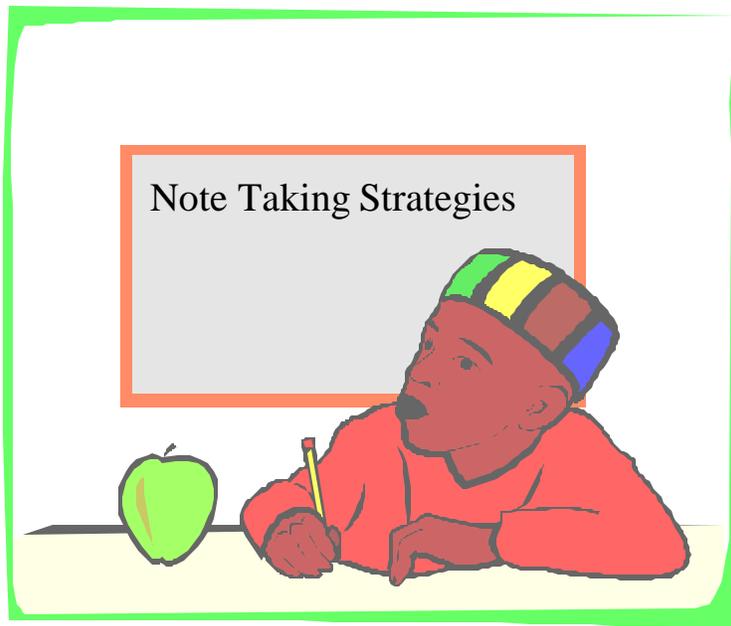




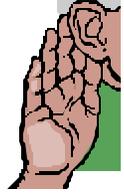
# Note Taking Strategies



Note taking most commonly is used to record oral presentations; however, note taking strategies may also be used to record notes from written sources. Part I will discuss preparation strategies; Part II will provide suggestions for remaining alert and recording oral presentations; and Part III will address maintaining note taking focus and explain note taking from texts.

## I. Preparation Strategies

- A. The first step to improved note taking is improved attention and listening skills. It is impossible to take good notes if you cannot pay attention while listening to a presentation or reading a book. Good listening skills also require that you attend to basic health needs and eliminate internal and external distractions.



## B. Basic Health Needs

1. The first step and the easiest of the strategies to implement is to pay attention to basic health needs. Health is an ongoing, continuous process. Therefore, it is important that good health habits become a part of each student's routine.
2. Use the following checklist to see if you are addressing all your good health needs:
  - a. Sleep
    - 1) \_\_\_ I am getting adequate rest and sleep.
    - 2) \_\_\_ I don't have trouble staying awake in class or when I read.
    - 3) \_\_\_ I follow a regular sleep routine. My sleep is not erratic.
  - b. Diet
    - 1) \_\_\_ I eat two or three balanced meals a day.
    - 2) \_\_\_ I do not overindulge in junk food or alcohol.
    - 3) \_\_\_ I do not smoke or use drugs.
  - c. Physical Condition
    - 1) \_\_\_ My hearing and vision have been checked within the past year.
    - 2) \_\_\_ When I am ill, I allow myself time for extra rest.
    - 3) \_\_\_ When I become ill, I seek medical attention.
  - d. Fitness
    - 1) \_\_\_ I exercise regularly.
  - e. Mental Health
    - 1) \_\_\_ I meet problems calmly and rationally.
    - 2) \_\_\_ I confront reality; I do not avoid it.
    - 3) \_\_\_ I do not worry excessively.
    - 4) \_\_\_ I handle stressful situations adequately.



## C. Eliminating Internal and External Distracters

1. Internal distracters are sources of distractions that originate from within. They include disinterest, lack of motivation, and low self-esteem.
  - a. Disinterest
    - 1) Work with classmates to maintain interest in the subject or task.
    - 2) Create interest by acquiring information about the subject from a variety of sources (lectures, texts, magazines, television, internet, other students).




