



Classroom Listening and Note Taking

How do I get the most out of my classes?

Preparing Before Class

Do the assigned reading before the class. You will understand the lecture more fully and know what questions to ask to clarify what you've read.

Review your notes from the last class, so you will be able connect new material to what you already know. This makes new ideas easier to remember.

Listening in Class

Don't just sit there and listen to your instructor... get mentally involved in the lecture!

- Choose a seat where you can see and hear your instructor, away from distractions (and distracting people).
- Hold a pen in hand, ready to take notes. It helps you focus.
- Think about what the instructor or a classmate is saying.
- Remember the questions you gathered while preparing for class and ask them.
- Try not to let your mind wander. Pull your concentration back when you have a lapse.

Why Should I Make Notes In Class?

- Relying on your memory is not the best option.
- Making notes provides you with a summary from which you can study and helps you remember the ideas you learn.
- Instructors and classmates add real-life ideas, examples, and explanations that help you remember the information better.
- Taking notes helps keep your mind on topic.

Written Notes

- Develop your own note taking style so that you will understand your notes when you review them later.
- Use headings and sub-headings.
- List items with numbers (i.e. 1,2,3, etc.).
- Use a phrase or word, rather than a sentence... aim for main ideas.
- Put an asterisk (*) beside important points.
- Develop your own short forms (e.g. Mktg for marketing).
- Don't rewrite your notes to make them look better, but do rewrite your notes if it will help you understand the material better.



Helpful Tips

Watch for signals. The instructor may use these to help you find main ideas (which may subsequently turn up on tests). For example, the instructor may:

- Repeat a point several times.
- Speak loudly to emphasize.
- Write on the board or put on an overhead.
- Distribute a handout.
- Say things like: "There are 3 reasons for this..." or "The most important thing to remember is..."

Review notes on the same day. Recalling material that day tells the brain that this material must be stored for future use. Also, you can add details you may have missed to your notes. Finally, you can compare your notes with examples from the text.