Taking Notes
(and getting the most out of them)

Before class

Complete the assigned reading/project before coming to class.

If available, print and review PowerPoint slides before coming to class.

Where you sit is important: Position yourself in the front and center of the classroom (the “T-zone”).

Review notes from previous class before the instructor begins.

What were the main points?

How do the notes connect to today’s lecture?

Have the right materials ready before class begins:

Good pen/pencil

Notebook/folder devoted to the subject

Clean notepaper

WHY TAKE NOTES?

It helps you to concentrate in class.

Your notes are often a source of valuable clues for what information the instructor thinks is most important.

Your notes often contain information that cannot be found elsewhere.

Different Note-taking Methods

Cornell Method

Reading & Lecture Notes Together

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cue Column</th>
<th>Reading Notes</th>
<th>Class Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Take notes here during class.</td>
<td>Prior to class, take notes on your reading on one page.</td>
<td>During class, take notes from the lecture on the back of those pages.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summary Area</td>
<td>Combined, you will have notes from your reading and lectures in one place!</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Cue Column: Questions, Connections, etc.
Summary Area: Condense page to 1-2 sentences

TIP: A professor is about to make a main point when (s)he:

Pauses before or after an idea
Uses introductory phrases to precede an important idea

Uses repetition to emphasize a point
Writes an idea on the board
Review Your Notes!

**Review** your notes within 24 hours to move the information from short-term memory to long-term memory.

The best time to review is after the class. Take **10 minutes** to glance over your notes and clarify any unclear points, fill in abbreviations, etc.

**Create a mind map of your notes**

For some students, **recopying** their notes is the best method of review. Try it!

For other students, **typing** their notes works great.

Incorporate PowerPoint slides into your recopied notes.

Once a week, review all of your notes from the entire week. This review should be longer, at least 30 minutes. By doing a **weekly review**, you won’t have to spend as much time studying when exams come around.

**Other notes on notes:**

**Label** (course title/number/lecture topic) and **date** all of your notes.

Use **standard abbreviations** when taking notes.

For example:
- Ex = example
- B/c = because
- Btw = between
- W/ = with

**Graphic symbols** are also great for notes.

For example:
- *, ( ), [ ], +, =, #, @

Be aware of a wandering mind! If you notice you are starting to daydream and are not paying attention to the instructor, refocus. Concentrate on your handwriting. Stretch your legs.