



Active Study: Note-Taking Worksheet
"The Art of Taking Notes"

- Purpose of note-taking
Maximizes "The Study Cycle"
Promotes active learning
Provides record of lecture, discussion, and readings
Prepares study materials for exam
Strategies
Explore note-taking methods by subject
Explore note-taking methods by personal learning style/preferences
Explore note-taking methods by professor style/preferences

Table with 3 columns: Subject, What to note, Note-Taking Strategy/ies. Rows include Arts & Humanities, Social Sciences, Biological Sciences; Math, Sciences; Foreign Languages.

Form for course information and note-taking strategies. Includes a 'Course:' field and a table with columns: Relevant Elements, Professor Style, Personal Style, Note-Taking Strategy/ies. Rows include Class structure and Tools/Resources available.



The Alberta Method

General Ideas	Explanation	Example
Write down main ideas presented in the lecture/reading	Explain main ideas in greater detail	Provide specific facts or examples to create better understanding of each idea

Two-Column Approach

Notes	Follow-up Items
Write down general lecture notes	List confusing ideas, problems, unknown vocabulary, and any new or remaining questions



Identification Method

Though you may not be able to answer all of the questions, this method encourages you to think about all aspects of a specific topic.

Who	
What	
When	
Where	
How	
Why	

Cornell Style & “The 5Rs”

Adapted from: [Academic Skills Center, Dartmouth College 2011](#)

- **Record:** During the lecture, record as many meaningful facts and ideas as you can in the “Notes Area”.
- **Reduce:** As soon after as possible, summarize these ideas and facts concisely in the form of an exam question in the “Clues & Questions Area”.
 - Writing questions clarifies meanings and relationships, reinforces continuity, and strengthens memory.
 - Preparing for examinations gradually and well ahead of time.
- **Recite:** Cover the note-taking column with a sheet of paper. Then, looking at the questions or cue-words in the question and cue column only, say aloud, in your own words, the answers to the questions, facts, or ideas indicated by the cue-words.
- **Reflect:** Look at your notes and corresponding questions to summarize that lesson in the “Summary” section at the bottom of your page.
- **Review:** Spend time every week reviewing all your previous notes.

Cornell Style continues on next page



Cornell Style Template	
Clues & Questions	_____ (Lecture Title)
	_____ (Course)
	_____ (Date)
	Notes
Summary	



Outline Format

Overarching Topic

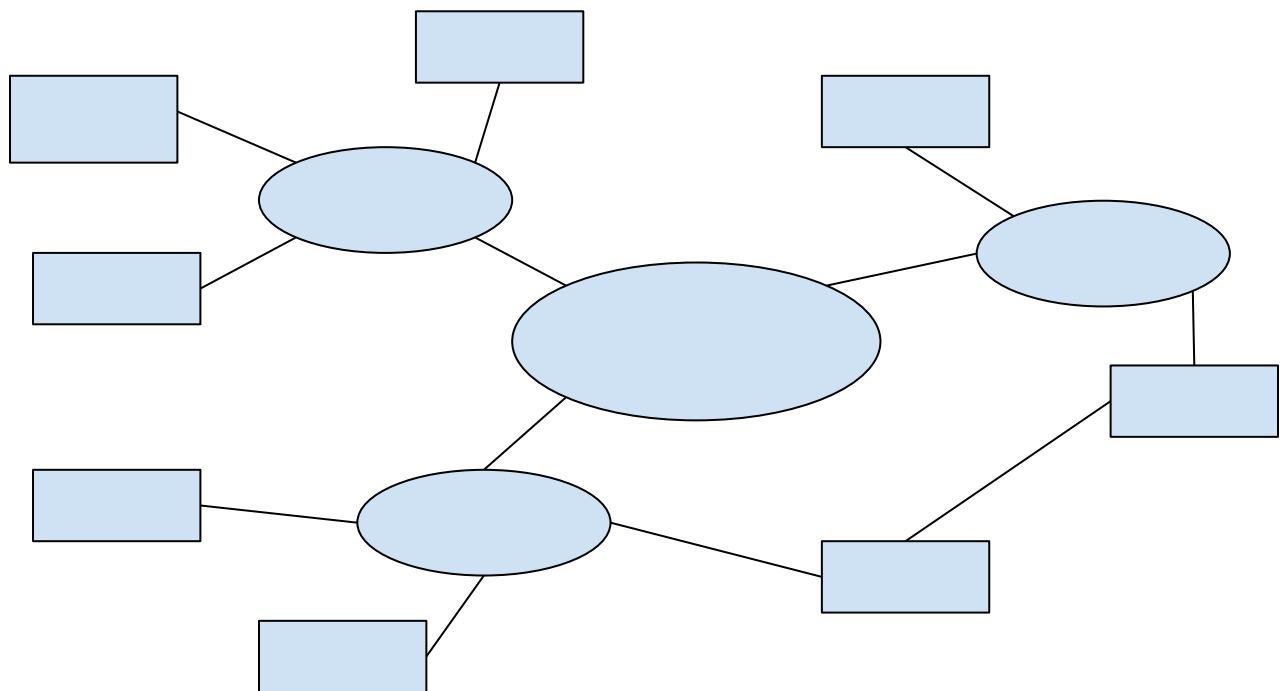
- 1. Key Point 1
 - a. Sub-point
 - i. Example
 - b. Sub-point
- 2. Key Point 2
 - a. Sub-point
 - b. Sub-point
 - c. Sub-point
 - i. Example

