

Getting Started

Getting to Know Your Textbook

The first thing you should do when you start a new class is to get to know your textbook. What are you going to learn? Where can you find certain kinds of information? How easy or difficult does the material seem to be?

Find the following parts of this textbook.

1. The **Contents** (sometimes called Table of Contents) tell you what kind of information is in the book. It tells you the chapters and page numbers where you can find that information.
 - a. How many parts does this book have? _____
 - b. How many chapters does this book have? _____
 - c. What is the main subject of each chapter in Part I?

 - d. On what page can you find an article called “Expert Says Popular Time Management Techniques Won’t Work for All?” _____
 - e. On what page can you find information on Creating Pie Charts? _____
 - f. On what page can you find information on keeping a Grammar/Error Log? _____

2. An **Appendix** (plural: *appendices* or *appendixes*) contains additional information related to the chapter. Sometimes charts, tables, or certain kinds of forms are given in this section of a book. Use the Contents to find the appendix (or appendices) of this book.

List three things you can find in the Appendix of this book:

3. Look through the chapters in Part 1.

Which chapter looks most interesting to you? _____

Why? _____

Getting Organized

It's important to have the right supplies to help you to organize your work. Here are some things that you may need to buy at the beginning of a new class or semester. Put a check mark by the things that you already have. If you are not sure what some of these supplies are or where to find them, ask your instructor or another student in your class.

- Three-ring notebook
- Dividers for your notebook (You can put your notes and handouts for each class in your notebook and separate them with dividers, or buy a separate three-ring notebook for each class.)
- A three-hole punch
- Lined paper
- Pens and pencils
- Highlighter pens in different colors
- Computer disks (or zip disks)
- A stapler and staples, or paperclips
- A sturdy backpack or bookbag

Setting Personal Learning Goals

At the beginning of a new class, think about your strengths (things you are good at), your weaknesses (things you need to improve), and your goals (what you want to learn in the class). It's useful to write these down and to look back on them from time to time. Try to think of at least three items for each category.

For example, a student using this book for a class might write the following:

My strengths: *I am good at coming up with ideas for writing assignments, correcting grammar mistakes in my writing, and taking tests.*

My weaknesses: *It is hard for me to speak in class. I don't usually ask questions or ask a teacher for help when I don't understand something. I sometimes don't remember what I read.*

My goals: *My main goals in this class are to speak more in class discussions, to talk to the professor or other students when I need help, and to improve my reading comprehension.*