

Note-Taking Strategies

Getting the most out of high school and college, means studying hard and using your time in class wisely. Make the most of your time in class and out with an effective note-taking strategy.

Stay Organized

It may seem obvious, but your class notes can only help you if you can find them. When you're taking notes be sure to:

- * Keep all your notes for one class in one place.
- * Date and number pages to keep them in order and make it easier to refer back to them.

Before Class

Review the materials assigned for that class period thoroughly. Bring a list of questions you may have from the reading and be sure to get answers.

During Class

Make the best use of your class time by having a note-taking method. **The Cornell Note-Taking System** is one that has been proven effective by countless high school and college students.

Start by using the main section of your notebook page to take down your notes during class. Be sure to leave space on the left side of the page and the bottom. Things to keep in mind:

- * Get the speaker's main points. Don't write down every word you hear.
- * Leave blanks in your notes to add explanations later.
- * Organize as you write. Pay attention to cues such as repetition and emphasis.
- * Indicate main points and supporting points as you go.
- * Jot down key vocabulary, important facts, and formulas.
- * Ask questions. If you're confused it's better to ask while the material is fresh in your mind.

After Class

As soon as you can after class, review your notes and fill in any blanks. Underline, highlight, and use symbols to sort through the information. If you don't understand something, get help from your teacher or classmates.

After you've reviewed all your notes from class, in the left-hand area of the page write down key words and questions your teacher might ask on a test. At the bottom of each page write a summary of the notes on the page. **This helps you digest what you've learned, and will improve your memory of the notes in the long term, for tests down the road.**

For Review

Once you've done all of the above, you'll find you've created your own personalized study guide. Cover the main sections of the page and use the key words and questions in the left margin as a quiz.

Stick to It

Review your notes the day you take them, and all your notes once a week, and **you'll hardly need to study when tests come around. You've been doing the work all along!**

Try out the Cornell system, but if it doesn't work for you, experiment with other methods. Ask your classmates how they take notes or ask a teacher for advice. Taking good notes requires practice like any other skill. And the more you work at it now, the more prepared you'll be later in college.