

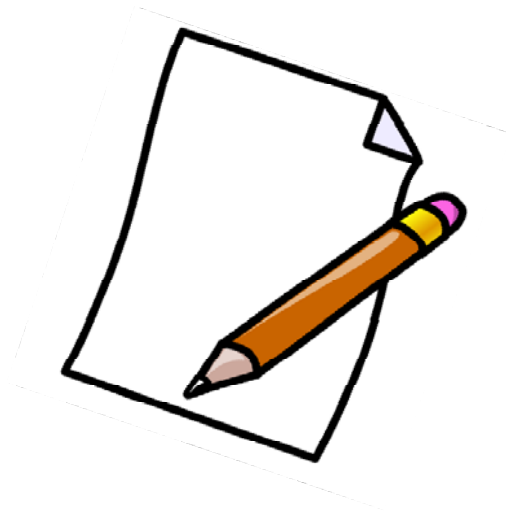
An Introduction to Note Taking



California State University, Fresno
Learning Center

Why Note-Taking Matters

- Note taking allows you to document information as it is given to you.
- Notes are more accurate than trying to recall what an instructor said in class by memory alone.



Key Tips

- Note taking is not just documentation, it has a process.
 1. You must “set the stage”
 2. You must “be present”
 3. You must know different “techniques”
 4. You must know how to “back up” what you write

Setting the Stage

- Show up to class prepared
 - It is boring to hear a lecture on something that you have no clue about
 - You should pre-read the chapter(s) that the next lecture will cover
 - It makes listening easier when you know what things mean
- Clarify your intentions, you should set goals for what you want to know

Setting the Stage

- Sit in the “T” or the action zone, because you are more likely to pay attention.
- Sound waves from the human voice begin to degrade at about 8 feet.



Be Present

- “Be present” doesn’t mean just showing up, but it is not allowing your mind to drift.
- You must accept your wandering mind
 - If your next social event is getting attention over “The Civil War” then take the opportunity to re-focus



Be Present

- Notice your writing; handwriting seems to get worse as your mind loses focus.
 - You do not need to be a court reporter, so take your time and make sure that your writing is legible



Be Present

- Active Listening
 - Hearing is not the same as listening
 - Listening is more complex because it is decoding and processing a message as the sender wants it to be perceived
 - Listening is teachable and learnable



Be Present

- Active Listening
 - Avoid the rush to judgement
 - It is common to stop listening as soon as you hear something you do not like. Focus turns to personal opinions rather than the actual message.
 - Instructors are responsible for giving information, but listening is your responsibility.

Note-Taking Techniques

- Be aware of your learning style
 - You will enhance your note-taking by being aware of your learning style.



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Note-Taking Techniques



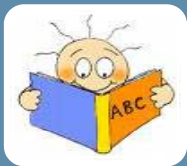
Visual Learners

- Color Code Notes or Flash Cards
- Use several colors of highlighters
- Rewrite information in diagrams and flow charts



Auditory Learners

- Read Notes aloud
- Study with a friend or group
- Go to lecture and ask questions



Reading/Writing Learners

- Rewrite your notes in new orders and by grouping
- Read over your notes and highlighted passages in books
- Practice writing out possible questions and answers



Kinesthetic Learners

- Use Flashcards- copy notes from class or take notes directly onto Flash Cards
- Bring something quiet to fidget with in class or while reading
- Take notes on a computer

Note-Taking Techniques

- Use key words
 - These are the important bits of communication:
 1. Names, concepts, technical terms, and numbers
 2. Words that emphasize a relationship (*both, more, agree, disagree*)



Note-Taking Techniques

- Use Pictures and Diagrams
 - Visually drawing out relationships benefits you because:
 1. It allows you to see the relationship in a format that is easily understood.
 2. While strategizing about how to draw the relationship you are getting a review.