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- 3) Apply the information to everyday life. This often makes the new information more relevant and more interesting.
  - 4) Actively use the new knowledge by asking questions, anticipating next steps, and talking about it.
  - 5) Use the new knowledge in other classes.
- b. Lack of Motivation
- 1) Identify specific ambitions or goals that may be fulfilled through success in school or in a class.
  - 2) Focus on the positive aspects of a course or an instructor.
  - 3) Picture yourself being successful.
  - 4) Make the information relevant to you personally.
  - 5) Use new knowledge in different ways.
- c. Self-esteem and self-talk. This is what we say to ourselves. Being aware of these messages brings our attitudes to a conscious level and will reflect our self-esteem. Self-talk can be negative, positive, or neutral.
- 1) Negative self-talk
    - a) Inefficient learners tend to engage in negative self-talk.
    - b) Comments may include “I’ll never pass this exam” or “I don’t belong in college.”
    - c) These students must become aware of this behavior and take steps to eliminate it.
  - 2) Positive self-talk
    - a) This is the process of making appropriate suggestions to oneself in order to positively influence how one feels.
    - b) Statements might include “I am very prepared for this exam” or “I can finish the research paper in time.”
    - c) Efficient learners tend to engage in positive self-talk.
2. External distracters are sources of distractions that originate outside the student. They include environmental factors such as noise, people, objects, and odors. Other external distracters are related to poor time management, organization, and study skills. Personal problems are another external source of distractions.
- a. Environmental Factors
- 1) The area in which you study should be free of distractions such as noise or the movement of people. Adjust the lighting so it does not glare or shine directly into your eyes. It should be neither too light nor too dark, and the temperature should be comfortable. Avoid sitting on the bed, couch, or an overstuffed chair because these are too comfortable.

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- 2) In the classroom, select a seat away from windows, doors, friends, wall maps, and clocks. Sitting in the front of the room and avoiding seats at the ends of aisles is helpful. Find the “power center” of the room by watching the professor’s actions and where other active students are sitting.
- b. Time Management, Organization, and Study Skills (Also see CAA Time Management and Study Skills handouts). Being organized and prepared to learn eliminates one strong distraction that may inhibit attendance and listening. If you are organized and prepared, that is one less thing to worry about.
    - 1) Organization for class
      - a) Think about the subject matter before class; those five minutes spent walking to class are a perfect time for this.
      - b) Arrive early to class so you can select the best seat for you.
      - c) While waiting for class to begin, review the previous day’s notes.
      - d) Take the appropriate materials to class: notebooks, books, pens, pencils, calculator, etc.
      - e) Complete assignments in a timely manner.
      - f) Do assigned readings before they are covered in class. You have to do them sometime; it is better to do them before class.
      - g) Take an outline of the readings (summary of main points) to class.
      - h) Prepare a list of questions from readings and previous notes; you will be ready to ask intelligent questions when you feel your attention slipping.
      - i) Organize course papers in notebooks or folder.
    - 2) Organization for study/reading sessions
      - a) Have a specific place to study or a place that can come to be associated with studying.
      - b) Develop a regular study schedule.
      - c) Organize your workspace and have everything you will need close at hand.
      - d) Choose a distraction-free area.
      - e) Buy your own books and supplies rather than borrowing them.
  - c. Personal problems are extremely distracting and can consume our attention in any situation. If you are having a problem that is interfering with your academic performance, do not hesitate to make an appointment with the counseling services on your campus.



