



Note-Taking and Textbook Reading

Texas Wesleyan University
Academic Success Center

Why Take Lecture Notes?

- Taking notes forces you to listen carefully
- While reviewing notes provide a gauge to what is important in your text
- Personal notes are often easier to remember than the text
- Writing down important points helps you remember

The Cornell Method

- The Cornell method provides a systematic format for condensing and organizing notes. This method allows you to incorporate other methods that you are comfortable with.
- Method- Rule your paper with a 2-inch margin on the left leaving a 6-inch area on the right in which to make notes. During class, take down information in the 6-inch area. When the instructor moves to a new point, skip a few lines. After class, complete phrases and sentences as much as possible. For every significant big piece of information, write a cue in the left margin. To review, cover your notes with a card, leaving the cues exposed. Say the cue out loud, then say as much as you can of the material underneath the card. When you have said as much as you can, move the card and see if what you said matches what is written. If you can say it, you know it.
- * You may also use your notes to make flashcards. Use the cues on the left side as one side of a flashcard and your notes on the right for the other side of the card. Rewriting the information onto the note cards helps you retain the information and the flashcards are great for studying alone or with a partner.

The Cornell Method: Example Page

Subject	Date
Cues	Notes & Details
Summary	



The Outlining Method

- **Works best when:**
- **L**ecture is organized
- Lecture is sequential
- Lecture contains major points and details
- **More difficult when:**
- **S**peaker talks very quickly
- Speaker is difficult to understand
- Rewriting will usually be necessary
- *Not as good for science, math, and physics.*

The Charting Method

- **This method helps organize information that might normally be confusing. It also reduces the amount of writing necessary and provides an easy way to review for study.**
- **Method- Determine the categories to be covered in the lecture. Then set up your paper in advance with columns headed by categories. Fill in the information as you listen to the lecture.**

- **Example:**

Fields in Psychology		
Field	Degree	Setting
Counselor	LPC, Ph.D, Psy.D, LMFT, LMSW, NCC	Private practice, school, hospital, clinic
Psychiatrist	M.D.	Private practice, school, hospital, clinic
Psychologist	Ph.D, Psy.D, Ed.D	Private practice, school, research

The Charting Method

- Works best when:
- Lecture format is chronological and/or factual
- Lecture includes comparisons and contrasts
- Information may normally be confusing
- More difficult when:
- Information does not fit into distinct categories
- Information is more abstract
- *Good for history and social sciences.*

The Mapping Method

- **Ma**pping is a method that emphasizes concept formation and relationships among concepts. Each fact or idea is related to another fact or idea. It is a graphic representation of the content of a lecture, textbook, or plan for an assignment.

- **Example:**



The Mapping Method

- Works best when:
- Lecture involves relationships
- Lecture is detailed and organized
- Lecture requires you to see 'the big picture'
- More difficult when:
- Lecture is distinct and chronological
- Speaker is disorganized or all over the place
- *Good for many science classes.*

In Class Cues: What is Important to Write Down?

- **In**structors often give clues to what is important:
- Information written on the board
- Information that is repeated
- Information that is emphasized:
- Tone of voice and/or gestures
- Amount of time devoted to the information
- Word signals ('The two kinds are...' or 'The conclusion was...')
- Summaries
- Reviews

General Tips for Notes and Studying

- **Before Class**
 - Complete assigned reading
 - Review notes from the previous class
 - Print and review notes that the instructor gives
 - Have your materials ready (paper, pen, pencil)
 - Sit where you can clearly see and hear the lecture

General Tips for Notes and Studying

- Develop your own system for taking notes
- Make your notes brief- use a phrase rather than a sentence
- Use abbreviation and symbols, with your own short-hand
- Put notes in your own words that you will understand later **except** with formulas, exact definitions, and specific facts
- If you miss something, indicate it and leave space to fill in later
- Leave room for coordinating your notes with the text, or adding information later
- You don't need to write down everything- pick out key points and main ideas (the 'meat')
- Have a uniform system that works for you with consistent abbreviations and punctuation

General Tips for Notes and Studying

- **A**fter Class
- Your notes are **USELESS** unless you use them
- Review your notes within 24 hours of taking them
- Recopy or type-up your notes to help reinforce the information
- Once a week, review all notes from the entire week
- Turn your notes into a study guide or flash cards
- Get together with peers to look over and compare notes for things you may have missed or need clarified

Things to Remember:

- Find the system that works best for you
 - Use your notes to study at least 2 hours per 1 hour course
 - Your notes can be used to make great study tools
 - Tailor your notes and study tools to best suite your learning style
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- *Don't know what your learning style is?*
 - **Attend a workshop or see the Learning Specialist to take an assessment!**

SURVEY/ATTENDANCE

https://txwes.co1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_3OY3AhXrlkmaWoJ