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Note-Taking Techniques

- Use Graphic symbols for coding

○		
	[], (), ○, □ = info that belongs together	
	*, -->, = = info that belongs together	
	** , --> -->, == = extra important	
	? = Huh?, Lost	
	? = big trouble, clear up immediately	
○		



Different Models

1. Cornell
2. Mind Mapping
3. Outlining



Cornell Method

Cue Column

2 1/2"

(←-----→)

•This section is for key words or questions

Note-Taking Column

6"

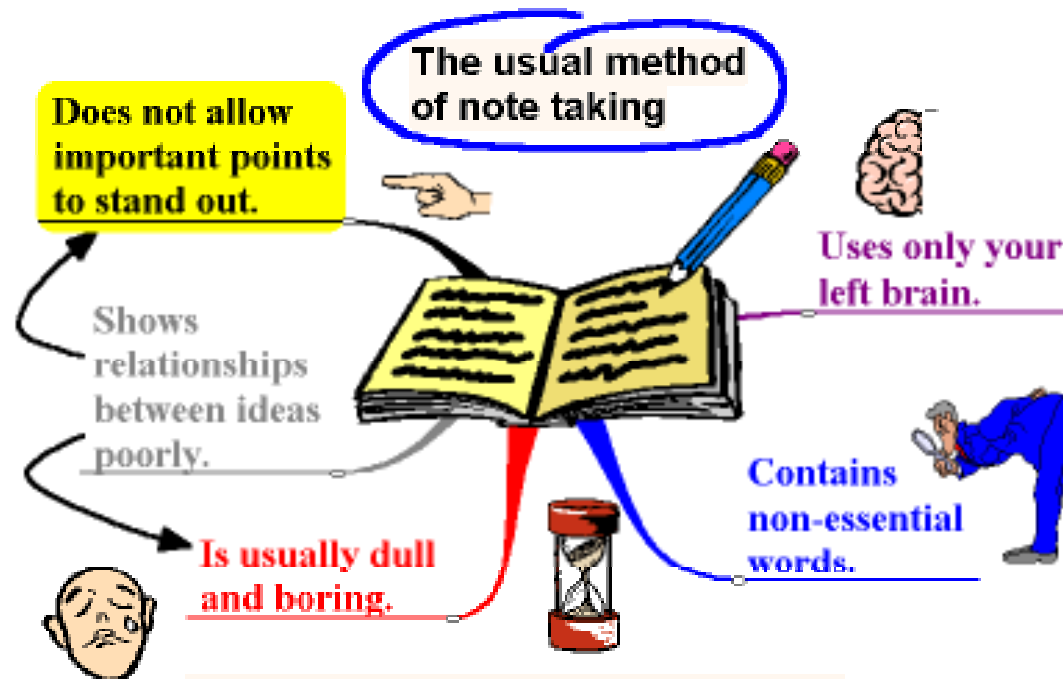
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1. Record: During the lecture, use the note-taking column to record the lecture.
2. Questions: As soon after class as possible, formulate questions based on the notes in the right-hand column.
3. Recite: Cover the note-taking column with a sheet of paper. Then, looking at the questions or cue-words in the question and cue column only, say aloud, in your own words, the answers to the questions, facts, or ideas indicated by the cue-words.
4. Reflect: Reflect on the material by asking yourself questions, for example: "What's the significance of these facts? What principle are they based on? How can I apply them? How do they fit in with what I already know? What's beyond them?"
5. Review: Spend at least ten minutes every week reviewing all your previous notes. If you do, you'll retain a great deal for current use as well as for the exam.

2"

Summary Section

Mind Mapping



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Outlining

First-level heading

I. Include major topics from the lecture or text in this heading.

A. Include definitions or key points that relate to the top level heading.

Second-level heading

1. List specifics in this heading.

Third-level heading

References

Carol Carter, J. B. (2009). *Keys To Success*. Upper Saddle River: Pearson Prentice Hall.

Ellis, D. (2009). *Becoming A Master Student*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company.



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