## II. Alertness and Note Taking Skills for Oral

### A. Effective note taking in class begins with

### Presentations

staying alert

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1. To stay alert in class:
  - a. Get adequate rest so you are not tempted to sleep in class.
  - b. Sit where the action is.
  - c. Find areas of common interest between you and the instructor.
  - d. Ask yourself “Why is this information important?” and “How will it help me?”
  - e. Avoid daydreaming by writing down your thought and allocating time to it later.
  - f. Identify the speaker’s purpose and adapt to it. Is the aim to inform, persuade, or entertain?
  - g. Listen for central themes rather than for isolated facts. Make connections between the facts and themes or among different themes even if the instructor doesn’t do so explicitly.
  - h. Keep active during class. Take notes constantly. Ask questions (use a list of questions prepared ahead of time) and answer questions. During lag times in the lecture, you can write questions in your notes, underline important terms and concepts, or relate the lecture material to the readings.
  - i. Seek clarification from the instructor when necessary.
  - j. Develop an interest in the course by talking with other students who enjoy the class, by reading articles, or by watching television programs related to the subject.
  - k. Find points about the subject that interests you.
  - l. Relate the subject to something in everyday life.
  - m. Promise yourself a specific reward for your attentiveness.
  - n. If all else fails, take deep breaths to increase oxygen flow. Or remove one shoe. This sets up a temperature difference in your body that can help to keep you alert.



## B. The Actual Note taking

1. An important aspect of good note taking skills is knowing what to write down in the notes. Distinguishing important from unimportant information is a skill that improves with practice. Being able to identify key words and key points will help you determine what should be recorded.
  - a. Key words signal that the information itself or the information to follow is important and should be recorded. Key words may be content-related, directional, or clue words.
    - 1) Content key words relate directly to the subject matter being covered. For example, content key words in a history class might be the names of U.S. presidents from 1920 to 1948; in a psychology lecture they may be the parts of a neuron. Content key words often appear in bold or italic print in textbooks. And they may be listed in the summary sections at the ends of chapters in most textbooks. Copy these term lists and take them to class to aid in recognition and spelling.

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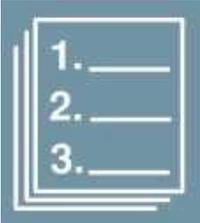
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- 2) Directional key words relate to specific things the student is expected to do; they are often action verbs. For example, the words “due” and “turn to” are directional key words.
- 3) Clue words indicate that important information is forthcoming. Examples of clue words are: “above all,” “next,” “in addition to,” “most importantly,” “advantages,” “disadvantages,” “reasons,” and “types.”
- b. Key points can easily be identified in assigned readings and with supplemental material provided by the instructor. Key points in a lecture often correspond to the major headings in a chapter. Bring a list of these headings to class and listen for them during the lecture. Some instructors write outlines for each lecture on the board or overhead projector. The key points will appear as major headings in the outline. Handouts provided by the instructor may also provide ideas for identifying key points.
- c. Cues and clues, which are often sent out by the instructor, help to identify important information. Listen for changes in the instructor’s voice. When important information is being presented, the instructor’s voice often becomes higher in pitch or speaking speed increases. Gestural cues are important indicators also. Writing on the board or overhead projector are obvious clues. Additional gestures that signal important material will follow are walking closer to the students, moving from behind the podium/desk, eye contact with students, leaning forward, or standing up.
- 
2. Forms of Organization
- a. There are a number of ways information may be organized in notes. The form of organization you use will depend on your personal preferences, learning styles, the manner which the material is presented, and the subject matter. You do not need to use the same form of organization for all note taking. Therefore, take a look at each strategy.
- 1) Cornell Method
- a) With this method, different parts of the notebook page have different functions. Notes are recorded on one half, key words and concepts are recorded in another area called the recall column, and a summary is recorded at the bottom of the page.
- (1) Advantages
- (a) Results in more organized notes
  - (b) Allows students to quickly identify key words and concepts
  - (c) Can easily be used as a study guide for exams
  - (d) Arrangement of information is aesthetically pleasing and easy to scan
- (2) Method
- (a) Divide the paper
    - Use loose-leaf notebook paper and write on one side of the page only.

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- Divide the paper vertically by drawing a line from top to bottom about 2" from the left side of the page.
- (b) Documentation
- Write the date and page number at the top of each page.
- (c) Record notes
- During the lecture, record the main ideas and concepts on the right side of the page. This is the notes column.
  - Rephrase the information in your own words before writing it down.
  - Skip one line between ideas and several lines between topics.
  - Avoid writing in complete sentences; use symbols and abbreviations.
- (d) Review and clarify
- As soon as possible, review the notes in the right column and clarify any ambiguous information.
  - Compare the information with your text and/or other students' notes.
  - Then pull the main ideas, concepts, terms, places, dates, and names from the right column and record them in the left-hand recall column.
- (e) Summarize
- Prepare a summary of the lecture material and record it at the end of the notes.
  - The summary may be in sentences or short phrases.
- (f) Study
- Use both sections of the notes to prepare for exams.

