

NOTETAKING TIPS

Why Take Notes?

Notetaking keeps you alert and engaged in class and while reading. It requires you to listen or to read carefully, and keeps your mind and body actively involved in the subject you are learning. Well-organized, concise notes make studying and understanding the material easier when it comes time to review.

General Notetaking Tips

- Read the material BEFORE the lecture so you have an idea of the key concepts and are prepared to focus during the actual lecture.
- Always put your name, course title, lecture topic, and date at the top of the page of notes so you don't forget the topic of the lecture.
- Sit near the front of class to limit distractions and to focus on the instructor.
- Do not write down word for word what the instructor discusses.
- Be selective in what you choose to note and only write down items you feel are important enough to be on a quiz or on an exam.
- Take notes quickly, but be sure to capture the most important details.
- Try different systems to take notes and select the best match for you and the topics discussed. (Check out the Questions system, Cornell system, Informal Outline, or Concept Maps outlined in the *Notetaking Systems* handout.)
- Be flexible and vary your note-taking styles (Math notes will not be the same as English notes).
- Include examples to help support key concepts.

How to Write Notes Quickly

Abbreviate

- Avoid writing whole words as much as you can. This saves time and allows you keep your head up, focusing on the instructor.
Examples: important=imp., significant=sig.

Write telegraphically

- Write in phrases rather than in sentences.
Example: Do not write "The three types of goals are long term, short term, and immediate." Instead, write: 3 goals = long, short, imm.

Replace whole words with symbols

- This saves even more time.
Examples: important = * or !, Positive = +, Negative = -

For more information and support, contact:

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