A Guide On How To:
Take Notes

• What is note taking?
• Why should I take notes?
• What are basic steps?
Note Taking

What is note taking?

A note-taking system is a fixed set of steps a student uses to keep notes organized, make information easy to find, and prepare for your exam.

Why should I take notes?

The most important reason for taking notes is that it provides a quick, easy way to look for overlaps, which are often indicators of test material. Only 20-30% of learners learn best by hearing, so the other 70-80% of learners need to see and/or write down information in order to process it best (Carbo et al. 1986).

What are the basic steps to taking notes?

Just P.R.E.S.S!

1. PREPARE – Proper preparation for taking notes will help you prepare for the lecture, and be able to take in the new material.

✓ Review past notes while you wait for class to start.

✓ Anticipate the topics to be discussed in class by looking at the syllabus or the bolded words in the textbook.

✓ Prepare to actively listen by having your materials ready at the beginning of the lecture.

✓ Eating healthy and getting enough sleep will allow your body to concentrate on more complex tasks, like learning and listening.
2. RECORD – Always write the **date** and **title** of the lecture at the top of your page to keep your notes organized. Instead of trying to scribble everything down word-for-word, create your own **coding system** that will allow you to note main ideas and details quickly.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Example</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Use a capital letter for a key word:</td>
<td>E = electrical</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use math symbols for word:</td>
<td>+, -, ±, ∞, ≠, ÷,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use all capital letters for key ideas:</td>
<td>JPEG</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use circles, squares, clouds to highlight key information</td>
<td><img src="image" alt="Icons" /></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3. EDIT – Read and edit your notes within two hours after the class has ended. **Editing your notes** is an excellent way to **check** your own **comprehension**, and correct any mistakes you may have made. If something is confusing, make a note to clarify it with the instructor before the next class session. In the margin of your notebook page, make a reference that connects you textbook reading to class lecture notes. Topics in lecture notes, and in the textbook are usually included on the test.
4. STUDY – The energy you spend taking notes will be wasted if you don’t use them to prepare for your exam. Simulate the test by using the opposing page of your note page to create a self-test. By folding the paper along the column line, you will be able to ask yourself a test question and immediately check if your answer is correct. A good habit to develop is to review your notes on a daily.

5. SUCCEED!

References


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