

Tips for Taking Notes

The following tips will greatly enhance the use of your notes.

Set Up Your Paper

- Put name, class and date in the upper right hand corner
- Give all notes a title
- Draw a line (or fold your paper) down the length of the paper about one third of the way from the left hand margin
- Use lots of paper, skipping many lines. This will let you later organize your notes more easily and comment on them

Take Notes

- Paraphrase the text or lecturer in the right column
- Listen carefully to identify important information. Concentrate on understanding what the ideas are
- Use memory cues such as CAPITAL LETTERS, Underlining, ☆Stars☆, or pictures
- Don't worry about spelling
- Use abbreviations or a shorthand that works for you. Do not try to write down everything word for word.
- If you are absent, be sure to get someone else's notes. Write your **own** comments in the left hand column

After Class

- Edit your notes as soon as possible. Reread them and make additions and clarifications, as needed
- Work with a partner when you find it useful
- Use a highlighter or different colors to emphasize important points
- Make a note to ask questions about confusing items at the next class session
- Fill in the left column with questions, symbols and memory keys

Review Notes

- Review notes regularly (not just before a test): first after class, then every two or three days, and finally before a test
- Cover the right column with blank paper
- Use the questions, symbols and memory keys in the left column as cues either to rewrite the information in the right column or to say it aloud
- Reflect on the notes. Summarize them and try to relate them to personal experience