is as safe and secure as it can be.

1) Treat remote learning the same as classroom learning

Despite being at home, it's important to remember the same rules apply as being in the classroom, particularly in respect of behavior and conduct. Focus on learning and don't get distracted by your surroundings.
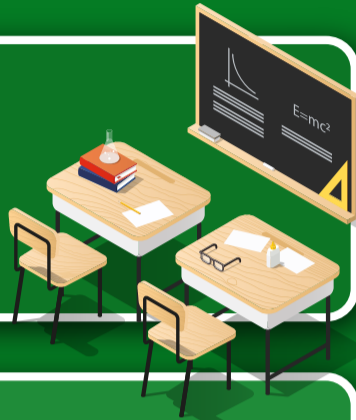
2) Use classroom language

If you are encouraged to communicate through emails and online messages, don't use shorthand text speak and write as though you would speak in class. Remember to be respectful and polite and avoid positing negative comments or spamming the chat.

3) Take regular screen breaks

Whilst remote learning might be an exciting experience to begin with, having prolonged periods of time in front of a screen isn't always healthy. Remember to have regular screen breaks where possible and in your spare time, try to get some fresh air and enjoy other activities away from electronic devices.

4) Always conduct video learning in an open space at home

To get the best experience from remote learning, it's important to create the right environment around you. Try to set up a mock 'classroom desk' at home in an open space so parents can supervise if necessary. Avoid bedrooms as this could be considered inappropriate.

5) Only communicate through approved school portals and platforms

It's important that you send messages and any pictures or images required for class through approved school channels, such as internal learning portals or approved platforms. This will help to keep your personal information safe and secure.

6) Stick to teacher rules and guidelines around online learning

Your school should issue you with guidance around remote learning and the rules to follow. Always maintain classroom behaviour and try to remember that you are in a learning environment and not a social setting.

7) Dress in school uniform

As part of your learning environment, try to maintain school uniform/dress. This will help as part of replicating classroom learning in the home. Try to avoid wearing anything too casual as this could be deemed inappropriate for school.

8) Don't share passwords or other sensitive information

In order begin your online lessons or to gain access to learning materials, you may be provided with login details and passwords. In the same way you keep your personal details private, always keep these safe and never share them with others.
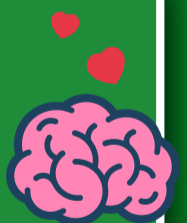
9) Don't use school platforms to discuss personal matters

It's important to keep your school communication channels separate from your own personal communication with friends and family. Don't be tempted to engage in casual discussions or send images, videos or links via official school apps or platforms that aren't associated with your learning.
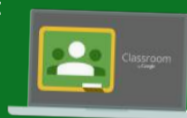
10) Look after your mental health and wellbeing

Remote learning ultimately means working alone and missing out on daily social interaction with your friends. If you ever feel frustrated, low or sad, it's important to discuss how you feel with your parents or your teacher. Keeping in touch with friends over the phone or on social media can also help to keep your spirits up.

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How to clean DEVICES

Our electronic devices can be a breeding ground for germs and bacteria. Many viruses, including coronavirus, can stick around for several hours or even days after being touched by or otherwise coming into contact with an infected person. With that knowledge, keeping them clean can be as important as keeping ourselves protected in order to avoid becoming ill and maintaining a high level of hygiene and cleanliness. We have therefore created this guide to help you clean your devices effectivly.

✔ Always

✖ Never

MOBILE PHONES & TABLETS

Always: Use wrung out alcohol wipes. Apple state that using a 70% isopropyl alcohol wipe or disinfectant wipe is ideal for the outside of a handset. To be on the extra safe side, power down the device before cleaning it. If you use a screen protector or protective case, you can clean these gently with warm water and soap. Just make sure you remove them from the phone first. While you CAN use general disinfectant spray, make sure it's sprayed onto a clean, soft cloth first, and not applied directly to the device. It will need to say something along the lines of 'kill 99.9% of bacteria' on it to be effective.

