

Note-Taking Strategies for Students

Taking effective notes in class is a skill that can be practiced and improved upon throughout your journey through college. Listed below are tips that assist students in selecting main ideas and creating structures that support knowledge acquisition and retention.



1. Complete readings before class

Being familiar with the material helps in differentiating what is important from what isn't when in lecture.



4. Avoid multitasking

To process and encode information into long-term memory requires undivided attention. For additional suggestions, please refer to the KCLC handouts, "Tips and Strategies to Enhance Concentration" and "How to Effectively Use Technology"



2. Keep notes organized in one place

Store notes electronically (i.e. Dropbox, Google Drive, Evernote) or in hard-copy (i.e. notebook or binder) to improve access and reduce misplacing them.



5. Summarize and paraphrase

Focus on capturing main ideas and themes of what is being taught instead of trying to take notes verbatim. Writing every word that you hear is an ineffective method of learning



3. Insert the date and leave empty space

Create a habit of dating each page for easy reference later, and identifying a section for additional comments, clarification and thoughts that may arise later.



6. Review your notes after class

Immediately after class, clarify questions and check that your ideas flow and are easy to follow. In addition, review notes again before the next class to help with memory retention.

I. Title
1. Subject
a. Item 1: Description
b. Item 2: Description
c. Item 3: ...
2. Subject 2
II. Title 2
...

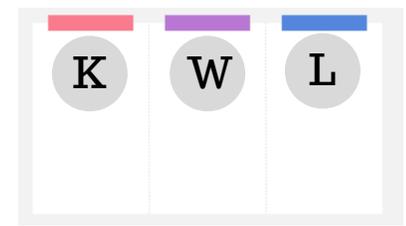
7. Outline

Use numbers, letters, Roman numerals, bullet points or indentations to organize information into categories and subtopics, in order to improve knowledge acquisition and retention.



8. Use the Cornell Method

If you're unsure of how to take notes, refer to the KCLC "Cornell Method" Handout, which separates your page into key points, general ideas and a summary.



9. Use the KWL method

Improve note-taking organization by adding 3 columns to your sheet that are labeled,
 ° What I **know**
 ° What I **want** to know
 ° What I **learned**