

NOTETAKING STRATEGIES

Six Techniques That Will Help You Learn More From Your Classes

1. Use a binder
 - Use dividers to organize it
 - Use a hole punch so you can insert handouts from class
2. Don't try to take dictation
 - Professors speak 150 - 200 words per minute; we write about 25 words per minute
 - Leave out non-essential words
 - Make sure you write down important points
3. Leave a 2-inch margin along the left side of each page of notes
 - Use margin for adding questions during or after class
 - Use questions to help you learn your notes later for tests
4. Use a modified outline when taking notes
 - Write a topic on one line
 - Indent supporting details under it
 - Leave several lines after the last point for adding information from memory or from your textbook later
 - *Note that this flyer is written as a modified outline*
5. Use abbreviations
 - Eliminate vowels
 - Use word beginnings
 - Use standard symbols from math or science
 - Create your own abbreviations
6. Review your notes the same day you take them
 - Add questions in the margins
 - Add additional information you recall from class
 - When studying your notes after class, cover the notes, read the questions in the margin and see if you can recall the answers
 - Remember the “forgetting curve”
 - Most information is forgotten during the first 24 hours after notes are taken
 - Over a period of 9 weeks, reviewing notes the same day you take them can make the difference between forgetting almost 80% of the information and remembering almost 80% of it
 - Review Questions:
 - What are the six techniques that can be used for note taking which will enhance learning?
 - How many words per minute do most people speak?
 - What are the purposes for leaving a 2" margin on the left side of class notes?
 - What steps are used to take notes according to a modified outline?
 - What types of abbreviations can be used in note taking?
 - How much information is likely to be forgotten after 9 weeks if notes are not reviewed within 24 hours after they are taken?

* From Sherry K. Lynch, Ph.D., University Counseling Center, Virginia Tech

CORNELL NOTE-TAKING FORMAT TEMPLATE

Subject:

Date:

Main Ideas	Details
<p>Words or Phrases here (clues for Reciting, Reviewing, and Reflecting)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Can be used to provide an outline of the course, chapter, or lecture.• Organized by main ideas and sub-topics/details.• Can be as detailed as necessary.• Sequential -- take notes as they are given by instructor or from text in an orderly fashion.• After class, write a summary of what you learned to clarify and reinforce learning and to assist retention.• Can be used as study tool to:<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Define terms or explain concepts listed on the left (Words or Phrases).2. Identify the concept or term based on its definition.3. Get a quick overview and determine whether you need more information or need to concentrate your study on specific topics.• Can be used to provide a "big picture" of the course, chapter, or lecture.• Limited in how much detail you can represent.• Simultaneous -- you can use this method for instructors who jump around from topic to topic.• After class, you will probably need to "translate" notes into a Cornell format.

Summary:

There are a couple of ways that you can take notes. The Cornell method is best when the information is given in a sequential, orderly fashion that allows for more detail. The semantic web/map method works best for instructors who skip around from topic to topic, and provides a "big picture" when you're previewing materials or getting ready to study for a test.

The 5 R's of Note Taking:

During the lecture, **Record** legibly in the Details Area as many meaningful facts and ideas as you can.

As soon as possible, **Reduce** (summarize) these facts and ideas concisely in the Main Ideas Area. Summarizing clarifies meanings and relationships, reinforces continuity, and strengthens memory.

Cover the Details Area; using only your jottings in the Main Ideas Area, **Recite** the facts and ideas of the lecture as completely as you can, not mechanically, but in your own words. You may then verify what you have said.

Draw out opinions from your notes and use them as a starting point to **Reflect** on the course and how it relates to your other courses. Reflection will help prevent ideas from being forgotten.

Spend 10 minutes every day in a quick **Review** of your notes, and you will retain most of what you have learned.

CORNELL NOTE-TAKING FORMAT TEMPLATE

Subject: _____

Date: _____

Main Ideas	Details
Words or Phrases	

Summary:
