

# Expert learners and learner agency

A suggestion for implementing the strategy

'Find out about UDL' from the Guide:

[Universal Design for Learning](#)

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## **Includes:**

What are expert learners?

Characteristics of an expert learner

Barriers to developing expertise

Who can be expert learners?

Reflection questions

Useful resources

Inclusive Education

From

Guide: [Universal Design for Learning](#)

Strategy: [Find out about UDL](#)

Suggestion: [Expert learners and learner agency](#)

Date

07 May 2025

Link

[inclusive.tki.org.nz/guides/universal-design-for-learning/expert-learners-and-learner-agency](https://inclusive.tki.org.nz/guides/universal-design-for-learning/expert-learners-and-learner-agency)

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## What are expert learners?

In a UDL context, expert learners are:

- ✓ **purposeful and motivated** (they can manage themselves when they get stuck, collaborate with others, focus on a task, are resilient)
- ✓ **resourceful and knowledgeable** (they can find and curate information, connect ideas to create new understandings, transfer understandings across contexts)
- ✓ **strategic and goal-directed** (they can break-down a task, manage deadlines, organise resources, communicate thinking).

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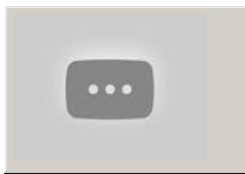
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## Characteristics of an expert learner

David Rose, Co-founder of the UDL describes the characteristics of an expert learner.



Video hosted on Youtube <http://youtu.be/8HykYqfn79c>

Closed Captions

Source:

[Joni Degner \(US\)](#)

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCDufgHYhSpBDQ6-GpUAtk-w>

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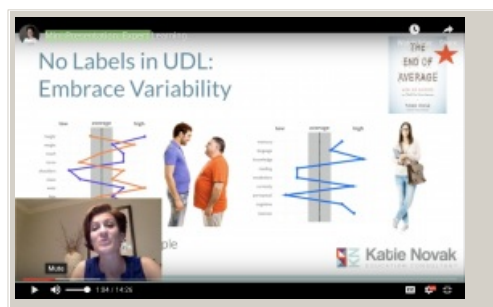
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## Barriers to developing expertise

Katie Novak describes how our current teaching practices often don't allow students to become expert learners.



Video hosted on Youtube [http://youtu.be/mYWR3nW\\_Eso](http://youtu.be/mYWR3nW_Eso)

No captions or transcript

Source:

[Katie Novak \(US\)](#)

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCkm3lEcokOluQFLNltqZ7gQ>

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## Who can be expert learners?

Developing expertise  
applies to everyone.

The goal of developing expertise applies to all participants: students, teachers, and all of the personnel in the system itself.

If everyone is focused on developing expertise as a learner, the context is suffused with great models.

**Anne Meyer, David H. Rose, and David Gordon**

Source:

[Universal design for learning: Theory and practice](#)  
<http://udltheorypractice.cast.org>

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## Reflection questions

How does the idea of expertise in learning impact on your thinking?

How could the idea of expert learners impact your practice?

How do students develop expertise as learners?

What attitudes and habits indicate that learners are developing expertise?

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## Useful resources



### Top 5 UDL tips for fostering expert learners

These tips can be used to support the development of expert learners.

Publisher: CAST

[Visit website](#)



### The goal of UDL: Becoming expert learners

Read time: 2 min

A succinct overview of the goal of UDL, aligned to UDL's three principles.

[Visit website](#)

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