Never: Don't submerge the device in bleach or soapy water. Similarly, do not clean the device whilst it's charging or otherwise plugged into another device. Using alcohol wipes on things like leather cases or other fabric and material should also be avoided as it could damage them. Don't clean phone cases with in-built batteries or other electronics with soap and water. A big thing to remember is to not use straight rubbing alcohol. It can damage the oleophobic and hydrophobic coatings that keep oil and water from damaging the display and ports. Finally, don't use regular house-hold surface cleaners (non-disinfectant ones) on phones and tablets – they are too abrasive and may damage them irreversibly.

LAPTOPS & COMPUTERS

Always: Turn the laptop all the way off before starting any kind of cleaning and always unplug it from the mains. If you can remove the battery of the device, do so. Wipe the screen with a dry microfibre cloth, then thoroughly wring out an alcohol wipe and repeat before returning with a dry cloth. The rest of the laptop can be cleaned with an alcohol wipe, much like a mobile phone, but be careful to wring it out to avoid unnecessary liquid dripping into the inner circuits. Be sure to clean thoroughly on and around the keys and any other buttons, but not between any open cracks.

Never: As with mobiles, avoid using water to clean the more delicate parts of your laptop such as keys and ports. While some of the more modern phones can be waterproof, laptops aren't and it will almost certainly cause damage and irrepair.

GAME CONTROll ERS (& CONSOLES)

Always: Remove any batteries the controller might use (Xbox controllers sometimes have batteries in the back.) Use alcohol wipes and be sure to get into the crevices around the sides as well as all the buttons on a video game controller, then dry it immediately with a microfibre cloth. On a console, pay specific attention to things like the power buttons and disc/cartridge eject buttons if there are any. If you have a vacuum cleaner with an appropriate attachment, use this to remove things like dust or food prior to using an alcohol wipe. A microfibre cloth will also do the job but make sure it's clean and dry before you use it.

Never: Do not use soapy water or bleach on the controllers and definitely not on the console itself. Make sure controllers are unplugged and inactive before cleaning them to avoid any problems with the electronics. Similarly, consoles should not be left on and need to be unplugged from the mains before being cleaned. Stay well away from the ports on consoles too, as any liquids could damage the interior.

KEYBOARD & MICE

Always: Use alcohol wipes like with laptops and keyboards. Make sure they're unplugged and leave them to dry a little after using disinfectant wipes. If you have a hoover with the right attachments, be sure to give it a once over first to remove food and debris. Compressed air is also great for keyboards. Use short, sharp bursts and aim to push dust towards somewhere you can hoover it easily. Lightly dampen a cotton swab with rubbing alcohol and be sure to get between the keys as much as possible. Things like mice, headphones and microphones also need to be disinfected with wipes. If your keyboard is wireless, remove the batteries before you clean it. Don't let any moisture leak inside the keyboard and dry them with a clean microfiber cloth.

Never: Don't clean them with warm soapy water. The electronics in these are not designed to be waterproof like some modern mobile phones and tablets. Also, don't use too much rubbing alcohol on keyboards as they could remove the lettering on top of keys.

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General Tips

1 Don't rub too hard. A gentle swabbing will be sufficient and excess cleaning could damage your devices. Wait a few minutes for the disinfectant to work, then wipe it clean.

2 How often you clean your electronics depends on a number of factors such as how much you come into contact with other people. Be sensible and practical.

3 Keep hands and faces as clean as possible. You'll have to wipe clean electronics less if you're nice and clean using them.

4 Remember, some germs are good and can help build a healthy immune system in children, but you can never be too careful with coronavirus.

5 Do not use regular kitchen sponges to clean devices - often they contain as many or more germs than our phones.

6 Consider using hands-free devices instead of pressing the phone to your face while making a phone call. If there's anything nasty on your phone, the last place you want it is near your face.

Meet our expert

Mark Foster has worked in the gaming industry for 5 years as a writer, editor and presenter. He is the current gaming editor of two of the biggest gaming news sites in the world, UNILAD Gaming and GAMINGbible. Starting gaming from a young age with his siblings, he has a passion for understanding how games and tech work, but more importantly, how to make them safe and fun.

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