

The Difference Between Synchronous and Asynchronous Learning

Know Which Method of Distance Learning Is Best for You

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In the world of [online education](#), often known as distance learning, classes can be asynchronous or synchronous. What do those terms mean? Knowing the difference between synchronous and asynchronous distance learning can help you choose a program that works best for your schedule, your learning styles and your education.

SYNCHRONOUS DISTANCE LEARNING

Synchronous [distance learning](#) occurs when the teacher and pupils interact in different places but during the same time.

Students enrolled in synchronous courses are generally required to log on to their computer during a set time at least once a week. Synchronous distance learning may include multimedia components such as group chats, web seminars, video conferencing and phone call-ins.

Synchronous learning generally works best for students who can schedule set days and times for their studies. People who like structured courses heavy on student interaction often prefer synchronous learning.

ASYNCHRONOUS DISTANCE LEARNING

Asynchronous distance learning occurs when the teacher and the pupils interact in different places and during different times. Students enrolled in asynchronous courses are able to complete their work whenever they please. Asynchronous distance learning often relies on technology such as email, e-courses, online forums, audio recordings and video recordings. Snail mail is another medium for asynchronous learning.

Students with complicated schedules often prefer asynchronous distance learning. It also tends to work well for self-motivated learners who do not need direct guidance to complete their assignments.

CHOOSING THE RIGHT TYPE OF LEARNING

When trying to decide between synchronous and asynchronous courses, take your learning style and schedule into consideration.

If you get lonely studying independently or feel more comfortable working closely with your professors, synchronous courses may be a better choice. If you are unable to commit to specific class times due to work or family obligations, asynchronous distance learning may be the way to go. Look into more on the [pros and cons of the different types of learning](#).