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¼ page	¾ page		9/10/02
	Subject date		p. 4
	Pg. #	Jericho	Jericho
Main Ideas	Notes	3 req'ments for dev'ment of cities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1<sup>st</sup> city developed</li> <li>• before Jericho people were mobile</li> </ul>
Key Words	Details	water agriculture protection	<p>Three req'ments for dev'ment of cities:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Water <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• cities built by lakes, rivers</li> </ul> </li> <li>2. Agriculture <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• division of labor: women planted; men hunted</li> </ul> </li> <li>3. Protection <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• walls of Jericho built to protect farms and water from invaders</li> <li>• walls built in 7800BC</li> <li>• city survived 800 years</li> </ul> </li> </ol>
		Summary: Jericho is significant as first city. Requirements for development of cities are water, agriculture, protection.	

## 2) Two-Column Method

- a) Like the Cornell method, the two-column method allows for easy scanning of notes to locate certain pieces of information.
- b) Method
  - (1) Divide paper
    - (a) Use loose-leaf notebook paper and write on one side of the paper only.
    - (b) Divide the paper vertically into two columns by drawing lines from top to bottom.
  - (2) Documentation
    - (a) At the top of the page, write: course, date, and page number.
  - (3) Record key words or ideas
    - (a) Record all key words, ideas, people, or events in the left-hand column.

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- (b) Information in this column must be very brief.
  - (4) Record descriptions or discussions
    - (a) For each key word or idea, record the corresponding description or explanation next to it in the right-hand column.
  - (5) Review and clarify
    - (a) As soon after class as possible, review the notes in the right column and clarify any ambiguous information.
    - (b) Compare the information with the book and/or other students' notes.
  - (6) Study
  - (7) Modify
    - (a) Add extra columns if necessary, depending on the material.
    - (b) For example, you may want to add an extra column for recording relevant information from your text at a later date.
- 3) Outlining
- a) This strategy involves placing the information which is most general at the left, with each more specific group of facts indented with spaces to the right. The relationships between the different parts are carried out through indenting. No numbers, letters, or Roman numerals are needed. Dash or indented outlining works best in classes other than physics or math.
  - b) Method
    - (1) Listen and then write in points in an organized pattern based on space indentation.
    - (2) Place major points farthest to the left.
    - (3) Indent each more specific point to the right.
    - (4) Levels of importance will be indicated by distance away from the major point. Markings are not necessary; space relationships will indicate the major/minor points.
    - (5) Advantages
      - (a) Well-organized system if done right. Outlining records content as well as relationships. It also reduces editing and is easy to review by turning main points into questions.
    - (6) Disadvantages
      - (a) Requires more thought in class for accurate organization. This system may not show relationships by sequence when needed. This system cannot be used if the lecturer speaks too fast.

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## (7) When to use

- (a) The outline format can be used if the lecture is presented in an outline organizational format. This may be either deductive (regular outline) or inductive (reverse outline where minor points start building to a major point). Use this format when there is enough time in the lecture to think about and make organizational decisions when they are needed. This format can be most effective when your note taking skills are super sharp and you can handle the outlining regardless of the note taking situation.

