Gear Document 2

MAKE SURE YOU HAVE THE RIGHT EQUIPMENT

Being prepared for class is one of the most important aspects of education. Most would not enroll in a university or college program and not buy the required textbooks. In fact, it would be almost impossible to succeed in the classes without the material. Further, all other course requisites are important. For example, students in chemistry classes may need to buy specific types of rulers or calculators and other equipment for their experiments. Medical students might at the very least need stethoscopes. The same is true of online education. When making the decision to take virtual courses, it is crucial to make sure you have the right equipment.

But the right equipment does not only refer to the requisite materials on the course outlines. It also refers to the way in which you complete your daily tasks. Since you might not have the availability of school labs and physical resources, you should ensure that your environment is set up in a way for you to succeed. Some of the items that you will need, in addition to the course requisites, are:

♠ a proper work space, ideally a desk with enough room for your computer, books, and other tools,

♠ a comfortable computer chair and foot rest,

♠ a good supply of pencils, pens, highlighters, and paper,

♠ add-on tools or equipment such as a comfortable headset, microphone, printer, keyboard, wrist rest, and mouse,

♠ high speed internet connection, preferably broadband or cable,

♠ a computer in good condition, one that has enough ram and hard drive space,

♠ a monitor or screen that is easy to read, and one that enables you to work for long periods of time with a minimum of eye fatigue,

♠ a computer that is free of viruses, malware and spyware,

♠ common everyday programs such as Microsoft Word, Excel and Paint, or Open Office which is quite serviceable and free (no licenses to buy),

♠ a versatile email program so that you are not stuck if webmail is down,

♠ Adobe programs such as Reader for PDFs and Flash Player for some videos,

♠ up-to-date browsers, FTP, Instant Messaging applications,

♠ blank DVDs or CDs for backups,

♠ and any other specialty programs or textbooks required to complete the courses.

Having the right equipment and using comfortable tools are essential for good learning according to our friends over at [The Internet Education Guide](#). Your environment is equally as important as doing satisfactory work. And one last piece of advice. Many of you may work on laptops which are great in small spaces and when you are pressed for time, but when spending longer periods at the computer, why not add a full keyboard, mouse and monitor? Your eyes, hands and back will be more comfortable while studying, and you will not be as tired when you are done.