



## Note-Taking: So much more than just an in-class activity

Good note-taking skills are an essential tool for success, useful in your classes, student organizations, and career. It is one thing to write down information on paper during lectures, but quality notes allow you to record the information in your own words, organize the new material, and process and integrate new knowledge. Note-taking is more than just an in-class activity. For the most benefit, use your note-taking skills before, during, and after class.

### BEFORE CLASS

**Review the text:** This will give you a heads up on the terms, concepts, and information that will most likely be covered in the lecture. It can also give you an idea of how to structure your notes.

**Identify any unfamiliar or difficult content:** If you find any terms, concepts, or information confusing, you will know to take more specific notes during the lecture. You can also be sure to ask questions so that the instructor can clarify the information.

### DURING CLASS

**Format your notes:** Find a style of note-taking that works best for YOU and the course. This might be using one style or a combination of styles so that your notes are the best resource they can be!

**Record examples & the most important information:** Don't worry about recording or writing down every word the instructor says or having correct grammar and spelling. Write down the most important information, main idea/terms, and examples discussed in class. If the professor writes something on the board or emphasizes a specific concept, write that down.

### AFTER CLASS

**Review within 24 hours:** To minimize forgetting and maximize information retention, review your notes within 24 hours after your class.

**Fill in the gaps:** During class, you might not have been able to write down all of the information. Fill in the gaps by utilizing your text, classmates, or by meeting with a professor during office hours. This is also a chance to fix any spelling or grammar errors you might have made while quickly recording notes.

**Summarize the information:** At the end of your notes for each class, write a short summary or synopsis to what you learned in class. This will help you focus back on the main ideas of the lecture and can serve as a quick review before your next class to help refresh the content covered. Ask yourself, "What was the main idea of the lecture?"

- You can't take notes if you aren't in class. Attend class every day.
- Laptops are great, but studies show that students who write their notes by hand recall and understand course material better.
- Try different note-taking methods before deciding which works best for you and each of your courses.
- Add color, graphics, & charts to personalize your notes & draw attention to the important facts, statistics, and terms.