**How to make the most out of self-isolation**

With Australian’s opting to stay indoors to reduce the spread of Coronavirus or COVID-19, an increasing number of TAFE students are finding themselves with extra time (and sanitiser) on their hands.

While undoubtedly, many will spend their newfound hours binge watching Netflix and hoarding toilet paper, this social distancing time is also a great opportunity to work on learning new skills, discovering Free TAFE courses, online study options and focusing on self-improvement.

So how can you make the most of self-isolation? We’ve put together our own list of suggestions for those that are after a little inspiration.

**Learn a new skill**

Dedicate some time to developing new skills like cooking, crocheting or writing. There are a range of fun and inspiring tutorials available on Youtube and online.

If writing your first novella is on the agenda we also recommend checking out Bendigo TAFE’s [writing course,](https://www.bendigotafe.edu.au/Courses/areas-of-study/Pages/Writing%20and%20Music.aspx) which is perfect for those wanting to study writing and sharpen their pen to paper skills.

**Enrol in a course**

Bendigo TAFE are offering a huge range of courses online starting in July, from agriculture to disability, and ustice to nursing, don’t let COVID-19 get in the way of following your passion.

Check out the range of online delivery courses starting up at [Bendigo TAFE.](https://www.bendigotafe.edu.au/Pages/default.aspx)



**Start a home DIY project**

Why not use the extra time to achieve something at home like paint a room, frame those holiday shots or get artistic.

For those with a creative flare, why not get accredited and enrol into one of Bendigo TAFE’s [design courses](https://www.bendigotafe.edu.au/courses/pages/cd.aspx) such as graphic design or visual arts.

**Go green and get active in the garden**

For those with gardens, we suggest trying your hand at a veggie patch, those without gardens can give a balcony or windowsill herb patch a go.

Students enrolled in Bendigo TAFE’s horticulture courses, agriculture courses and landscape courses worked with Guide Dogs Victoria on [**this amazing sensory garden**](file:///\\nas\Department_shares\Marketing_and_Corporate_Communications\Events%20and%20Sponsorship\Events%202020\Blog%20Articles\How%20to%20make%20the%20most%20out%20of%20self-isolation%20V2.docx) at the 2019 Melbourne Flower and Garden Show.

Why not try your hand at your own backyard or balcony sensory garden!

**Set personal goals and stick to them**

Whether your goal is to work your way to 100 sits up each morning, make the perfect soufflé or ace your vet nursing course, you can do it from the comfort of your home. Just make sure to set goals you’re serious about, dedicated practice times, and commit to them.

**Catch-up with friends online**

The best way to overcome self-isolation is to not actually get too isolated. Pick up the phone and give your friends and family a call, or better yet arrange a social hour with a group of friends on Skype or Face time.

We also recommend online study sessions with your fellow students, so whether you’re chatting homework with the VCAL crowd or talking business with your Diploma of Management friends, there are tonnes of mental health benefits to staying social.



**Learn a new language**

We’re serious! If Harry Styles can learn Italian in isolation then you can too. Maybe French, German or Latin are more your style? There are a bunch of free aps available to help with the lingual journey.

Carpe diem!

**Explore the world’s museums and zoos**

Just because some of the world’s most iconic zoos and museums have closed their doors to the public doesn’t mean enthusiasts can’t visit them online…we’re looking at you Certificate II in Animals Studies students.

[Melbourne Zoo](https://www.zoo.org.au/animal-house/) now has live cameras streaming a range of their enclosures, including giraffe, lion and penguin.

[The Louvre](https://www.louvre.fr/en/visites-en-ligne) has a range of virtual tours available online for those that like art but could do without spending the money on the travel fares.

**Start a new book, audiobook or podcast**

Take the opportunity to read that book that’s been on the shelf for years, listen to an audiobook or get informed with a podcast series.

Maybe a book to study cookery takes your fancy or a podcast on building design, the options are endless!

So make the most out of self-isolation and try something new, you won’t regret it!

You might be isolated, but you're not alone. If you’re ever feeling anxious, stressed or just want to talk, you can find help by contacting one of the below resources.

Bendigo TAFE Counselling:

• Email: [studentsupportservices@bendigotafe.edu.au](mailto:studentsupportservices@bendigotafe.edu.au)

• Phone: 1300 554 248

• Text Message: 0417 824 270 (Student Support Bendigo)

Lifeline: 13 11 14

Beyond Blue: 1300 224 636

Reachout: au.reachout.com