## ONLINE Technical Skills and Requirements



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### Important Tips for Success as an Online Learner

1. ***Begin planning now for private, uninterrupted time in your schedule*** to complete the reading and writing assignments – preferably in at least one-hour blocks and at least three times a week. It can be easy to fall behind!
2. *Check your email account regularly* for updated information. If you prefer a different email account other than your HSU email account, be sure to update your preference using Student Center.
3. Use e-mail for private messages to the instructor and other students. The discussion forum is for public messages.
4. If you have questions or confusion about an assignment, take action promptly! Check the Course Related Questions Forum to see if your concern has been addressed already, and post your question there if you don't see an answer.
5. Read directions carefully.
6. For posts to online discussion forums, conventions of online etiquette ("[netiquette](http://teaching.colostate.edu/tips/tip.cfm?tipid=128)") which include courtesy to all users, will be observed.

### Attitudes & Technical Skills Required

You will find that the following attitude will significantly contribute to your success in this online class:

* A positive attitude towards technology
* An open mind towards online education
* Willingness to share your experiences with others
* Strong writing skills needed for expressing yourself in the discussion area
* Strong analytical and critical thinking skills for when you "get stuck"
* Resourcefulness - don't be afraid to click on links and explore and ask questions
* Time management

Online learning requires only basic technical skills:

* Competency with file management (for example, creating a folder on your desktop, moving files from one location to another, finding a saved file)
* Internet navigation skills
* Download plug-ins from the Internet
* Update your Internet browser
* Send and receive email
* Create and save documents (Word, PowerPoint, Excel or HTML)
* Toggle between two open software applications on your computer
* Copy text from a word processing program and paste them into another program

Note: While keyboarding at 35 wpm or greater is not a requirement for online learning, it can be a real timesaver!

### Minimum Hardware and Software Requirements

1. You will need access to a computer and the Internet. Most late model computers have adequate processing capabilities for online courses. For specific questions about the technical suitability of your home computer or laptop, contact the HSU Help Desk (707-826-4357 or help@humboldt.edu). If you do not have a computer at home or work but do spend time on campus, you can use any of the computer labs during open hours. A laptop with wireless capability will provide maximum flexibility for accessing the course when on campus.
2. If you plan to connect to the Internet from home, you will need Internet access. High speed Internet access with a cable modem or DSL is recommended. For either connection method, you will need an Internet Service Provider (ISP).
3. You also will need word processing software (e.g., Microsoft Word). If you need a word processor, contact the HSU Bookstore for reduced pricing on Microsoft Office (includes Microsoft Word word processing software) available to registered HSU students. An acceptable alternative is OpenOffice's Writer program available at no cost. Review documentation on using this MS Word substitute. Mac users can also use Apple Pages.
4. Free web browsing software can be downloaded from the Internet but is usually already installed on modern computers. **Firefox is the recommended web browser most compatible with Moodle for Mac Users. Windows users can use Firefox or Chrome.** Your browser must have the Java plug-in enabled.
5. **Computer System and Browser**
6. Before logging into Moodle, confirm that your computer hardware, software and settings are correct and compatible with Moodle requirements to be able to run the LMS.

**Computer Requirements**

* + For PC computers: Windows XP Operating System or better (Windows 7 preferred)
	+ For Macintosh computers: OS X
	+ **For all computers:** 2 GB of RAM (4 GB recommended),
	+ 1 GB of free disk space (recommended) Broadband Internet connection (DSL or cable recommended)
	+ Sound card with speakers or headphones (USB headset highly recommended)
	+ Web camera or built-in computer/laptop camera
	+ The latest version of [Java](http://java.com/en/download/index.jsp)
	+ [JavaScript](http://support.mozilla.org/en-US/kb/javascript-settings-for-interactive-web-pages#w_enabling-and-disabling-javascript) must be enabled
	+ [Cookies](http://support.mozilla.org/en-US/kb/enable-and-disable-cookies-website-preferences) must be enabled
	+ [Pop-up blocker is turned off](http://support.mozilla.org/en-US/kb/pop-blocker-settings-exceptions-troubleshooting#w_pop-up-blocker-settings) with the Moodle site added to exceptions

**Browser Requirements**

* + Moodle works best with Firefox. Other browsers may not support all Moodle tools.
	+ All browsers should have JavaScript, Cookies, and Pop-ups enabled for Moodle (do not block Pop-ups).

**Software Recommendations** (Some online classes may use the following **free** software)

* + [Mozilla Firefox](http://www.mozilla.org/en-US/firefox/new/)
	+ [Adobe Acrobat Reader](http://get.adobe.com/reader/)
	+ [Adobe Flash](http://get.adobe.com/flashplayer/)
	+ [Adobe Shockwave](http://get.adobe.com/shockwave)

**Word Processing Software**

If you need word processing software (e.g., Microsoft Word), contact the HSU Bookstore for reduced pricing on Microsoft Office (includes Microsoft Word word processing software) available to registered HSU students. An acceptable alternative is OpenOffice's Writer program available at no cost. Review documentation on using this MS Word substitute.

**Blackboard Collaborate**

Some courses at HSU may use Blackboard Collaborate, an online live "classroom." Special requirements for accessing Collaborate are listed on the [Collaborate website](http://support.blackboardcollaborate.com/ics/support/default.asp?deptID=8336&task=knowledge&questionID=1473).