## (8) Example:

Psyc 101 2/2/02 pg 5

Extrasensory perception

- \_\_ Definition: means of perceiving without use of sense organs
  - \_\_ Three kinds
    - \_\_ Telepathy: sending messages
    - \_\_ Clairvoyance: forecasting the future
    - \_\_ Psychokinesis: perceiving events external to situation
  - \_\_ Current status
    - \_\_ No current research to support or refute
    - \_\_ Few psychologists say impossible
    - \_\_ Door open to future

## (9) Example of numerical outline:

Marge Feser- Intro to Prehistory  
10/25/02 – p. 3

Origins of agriculture

- I. Agriculture compared to hunting - gathering
  - A. Advantages of agriculture
    1. More efficient use of land
      - a. Agric: 1 sq km supports 50 people
      - b. H-G: 25-30 sq km support 5-6 people
    2. More stable food source thru year (w/storage)
    3. More free time in non-critical seasons
  - B. Disadvantages of agriculture
    1. Malnourishment
      - a. Farmers often deficient in protein
    2. Labor intensive in critical seasons
    3. High risk if crops/herds fail
- II. Identifying domesticates in arch'l record
  - A. Plants

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## 4) Mapping Method

a) Mapping is a graphic representation that relates each fact or idea to every other fact or idea. It is a method that maximizes active participation during the lecture.

## b) Advantages

(1) This format helps you to visually track a lecture regardless of conditions. Little thinking is needed and relationships can easily be seen. It is also easy to edit your notes by adding numbers, marks, and color coding. Review will require you to restructure thought processes, forcing you to check understanding. Simply cover lines for memory drill. Main points can be written on flash cards or note cards which can be pieced together into a table or larger structure at a later date.

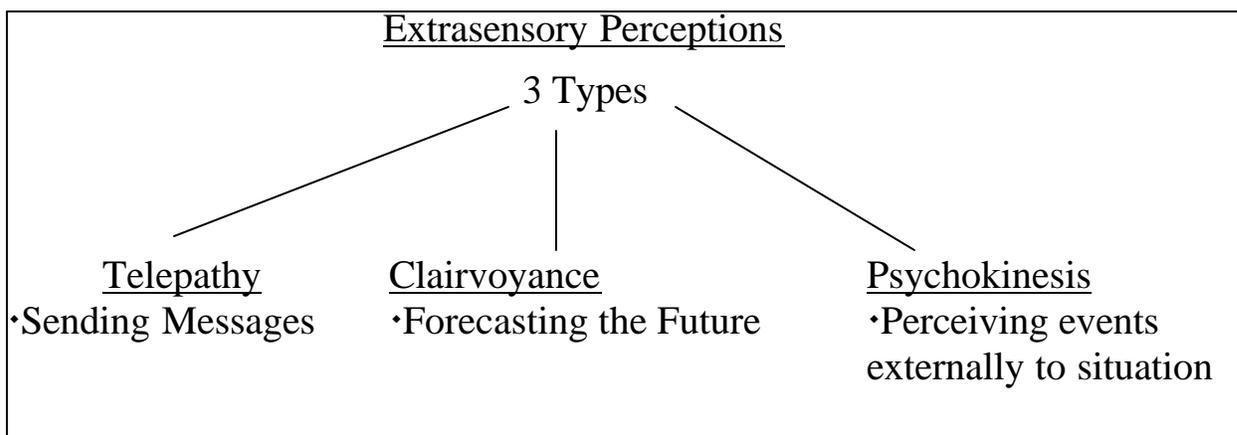
## c) Disadvantages

(1) You may not hear changes in content from major points to facts.

## d) When to use

(1) Use when the lecture content is heavy and well-organized. May also be used effectively when you have a guest lecturer and have no idea how the lecture is going to be presented.

## e) Example



## 5) Charting Method

a) If the lecture format is distinct (such as chronological), you may set up your paper by drawing columns and labeling appropriate headings in a table.

## b) Method

(1) Determine the categories to be covered in the lecture. Set up your paper in advance by columns headed by these categories. As you listen to the lecture, record information (words, phrases, main ideas, etc.) into the appropriate category.

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## c) Advantages

- (1) Helps you track conversation and dialogues that would normally be confusing. Helps you to avoid relevant content. Reduces amount of writing necessary. Provides easy review mechanism for both memorization of facts and study of comparisons and relationships.

## d) Disadvantages

- (1) There are few disadvantages except for learning how to use the system and locating the appropriate categories. You must be able to understand what is happening in the lecture.

