



Effective Note-taking

Note-taking during a lecture is one of the most cognitively demanding learning activities. A lecturer speaks at a rate of 125-140 words per minute. You should not try to reproduce every word, rather you should focus on understanding what's being said, then write in your own words.

- Generating questions is the core of all learning.
 - Mirror questions (after lecture, create them in left margin)
 - Summary question of entire lecture connects mirror questions
 - "50-Point" question (imagine one that might appear on test)
- Use verbal translations for quantitative notes next to problems; describe steps.
- Remember Ebbinghaus "forgetting curve"; you lose 70-80% if you don't read and refine notes within 24 hours. A short review of notes can save you re-learning before the test. **ENGAGE** with notes, instead of simply reading. Generate questions, use colors, make mind maps.
- Be open to different styles: Cornell, T-notes for quantitative classes, concept maps, etc.

Best practices:

- Use loose-leaf notebook rather than spiral so you can add/rearrange
- Date and label each lecture
- Write on right side only
- Make eye contact, watch and listen for cues
- Use left side for asking "mirror questions" answered by notes
- Leave lots of white space, skip lines
- Use abbreviations consistently
- Do not write in complete sentences
- Put ideas in your own words
- Review and edit/reduce notes within 24 hours

