

CORNELL NOTE TAKING STRATEGIES

The Cornell method of note taking offers several advantages:

- It results in more organized notes.
- It allows students to quickly and efficiently identify key words and key concepts from a lecture.
- The notes can easily be used as a study guide for exam preparation.
- The arrangement of information is aesthetically pleasing and easy to scan, making it easy to locate particular pieces of information.
- The strategy may be adapted to a number of presentation formats.

To create Cornell Notes, you should do the following:

1. Set up your paper

- To begin you need to set up your paper. Write the following information at the top of each page: student name, course, date, and page number. You will also need to draw a line, 3 inches from the left edge of the page, if you do not have Cornell Note paper (this will give you the two columns you will need).

2. Record your note

- During the lecture, record the main ideas and concepts on the right side of the page. This is the notes column.
- Rephrase the information you hear / read into your own words before writing it down
- Skip one line between ideas and several lines between topics.
- Avoid writing in complete sentences; use symbols and abbreviations instead.
- Avoid using a formal outline. Alternatives you could use include:
 - Paragraph Style: For unstructured information, record notes in paragraph style with short, telegraphic sentences and phrases.
 - Topic and Ideas Style: For expanded topic information, record topics and ideas.
 - Sentence Style: For ideas and concepts, record notes in short sentences.
 - Definition Style: For main topics and features, record definitions and explanations of words in short phrases.

3. Review and Clarify

- As soon after class as possible, review the notes in the right column and clarify any ambiguous information.
- Compare the information with your readings and/or other students' notes.
- Pull the main ideas, concepts, terms, places, dates, and people from the right column and record them in the left-hand recall column.
- You can also use the left hand column to write in possible exam/quiz questions.

4. Summarize

- Once your notes are complete, prepare a summary of the lecture material and record it at the end of the notes. The summary may be in sentences or short phrases and should only include the main ideas from the lecture.

5. Study

- Use both sections of the notes to prepare for quizzes and exams. Try covering one section while reciting the information from the other.