## e) When to Use

- (1) Test will focus on both facts and relationships. Content is heavy and presented fast. You want to reduce the amount of time you spend editing and reviewing at test time. You want to get an overview of the whole course on one big paper sequence.

## f) Example - Chart format for a history class:

PERIOD	IMPORTANT PEOPLE	EVENTS	SIGNIFICANCE
1941-45	FDR	WWII	U.S.A INVOLVEMENT

## 6) Sentence Method

## a) Method

- (1) Write every new thought, fact, or topic on a separate line, numbering as you progress.

## b) Advantages

- (1) Slightly more organized than the paragraph. Gets more or all of the information. Thinking to track content is still limited.

## c) Disadvantages

- (1) Can't determine major/minor points from the numbered sequence. Difficult to review unless editing clears up relationships.

## d) When to use

- (1) Use when the lecture is somewhat organized but heavy with content, which comes fast. You can hear the different points, but you don't know how they fit together. The instructor tends to present in point fashion, but not in groupings such as "three related points."

## e) Example 1

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(1) A revolution is any occurrence that affects other aspects of life, such as economic life, social life, and so forth. Therefore, revolutions cause change. (See page 29 to 30 in your text about this.)

f) Sample Notes

(1) Revolution - occurrence that affects other aspects of life: e.g., econ., socl., etc. C.f. text, pp. 29-30.

g) Example 2

(1) Melville did not try to represent life as it really was. The language of Ahab, Starbuck, and Ishmael, for instance, was not that of real life.

h) Sample Notes

(1) Mel. didn't repr. life as was; e.g., lang. of Ahab, etc. not of real life.

7) Topic and Concept Cards

a) Topic and concept cards provide alternatives to loose-leaf paper for recording notes. Notes are taken or recopied on 3 X 5 or 5 X 7 lined index cards. The topic or concept is written on one side of the card and the explanation or description is written on the other side. Usually, only one topic or concept is written on each card.

b) Advantages

(1) Topic and index cards are highly manipulable. The cards may be arranged and rearranged into stacks of related items.

c) Example

<p>Agricultural Revolution</p>
------------------------------------

*Front*

<p>Farming has many advantages over hunting and gathering:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Stable food source</li> <li>2. Less undernourishment</li> <li>3. Efficient use of land</li> </ol>
--

*Back*

3. Note Management

a. Three-Ring Binders

- 1) Notes may be easily inserted and removed for reorganizing, recopying, or reviewing.
- 2) Supplementary course papers may be organized and added using a hole punch (This keeps all course materials in one place for easy studying.)
- 3) Dividers may be added to separate types of information (i.g. syllabi, quizzes, homework)

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- 4) Most binders have inner pockets for storage of papers.
- 5) Tips for using three-ring binders
  - a) Purchase a binder for each class. Buy certain colors for different classes. For example, use red for classes in your major, blue for science classes, green for history, etc. Using different colors makes it easier to locate the correct binders when they are needed for class or for studying.
  - b) Label the spine and front of each binder with the course name and your name. Include your address and phone number inside the folder in case it gets lost. Use sticky labels rather than writing directly on binder; labels can be removed and changed the next semester.
  - c) Purchase divider pages to put in each binder. Use them to separate different topics in the notes or to separate notes from other course papers like exams, handouts, and homework.
  - d) Remember to put the notes in the proper sections of the binder.
  - e) Purchase a hole punch so that other course papers may be added to the binder.
- b. Color Coding
  - 1) Color coding is used to distinguish different types of information and to organize notes. The strategy may be used while recording notes during a presentation, but more often it is used after class.
  - 2) Advantages
    - a) Provides an opportunity for reviewing notes
    - b) Provides a quick means of distinguishing important material to study for exams
    - c) Allows for better organization of notes
  - 3) Methods
    - a) Identification of information
      - (1) To distinguish different types of information, a different color of ink is used for each major topic.
      - (2) To distinguish the relative importance of information, key words, names, dates, or ideas that trigger memory are recorded in a color different from the supporting or descriptive information.
    - b) Organization of information
      - (1) Assign a highlighter color to each of the major topics and highlight all the information pertaining to each topic using its assigned color.
      - (2) This strategy is particularly useful for courses in which the instructors skip back and forth between different topics.