Mapping

There is an array of mapping types, including, but not limited to: Diagrams, Venn Diagrams, Tree Diagrams, Sequences, Cause-Effect, Flow Charts, Concept Maps, Matrices

- Uses geometric shapes, pictures, and arrows to show relationships
- Encourages students to condense material and recognize connections

Concept Map Example:



Adapted from:

<http://www.citrus.cc.ca.us/stdntsrvcounsel/earlyalert/Documents/Workshop%20Workbooks/NoteTakingWorkbook.pdf>

**Note-Taking: Ten Practical Suggestions**

The purpose of note-taking is to maximize your active studying techniques and to prepare study materials you can revisit throughout the semester, especially prior to quizzes or exams. Note-taking is an important aspect of a student's college routine. Moreover, note-taking can be a challenge since there are so many approaches to consider. It takes consistency and practice...and more practice. This handout presents ten practical suggestions to assist you in identifying and maintaining an effective note-taking approach.

1. **Do not attempt to write down everything.** Be alert and attentive to the main points that you read or hear, keeping notes short and concise. Try to condense material so you can grasp it rapidly.
2. **Take notes using your own words.** This can deepen your personal understanding, but make sure you are not changing the meaning. If you quote directly from an author, quote correctly.
3. **Build the *preview* stage from “The Study Cycle” into your routine.** This can assist you with thinking about course material before you start taking notes, so you are best prepared for class.
4. **Consider developing a system of symbols and abbreviations.** This can save you time during the note-taking process and can prompt you to take action (i.e. look up a definition of key word) when you revisit your notes. It is important to keep your system consistent and simple, so that it makes sense to you throughout the semester.
5. **Do not worry about missing a key point.** Leave plenty of open space for later additions, possibly during the *review* stage of “The Study Cycle.”
6. **Develop an organized system for storing your notes.** This might include a notebook or an electronic folder. Storing notes in order and in one place will increase the likelihood of you using them productively throughout the semester.
7. **Consider re-writing your notes.** Some students find this helpful as a method of deepening their understanding. However, this process can also be time-consuming and unproductive. We suggest this approach only if you find that re-writing content effectively re-engages you with course material.
8. **Review your notes regularly, not just before a quiz or exam.** This is a reliable way to achieve lasting memory and comprehension. Keep in mind that this can occur during any stage of “The Study Cycle.”
9. **Consider recording your lecture.** Some students find the ability to revisit a lecture in its entirety to be helpful, and to relieve pressure during the in-class note-taking process. However, similar to re-writing notes, the process of re-watching or re-listening can be time-consuming and unproductive. We suggest this approach only if you find that it re-engages you with course material. *Keep in mind it is best to request permission from your professor prior to trying this strategy.*
10. **Explore your options, but be willing to commit.** There are a multitude of note-taking strategies and techniques, but practice is essential. We encourage you to try one to two new methods or styles for a particular course, but give yourself time to become accustomed to the approach prior to deciding if it works for you. It is important to consider the subject, your personal learning style/preferences, and/or the professor's teaching style/class resources when committing to an option.