

GENERAL GUIDELINES FOR NOTE TAKING

ORGANIZE

- Keep one notebook per course
- Loose-leaf binders with pockets give more flexibility in organizing notes adding handouts

BE COMPLETE AND ACCURATE

- Write down key points, theories, facts, theorems, definitions
- Write down new words
- Write down examples
- Write down anything given in list form
- Write down what is written on the board
- Listen for main points

REORGANIZE AND REHEARSE

- Reorganize your notes visually (create outlines, diagrams or charts)
- Use different pen colors or highlighters for different types of material
- Try writing brief summaries of the information in your own words
- Review your notes regularly to improve understanding and prevent cramming
- Make up possible test questions

ENGAGE FULLY

- Be positive about learning.
- Always try and sit in the front row
- Plan to start listening as soon as the professor starts taking (don't let other distract you)

KEEP UP

- Abbreviate! Every subject has words that can be shortened. For example, use *b/c* for *because*, *w/* for *with*; or *re:* for *regarding*
- Leave space if you fall behind or get confused. Circle terms you do not understand. Write question marks where you want to clarify later, but do not stop taking notes.

EVALUATE YOUR METHOD

- If you feel your notes are not helping, ask your professor for help
- Seek assistance.

SPECIAL HINTS

BEFORE CLASS

- Do the assigned readings (reading before class will help you identify, understand and organize main points and content in the lecture)

DURING CLASS

- Listen for structure
- Listen for introductory and concluding phrases and transitions indicating how the lecture is organized ("Today's topic will include")
- Listen for repetition (Repeated items are important)
- Listen for questions (The professor will most likely answer them for you)
- Pay attention at the end of the lecture, usually the professor will summarize the most important points of the lecture ("Today I discussed....")

AFTER CLASS

- Compare notes with classmates to supplement or clarify what you wrote down
- If you are confused ask the instructor for help right after class, don't wait to long or you'll forget
- Check for accuracy of material, especially formulas, definitions, and spelling
- Ask the professor if you need to memorize equations and formulas
- Make sure you see connections between material from different lectures (try and see the big picture of how concepts relate)