

Summary for Taking Effective Notes

Why take notes?

Helps you organize what you hear.

Helps when you study for exams.

Helps maintain attention.

May be only source of information.

How do you take notes? Be prepared:

Study and read prior to class.

Have a purpose for listening.

Be positive; you are not there to be entertained but to learn.

Have a system; be organized.

Follow the lecturer's pattern.

Use a note column and a recall column.

Use symbols; make sure you will know what they mean later.

Sit near the front of the class. Keep your eyes on the instructor.

Helps concentration.

Eliminates some visual and auditory distractions.

Listen before writing.

Listen, understand, evaluate, organize and then write. Listen long enough to be sure you understand, then write.

Listen for signal words, "first...., most important..., finally...".

Leave spaces if you miss something; fill in later. Be selective, brief, and concise; omit anecdotes, long examples.

Associate your past experiences and knowledge with what the instructor is saying.

Power Point Lectures:

Even though your attention is concentrated on the material on the screen in power point presentation, it is extremely important to listen to and record the instructor's comments on the material.

Power point lectures are sometimes available on Canvas or the web before the lecture. If so, it is very helpful to read over the presentation before class and to take notes on the instructor's comments during class.