

The Art of Note Taking

1. *Make sure you are up to date on required readings, home-works and other assignments and understand them. If you don't understand any given concept please schedule an extra help session(s), see a peer tutor or take other corrective action as necessary.*
2. *If possible, sit near the front and center of the class. You will be less likely to become distracted and will probably find staying focused easier.*
3. *Use a binder instead of a traditional notebook. This way you can add, rearrange, or rewrite pages of your notes, insert handouts and assessments in the appropriate chronological order and review the material covered in the chapter/unit much easier.*
4. *Put headings and the date on all papers. Organize them chronologically in your binder.*
5. *Think about what is being said before you write anything down. Do not write down everything the teacher says. Pick out important phrases, terms, and concepts to focus on.*
6. *Record any examples the teacher may give while lecturing. Examples are extremely important in creating connections in your brain and in helping to jog your memory while studying.*
7. *Look for cues that teachers give to indicate that something is important. For instance, they may repeat something a few times, change the volume or tone of their voice, write it on the board or overhead, and/or creates lists for you. Be sure to ask them to repeat what they have just said if you miss the initial cue but later realize that you should be writing the material down.*
8. *Leave some space between portions of your notes so you can make additional comments as you study or read the text. This is called annotation.*
9. *Re-write or even re-TYPE your notes. Not only will your notes be much more organized and make studying easier, but the practice of re-writing notes gives you another opportunity to think about the material as you write or type it again. Make sure that you re-write them in a timely manner. The more time that passes between taking the original notes and re-writing them, the less effective this strategy is.*
10. *Review these notes often. The more times you see them, the easier it is to commit them to memory and the less time you will spend studying them prior to the test.*