

Note-Taking Skills and Strategies

The Center for Excellence in
Teaching, Learning and Advising

Skills and Strategies

- ❑ If the instructor writes something on the chalkboard/overhead or repeats an idea, then it is usually a key point and should be written down.
 - ❑ Try to use a three-ring binder; it allows for more flexibility in rearranging notes and handouts.
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Skills and Strategies

- ❑ Try to sit towards the front and center of the class where you will be less distracted and can best hear the professor and have a good angle on any visual aids that may be used.
 - ❑ Do not rely on someone else's notes; you may not understand everything that s/he has written down, and you learn best by taking your own notes.
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Skills and Strategies

- If the instructor talks fast, it may help to bring an audio recorder, and record the lecture while taking notes. After the lecture is over, you can replay the lecture, and fill in missing sections in your notes.
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Skills and Strategies

- ❑ Complete reading assignments or homework questions before class. It is easier to take notes when you know what the instructor is talking about.
 - ❑ Date your notes, and add titles and subtitles when you move on to a new topic for easy referencing.
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Skills and Strategies

- ❑ Write down any new terminology, along with the definition, that the instructor may present.
 - ❑ Make sure that you write legibly. If you cannot read your notes later, they will be useless. If you have sloppy handwriting, it may be wise to type your notes so that they are easier to read.
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Skills and Strategies

- ❑ If you missed what the instructor said, ask him/her to repeat it, or go to the instructor after class and ask for clarification. If you are in a rush, ask the instructor at the beginning of the next class, or try to find the answer from a friend or the text.
 - ❑ Compare notes with a classmate to make sure you did not miss any important points.
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