

Catering to Multiple Learning Preferences

The term "**learning styles**" refers to the idea that different people are more comfortable and successful learning in different ways. Under one popular model, there are three learning styles: visual, audio, and kinesthetic.

In recent years, many researchers have begun to question common wisdom about learning styles, pointing out that a great deal of popular advice to teachers is contradictory and poorly supported by data. Many experts now believe that a well-crafted mix of learning styles—in which lessons are reinforced through a variety of different methods—is actually the best approach for all learners.

While views on learning styles vary, one thing is certain: participants' personalities and personal situations play a huge role in determining how they prefer to receive information. One participant may have quit school at a young age and be unfamiliar or uncomfortable with a traditional lecture format. Another may have trouble following along in a discussion format and need clear materials to read at home later. Yet another may be more comfortable reading materials in a different language from the one the course was conducted in.

Since our goal is to foster a mindset in which participants are encouraged and inspired to continue to develop their security skills, strive to accommodate a variety of learning preferences throughout your training. For example:

- Don't just lecture and show slides for two hours! Offer a good mix of group discussions and activities.
- Provide visual aids in multiple formats. If you have a slideshow, consider including the same visuals in a handout. If you're sharing materials from [Surveillance Self-Defense](#), consider bringing copies in multiple languages or at least tell participants where to find them.
- Many people are uncomfortable discussing their own assets and threats. Don't put people on the spot, and be ready to shift the format if discussions aren't working. Use fictional examples to keep people from feeling like they're exposing themselves. (See an example of this technique in our section on [cultural sensitivity](#).)
- Different participants have different rituals and behaviors that they need in order to process information. People may need to get up and move around the room, doodle, or take frequent breaks. If it seems someone is distracted or not listening, don't be offended. Try accommodating their needs as well as possible.
- Many people cannot spare two hours to sit in one place and need to step away to take care of health issues, their families, and other obligations. Don't demand the same level of engagement you might expect from a traditional classroom, which risks signaling to the people who most need help that they aren't welcome.

Si busca la traducción al español de este artículo, haga clic [aquí](#).