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- 4) There are drawbacks to color coding during a presentation. It takes concentration to remember to switch colors. Color coding to identify important information is more commonly done after a presentation. First, scan the notes to get a general idea of the content of the lecture(s). Then use a highlighter to highlight the important terms, people, dates, and ideas.
- c. Note SHRINK
    - 1) This strategy is used to shrink presentation notes down to their essence. It uses the Cornell style, with a note column on the right and a recall column on the left.
      - a) Survey the notes by reading the first sentence of every block or paragraph.
      - b) For each paragraph, summarize in one or two words what the entire paragraph is about. Underline or **highlight** these topics.
      - c) Examine all of the topics and determine what are the biggest “thought chunks” possible. Record those major concepts in the left column.
  - d. Note TALK
    - 1) This involves self-recitation in order to increase understanding of information and to commit information to memory. It is extremely effective.
      - a) Cover the main column of notes.
      - b) Look at each key word or phrase in the recall column (left) and recall all the relevant information from the notes related to that topic.
      - c) Put the information in your own words and recite the information aloud.
      - d) Uncover the notes to check for accuracy.
  - e. Note THINK
    - 1) This involves personalizing the new information in order to create interest and enhance remembering.
      - a) Consider personal experiences (at home, work) related to the material.
      - b) Consider how the information may be used or has been used in other courses.
      - c) Look for similar situations in society.
      - d) Record personal perceptions in a different color in the notes or in a special section.
      - e) Review the personal notes before an exam to aid recall.
4. Tape Recording
    - a. The purpose of taping lectures or meetings is to make a permanent and complete record of the presentation. Tape recording is done during the class or meeting, and the tapes are reviewed afterward.
    - b. Advantages

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- 1) Useful strategy for auditory learners, who often have difficulty recording the written language.
- 2) Tapes provide opportunity to concentrate on listening during a lecture and to record notes later from the tapes, using the pause and rewind buttons if necessary.
- 3) Tapes help record more complete and accurate notes.
- 4) Taping allows the individual to hear the material again, providing an effective review of the material.

c. Tips

- 1) Talk to the instructor to obtain permission for taping. Explain why taping is necessary and for what purposes tapes will be used.
- 2) Purchase the appropriate equipment. Buy the smallest recorder possible that still records with an adequate level of sound and clarity. Recorders that automatically flip to the other side of the tape without removing the tape are preferred. Buy the longest playing cassette tapes.
- 3) Experiment with volume controls before the lecture begins. Set the volume to pick up the speaker but not background noises.
- 4) Sit in the front of the room with your tape recorder in order to get the best sound quality possible. Unless absolutely necessary, avoid leaving the tape recorder unattended while taping.
- 5) Try not to distract other people or interrupt the lecture.
- 6) Record the course name and the date on the tape. If there is more than one tape per lecture, write “1 of 2” and “2 of 2” on the tapes.
- 7) Listen to the tape as soon after the lecture as possible, while the information is still fresh.
- 8) Fill in missing information in the handwritten notes based on the taped material.

### III. Maintaining Note Taking Focus and Recording Notes from Written Sources

A. Staying on target when recording notes sometimes be difficult. Task alertness skills will help you maintain suggestions may help students remain notes.



from written sources may organization plus management and your focus. The following oriented to the task of recording

1. Define the note taking task.
  - a. Determine what must be done to complete the task.
  - b. Make sure the directions and expectations for the task are fully understood.
  - c. Seek clarification of instructions from the instructor rather than from other students (e.g. you're not sure which sections are included in assigned reading).

