

Learning in the Sky!

Having to travel while in school can be stressful. Here are some quick tips on staying on top of things while still having fun moving around!

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Hey everyone! My name is Hussain and I am a second year medical science student at the University of Western Ontario. This year, I had to unexpectedly travel and live outside of Canada for almost a full two months. To make matters worse, I was going to Pakistan. If you don't know where that is, it's right to the east of India and, more importantly, 10 hours ahead of Toronto. I had to somehow juggle work, school, and family all while having to stay up at odd hours of the night to do my midterms and exams. During the experience however, I learned many invaluable lessons that really made my life much easier. So if you are someone who is planning to travel or just generally have a mountain of commitments this year, read on to read my tips to make your life just a bit more easier!

Make everything due early

One key benefit of going to a country 10 hours ahead of Canada was having items done 10 hours earlier. You see, I never changed my time on my laptop to the local time there and made myself work as if I was still in Canada. This meant that if I had an assignment due at midnight, I would have it done by 2pm. This might not seem like a lot, but it makes a HUGE difference when you realize that you have an extra 10 hours to finish your work if you ever do need it. Now being back in Canada, I'm continuing my "10 hours early" habit to make sure I don't miss another assignment ever again.

Figure out where you're going to work

If you're travelling to meet family, chances are you'll get distracted. Whether it be playing with your cousins or meeting long lost friends, getting distracted abroad is 10x easier then when you're sitting in your bedroom. You should definitely have fun while you are travelling though, just in moderation. Don't end up forgetting about your 5 quizzes next week just cause your cousins are calling you to a BBQ tomorrow night. Before I left the country, I asked my family in Pakistan to please save me a



room where I can study at my convenience. If not a room, then just a study desk and some noise cancelling headphones would do the trick. Make sure you have this dedicated study place as soon as possible so you have your “headquarters” from where you can organize all your work.

Make a list of everything due

This might sound cumbersome, but it keeps coming down to being able to not get overly distracted abroad. For me, I wrote down all the due dates for all the quizzes, assignments, labs, presentations, midterms, and exams I had for the following half semester. Having this master list saves so much time when you're running around your course websites trying to make sure you're not missing anything or haven't accidentally ignored a due date.

Make a study group

This doesn't need people from your program, or even your university. Being in the company of like minded and academically driven individuals would do wonders for keeping you on track. The best part, you can do this with your cousins and friends that you have gone to go visit. No matter what stage of life they are in, you all can always sit down and work alongside your friends and family so you both can succeed. You can always take breaks, make jokes, and play some games from time to time too.

Have fun!

You are travelling after all, it would make no sense that you would be studying all the time. If done in moderation, relaxing and taking a break would tremendously help your studying by giving your brain its well deserved rest. Play some sports, remember fond memories, eat your aunt's heavenly dishes, or just take a nap. Whatever works for you! *Bon voyage!*

