

Advice for Using the Cornell System

FORMAT for notes	<p>Write the date, class, topic of notes, source of notes (e.g., lecture, book, film) and page number for each page of notes at the top of a page of lined paper.</p> <p>Mark a wide left margin (approximately 1/3 of page).</p> <p>Consider the left-hand column the place for study questions and main ideas.</p> <p>Consider the right-hand column the place for specific information.</p> <p>While taking notes, write in the right-hand column.</p> <p>Use abbreviations.</p> <p>Paraphrase to capture content but simplify writing.</p> <p>Use symbols (arrows, circles, underlining) or highlight important information, ideas/words that are unclear, relationships between ideas/information.</p> <p>Include graphics (e.g., diagrams, charts) when relevant.</p> <p>Skip lines between ideas.</p> <p>Within 24 hours of taking notes, develop study questions and identify main ideas about specifics in right-hand column; write study questions/main ideas in the left-hand column.</p>
Be an active listener	<p>Think about what is being said.</p> <p>Think about how what is being said relates to other points in the lecture, ideas from discussion/reading/other subjects.</p> <p>Ask questions.</p>
TAKING NOTES; SOME TIPS	
Be aware of lecturer/speaker organization	<p>Listen for the speaker to forecast organization of the lecture (e.g., phrases, like “Today I want to talk about,” or “By the end of this lecture, you should be convinced that...”)</p> <p>Look for lecture outlines on the board or handouts.</p> <p>Use arrows/lines/circles/numbers to connect related ideas.</p>
Use the speaker’s style to identify important points	<p>Become familiar with the speaker’s style.</p> <p>Listen for important points that might be emphasized when the speaker:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pauses or slows down • Repeats a point • Modulates the volume of her/his voice • Uses introductory phrases (e.g., “The four main points are” or “Note the relationship”) • Writes on the boards • Gestures or uses visual aids

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<p>Keep up with the speaker</p> <p>Example:</p> <p>Example:</p>	<p>Write only the important ideas such as names, places, dates, events, examples, terms, definitions, causes, effects, evaluations, cross references: make it brief but clear.</p> <p>Speaker says: “Hippocrates, a Greek who is considered to be the Father of Medicine, was born on the island of Cos in 460 B.C.</p> <p>Notes say: “Hippocrates (Gr) Father of Med. B. Cos 460 B.C.</p> <p>Use abbreviations for familiar words</p> <p>Speaker says: “George Washington was not, in a sense, America’s first president.”</p> <p>Notes say: “G. Wash. Not Am’s 1st Pres.?”</p>
<p>Be alert to the speaker’s stance</p>	<p>Some lecturers attempt to persuade as well as inform listeners; when applicable, note ideas/references/opinions that provide insight into the speaker’s point of view.</p>
<p>Review notes shortly after a lecture</p>	<p>Develop study questions and identify main ideas.</p> <p>Fill in details for clarity.</p> <p>Look up and add the definitions of new words/terminology.</p> <p>Identify information that is unclear and/or questions that need to be answered; write and mark questions in the text of notes or at the end where they will be easily found; get answers to the questions from other students and/or the speaker.</p> <p>Add symbols to highlight important ideas and key words.</p> <p>Delete irrelevant information.</p> <p>Review the overall organization of the material; add symbols to make the organization clear or rewrite for clarity as needed.</p> <p>Write a summary of the significant ideas.</p>
<p>Make use of the format</p>	<p>Spread out or hold notes so that right side of page is covered; review ideas and answer study questions from the left-hand column; use right-hand specifics as an answer key.</p> <p>Engage in an oral quiz with others using study questions from the left-hand column.</p> <p>Cover the right hand column of specifics with blank paper; write out answers to the left hand study questions and explanations of main ideas.</p>
<p>Write</p>	<p>Write summaries of the most important material in the notes.</p> <p>Write summaries of the materials as yet unlearned</p> <p>Write anticipated test questions beyond those already in the left hand column and write answers to the questions.</p>

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Review	<p>Look over notes frequently to keep information and questions still unanswered fresh in mind.</p> <p>Recite information from notes.</p> <p>Exchange notes with others to flesh out information and understanding.</p> <p>Use notes in study groups to provide a common ground of material for reference and review.</p>
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