



Student Learning Services

Why Take Notes?

1. Professors share information not available in textbooks and help you to make connections to concepts in the textbook.
2. Notes are a storehouse of information for later use.
3. We remember more when we write things down.
4. Taking notes helps you to listen attentively and to think critically.
5. Studies show that people may forget 50% of a lecture within 24 hours, 80% in two weeks, and 95% within one month if they do not take notes.

Note-taking Skills

- 1. Listen actively**
 - a. Identify the speaker's pattern of organization
 - b. Identify the main ideas
 - c. Listen for changes in lecturer's voice
 - d. Watch for lecturer's gestures
- 2. Be organized**
- 3. Keep the syllabus, all course handouts, notes in a three ring binder**
- 4. Before Class**
 - a. Read the assigned textbook material
 - b. Review the last session's notes and skim the textbook
 - c. Begin notes for each lecture on a new page
 - d. Date each page of notebook
 - e. Identify the chapter being covered and the title of the lecture at the top of the page.
- 5. During Class**
 - a. Stay focused; don't let your mind wander
 - b. Participate in class activities and discussions
 - c. Watch for clues from instructor to identify important information: repetition, vocal emphasis/excitement, information written on the board
- 6. After Class**
 - a. Review notes with a classmate to fill in any gaps you may have (immediately after class is best practice)
 - b. Edit and revise your notes as soon as possible
 - c. Organize your notes using concept maps, diagrams, charts, matrixes, flashcards, etc.
 - d. Add recall or questions in margin for later review
 - e. Review notes regularly; information is retained better when learned in small chunks.

For individual help with these note-taking skills, please visit Student Learning Services in Room 110.



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Three Note-taking Styles

1. Outline Note-taking Format

The outline note-taking format is the most familiar note-taking format. Outlines help to keep your notes organized in a way that makes reviewing and studying easier.

- I. The Main Idea
 - a. Part of the Main Idea
 - i. Major Detail
 - 1. minor detail
 - 2. minor detail
- II. The Second Main Idea
 - a. Part of main idea
 - i. Major Detail
 - 1. minor detail
 - 2. minor detail
 - ii. Major Detail
 - 1. minor detail

2. Paragraph Style (Block Style)

Another note-taking format is paragraph style. This style can be used when the instructor does not structure the lecture in a way that makes main ideas and major details clear. By writing abbreviated paragraphs, you will be able to highlight, circle, or underline the main ideas when they become apparent to you.

With the paragraph style you do not need to write complete sentences; however, you should try to write meaningful phrases.

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3. The Cornell System

The Cornell Note-Taking System is a system developed to use lecture notes as a form of “self-test” by separating the note paper into two sections; a notes section and a cue section for testing your recall of the notes section.

How to use the Cornell System

1. **Use 3-ring notebook paper**
2. **Make a recall column-**draw a vertical line down the page two and a half inches for the left edge of the paper. The left column will be your “recall” column; on the right side, you will write your lecture notes.
3. **Make a summary section-** draw a horizontal line 2 inches from the bottom of the page. This section will be used to summarize the whole page of notes in your own words.
4. **After lecture-** Review your notes, then write down key phrases related to the material in that section. These “cues” will be the words that trigger your memory about the details of your notes.
5. **After review-** Test yourself by covering the lecture side of your notes to see whether you can recall the important parts of your notes from the cues in the “recall” column.
6. **Recite the information out loud as part of your review**
7. **Continue-** continue testing yourself by using the “recall” column cues until you can recall all the important details of your notes.

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Below is an example of the Cornell System:

(Recall Column)	(Notes Column)
3 periods of English	<p>Early History of the English Language English language time periods -Old English mid 5th century to 1100 -Middle English 1100-1500 -Modern English 1500- p.</p>
2 original peoples	<p>English in Britain -Original inhabitants -Britains (Celtic) -Picts (non-Indo-European) >lived in the North</p>
3 Invading peoples	<p>Invasions brought new people and languages -Angles-settled on N. 2/3 Eng. –called it Anglaland -Saxons-stled on S. 1/3 Eng. -Jutes-stled in Kent, Hampshire, Isle of Wright</p>
Gained control in what year?	<p>!- took these tribes 150 yrs to gain tot. control of England</p>
(Summary Section)	<p>The English language has an ancient history that has not only evolved from the original inhabitants' language but was also shaped by invading tribes from throughout Europe.</p>

This chart and information was copied and adapted from www.uml.edu

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