



# Note-Taking

## In Class Skills

- **Commit to the class.** You will benefit more from classes for which you have prepared than those where you do not.
- **Concentrate and listen.** Use different strategies in different situations. Listening actively during lecture is the most efficient way to learn in class.
- **Capture key ideas.** Identify key words/themes. Relate details to the main point. Save your energy — don't write down what you already know. Listen for clues.
- **Connect ideas.** Paraphrase what you hear. Relate key ideas to what you already know, and look up unknown words. Adapt to challenging lecture styles. Evaluate the quality of your listening.
- **Size up.** What kind of note-taking strategies will work best in a given class? The same strategy may not be effective in all settings.
- **Use your notes for review.** Promote mastery by reviewing right after class, between classes, and before class.
- **Use abbreviations.** Make up your own, but be sure to record what the symbols mean.

## Taking Successful Notes on Readings

- **Write notes in your own words.** This helps you make connections with the material and makes it easier to remember. This also helps you avoid plagiarism when you use the notes to write a paper.
- **Avoid writing things down that you do not understand.** Mark the passage with a question and do what you can to clarify it before you move on.
- **Think and record in pictures.** If you can make a list, table, graph, or draw a picture, it may be easier for you to recall later.
- **Explain yourself.** Regularly explain the key ideas in the reading to a study buddy. When you can't explain something easily, you may want to review that information.

## After Class

- **Rewrite and reorganize your notes.** This not only allows you to create a neater, edited set of ideas for study, but also provides an immediate rehearsal to help you consolidate the information.
- **Highlight the most important ideas.** Underline or color-code the ideas that stand out as the most likely to appear on a test. Write notes in the margins that will make the information more meaningful to you.
- **Summarize the main ideas.** What were the main points covered in class? How did the class fit with the overall objectives of the course?
- **Identify any ideas that are still confusing.** Make notes about what remains unclear so you can look up the answers in your reading. Ask other students or the instructor for more information.

## Taming the Tough Lecture

### The Boring Lecturer

- Make more connections to what you hear.
- Ask questions that encourage examples.
- Give encouraging body language.

### The Fast Talking Lecturer

- Ask the instructor to slow down.
- Encourage the instructor to write down key terms.
- Focus on the major thrust of the presentation, not the details.

### The Obtuse Lecturer

- Prepare for class carefully.
- Ask for restatements.
- Have a positive attitude (think about this kind of instructor as eloquent rather than obtuse).

### The Disorganized Lecturer

- Look at the big picture.
- Form a study group.
- Increase connections.





# The Cornell Note-Taking Method

	<b>During Lecture</b>	
<b>After Lecture</b>	<i>Record as many facts and ideas as you can in a six-inch column. Learn to write a streamlined</i>	
<i>Reduce important ideas to key words.</i>	<i>version of the main points of the lecture by leaving out unnecessary words and using only key words.</i>	
	Topic: Getting the most from lectures. (Told story about students who wouldn't take notes...not taking notes = failure.)	
Take notes!	Ways to prepare for lecture:	Attendance concerns:
Prepare	* sleep	1. Miss test cues
	* eat properly	2. Develop bad habits
	* read ahead	3. Rely on others' notes
Attend class	* practice connections	4. Get behind
	Listening skills & styles	
	* Selective listening (don't write down everything)	
Selective listening	* Listen for concepts & terms	vs. * Tuning out on purpose
	* Read body language	* Daydreaming
	<b>After Lecture</b>	
	<i>Reflect upon the information you have learned. Examples: How do these facts and ideas fit into what I already know? How can I apply them? How is knowing this important?</i>	
<i>Recite out loud and in your own words the facts and ideas you are trying to learn.</i>	Am I properly preparing for lecture now? Do I practice selective listening? How often do I daydream?	
	<i>To prevent forgetting information, review and recite your notes frequently. A good guideline to follow is to review your notes nightly or several times during the week by reciting, <u>not</u> rereading.</i>	
	<i>Summarize facts. The summary should not be verbatim and should be in your own words.</i>	
	1. Summarize each page of notes at the bottom of each page.	
	2. Summarize the whole lecture on the last page.	
	Taking notes is crucial to learn information from lecture.	
	During lecture, listen for important or stressed concepts and ideas.	
	There is more to preparing for class than just showing up (that's important, too!).	

