

20 Things You can do to Start Your Class Off Successfully

- 1. Let your students know who you are**
Tell your students about your professional background and your current interests.
- 2. Get to know your students**
Have them fill out an index card with their name, hometown, intended major, an interesting fact, and a life-changing movie, book, or experience.
- 3. Nurture a sense of community**
Have students introduce one another.
- 4. Get a sense of who your students are and where they're at**
Ask your students to describe their expectations for the course, their concerns, and inventory their background and skills.
- 5. Go over your class' requirements and ground rules**
Make sure they receive this information in writing in an easy-to-read format. Be sure to describe your rules regarding academic dishonesty, absence, late work, missed tests, grading, and decorum
- 6. Grab your students' attention**
Use a news story, an anecdote, a puzzle, a question, a picture, or a cartoon to engage their interest.
- 7. Set high expectations—and tell students how they can meet those expectations**
Remind them about the course's significance—and how it will benefit them.
- 8. Ask questions in ways that work**
Don't simply toss out a question, gather a number of questions and list them on the blackboard
- 9. Have brief "coffee breaks" during class to re-energize your students.**
Shift gears and do something different.
- 10. Have a "bag of tricks" ready to go.**
These include showing a film clip or a series of pictures or cartoons or playing a song or introducing a brief news article or another text for them to consider.
- 11. Share your philosophy of teaching with your students.**
Do you, for example, emphasize active learning? Problem solving?



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12. Encourage intellectual flexibility and open-mindedness.

Have students role play or engage in a debate, or ask them to present conflicting views of the same topic.

13. Have the students generate ideas through a brainstorming session.

14. Present the students with two opposing points of view to compare and contrast.

15. Present the students with an unsolved problem or a dilemma in your subject area.

16. Conduct a survey.

17. Have students write a 1 minute paper--something brief in class.

For example, what was the most important thing that they learned and the thing they found most confusing.

18. Put students into learning cells to discuss the material or to solve problems

19. Have students discuss the required readings, and think through why certain works were included.

20. Ask students to formulate questions based on what was discussed in class.