

NOTE-TAKING STRATEGIES

BEFORE CLASS:

- Look over notes from last lecture
- Check course outline
- Preview ideas and new terms
- Read/skim text, especially the table of contents, summary, key words, pictures and charts

IN CLASS:

- Go to class early so you can ask your professor or classmates about anything you did not understand from last class
- Choose a seat near the front
- Stay until the very end in case teacher summarizes lecture or previews the next one
- Don't try to write everything down
 - be selective
 - listen for important ideas
 - try to summarize
 - write down what teacher emphasizes, repeats, puts on board
 - use abbreviations – design your own and use them consistently
 - leave spaces on the page so you can fill in details after class
 - only write on one side so it's easier to see the big picture and to test yourself

AFTER CLASS:

- Go over your notes within 24 hours
 - clarify and expand notes
 - summarize ideas orally
 - categorize or label ideas in the margin
 - look for patterns, relationships, connections – try to see the BIG picture!
- Test yourself
 - Ask questions based on main ideas and answer out loud
 - For a problem solving course, practice problems without looking at your notes
- Fit each lecture into the bigger picture of the whole course
 - Integrate ideas from text into your notes
- Compare notes
 - Exchange notes with a classmate from time to time to make sure you are getting the important ideas
 - Get together in small groups and discuss lectures right after class