

Note Taking Tips



Everyone is different and will make notes in different ways, that's why it is important to make your own notes in your own words. You may find it difficult to understand someone else's notes as they write or think in a way that is different to you. If you have been absent for example and ask a friend for a copy of their notes remember to read them over and copy them down in your own words to make sure that you understand the topic.

You will probably use three types of note taking:

- ***From Printed Handouts***: highlight areas of interest and rewrite in your own words.
- ***During Class*** : summarise main points discussed and rewrite and add to later. Note references for additional sources of information.
- ***During Research*** ie, using books, web sites, journals etc. Again highlight areas of interest, rewrite in your own words - don't be tempted to copy word for word. Remember to note down references.

Why Take Notes?

- 1) **To aid understanding of a subject:** If you can't write notes in your own words you may not have fully understood the subject and may need to do further research or ask for help from your lecturer.

- 2) **As a memory aid:** Rewriting notes in your own words aids memory. Most people lose their retention of information at the following rate:

47%	within 20 mins of a class
62%	within 1 day.

- 3) **To help with exam revision.**
- 4) **To gather information for an essay or project.**

Tips for Taking Notes:

- Keep notes brief.
- Keep them in order – use numbering, headings, colour coding
- Use separate files for each subject and file dividers to separate topics.
- Use your own words.
- Leave space to add more information later if required.
- Abbreviate words and sentences particularly when taking notes during a class. Write out in full later.

- Remember to note sources of information for referencing later.
- It is a good idea to highlight quotations or key points in a different colour.
- If it suits your learner style use mind maps, spider graphs, charts instead.

Attached is a template that may be useful to you when note taking. You may choose to adapt this as you become more accustomed to taking notes or devise your own method to suit your own needs.