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2. Divide and conquer.
  - a. Break the task into smaller, more manageable parts (Don't try to read a huge chapter at one time; read only a section or two at a time).
  - b. Develop a time schedule for completing each part.
  - c. Work on one part at a time, switching to another assignment when boredom sets in.
  - d. Reward yourself after completing each part of the task.
3. Feel strongly the urge to do the task.
  - a. Relate completion of the task to one's academic goals.
  - b. Relate completion of the task to one's short-term goals, long-term goals, and ambitions.
4. Get started at all costs.
  - a. Try to ignore difficulties you anticipate.
  - b. Don't think of things you would rather be doing. Or just budget time to do them and get them out of the way.
  - c. If other commitments are fogging your concentration, make a list of things to do later; this will get them off your mind temporarily.
5. Prepare an effective study area.
  - a. Have a specific place to study that can come to be associated with studying.
  - b. Organize your workspace (desk, books, notes, supplies) and have everything you will need close at hand.
  - c. Work in a distraction-free area
6. Concentrate.
  - a. Work on concentration strategies.
7. Reduce stress.
8. Evaluate.
  - a. Constantly, objectively, and realistically evaluate progress toward completing the task.
  - b. If necessary, enlist the assistance of an outside party (instructor, advisor, tutor, counselor, parent, trusted friend) for evaluating progress.

## B. Text Note Taking

1. Taking notes on assigned readings is not as common a practice as it should be. There are several advantages of text note taking. This approach:
  - a. Improves attention and concentration, which positively impacts registration of information in memory.

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- b. Encourages students to identify the main ideas and supporting details of the reading in order to better understand relationships among ideas and the overall organization of the text.
- c. Results in a shortened version of the assignment with all the essential information needed for review.
- d. Reinforces learning of the material being read and makes reading a more active process.

## 2. Strategies

- a. Read before taking notes.
  - 1) While it is not necessary to read the entire chapter before taking notes, you must finish titled sections or long paragraphs before selecting main ideas and paraphrasing. It is difficult to know what to record unless you have enough information from which to choose.
- b. Know what to record.
  - 1) Identify major topics based on section headings. Try to pick out one major idea per paragraph along with a few supporting details. Look for words in bold print or italics.
- c. Be selective in what you record.
  - 1) Remember that the goal of note taking is to produce a shortened version of the reading. This is a skill that improves with practice.
- d. Use your own words.
  - 1) Information should be paraphrased before it is recorded in notes. The time spent trying to understand a passage and recording the main ideas in your own words is the single most important investment of time you can make. The chances of remembering are greater if the work is in your own words.
- e. Work quickly and efficiently.
  - 1) Note taking need not be, and should not be, painful and time consuming. Read, think, write, and move on.
- f. Use an appropriate form of organization.
  - 1) Select a form of organization that will permit quick and active recall of the main points. The form should also allow you to see associations among ideas. The Cornell Method is a good choice.

## C. Important Tips To Remember

- 1. The most effective order of activities when taking notes is: listen, look, think, understand, paraphrase, then write.
- 2. The following information should be recorded:
  - a. Information not in assigned readings

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- b. Explanations of obscure material that students might not understand
  - c. Demonstrations or examples that provide greater understanding
  - d. Background information that puts the material in context
3. Don't waste time writing down details and copying tables that can be found in the book and copied later. Instead, write brief notes about the subject discussed.
  4. Avoid writing in full sentences.
  5. When in doubt about the importance of information, write it down. Check its significance later.
  6. Write on your own paper. There is not enough space to take notes on handouts.
  7. Don't be stingy with paper. Skip lines or leave spaces for adding information or writing questions later.
  8. Be cautious when loaning your notes to another student. Give him/her a copy instead of your notebook. Lost notes are irreplaceable.
  9. Make your own notes. You may want to supplement your notes with those of another student, but don't rely solely on notes taken by someone else. The notes may not be as complete or as accurate as your own, you may not understand another person's shorthand or symbols, and another person may not record things s/he already knows but you don't.
  10. Always date your notes. Dating helps one to find certain pieces of information and to organize notes.
  11. Always put page numbers on your notes. This is useful if notes are dropped and scrambled out of order.
  12. If you recopy or reorganize notes, be sure to renumber and redate the pages.
  13. Remember to take a break when you need it!

**Go To It!!!!!!!**



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