

Student Success Tools

Taking Notes (and getting the most out of them)

Why Take Notes?

- It helps you concentrate in class.
- Your notes are often a source of valuable clues for what information the instructor thinks most important.
- Your notes often contain information that cannot be found elsewhere.

Before Class

- Complete the assigned reading/project *before* coming to class.
- If available, print and review PowerPoint slides *before* coming to class.
- Where you sit is important: Position yourself in the front and center of the classroom.
- Review notes from previous class before the instructor begins.
 - What were the main points?
 - How do the notes connect to today's lecture?
- Have the right materials ready before class begins:
 - Good pen/pencil
 - Notebook/folder devoted to the subject
 - Clean notepaper

During Class: Different Note-taking Methods

Cornell Method

Key Words	Notes Section
Summary	

Reading and Lecture Notes Together

<u>Reading Notes</u> Prior to class, take notes on your reading on one page.	<u>Class Notes</u> During class, take notes from the lecture on the back of your reading notes pages.
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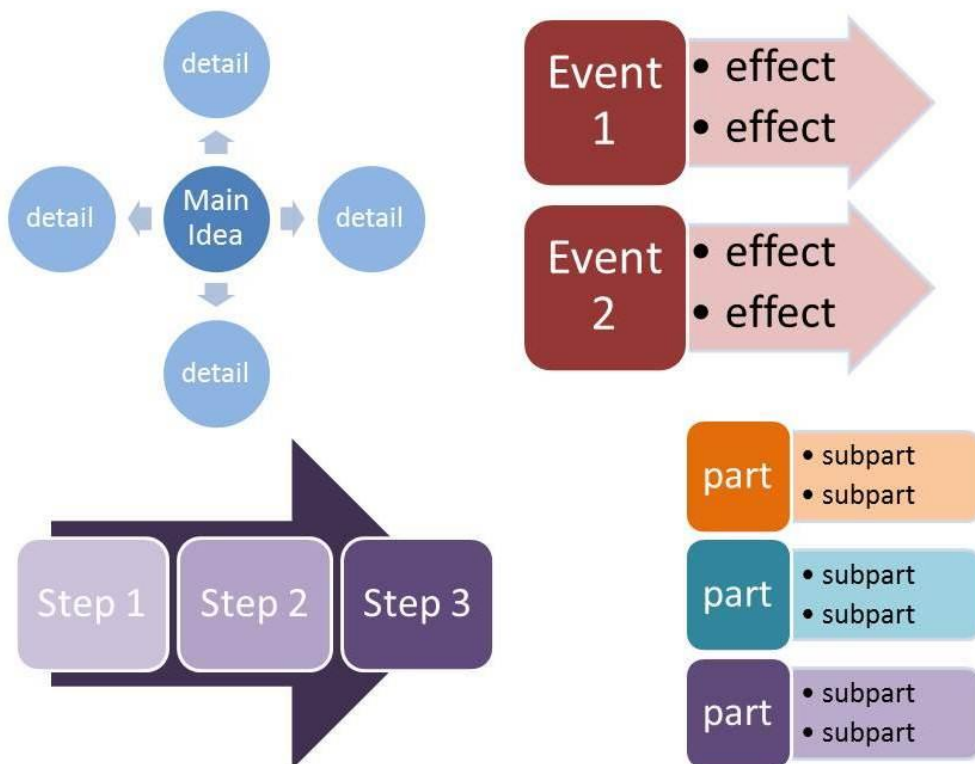
Taking Notes

During Class Tip: The professor is about to make a main point when s/he:

- Pauses before or after an idea
- Uses introductory phrases
- Uses repetition to emphasize a point
- Writes an idea on the board

After Class

- Notes are worthless unless you review them! Review your notes within 24 hours to move the information from short-term memory to long-term memory.
- But the BEST time to review is right after the class. Take 10 minutes to glance over your notes and clarify any unclear points, fill in abbreviations, etc.
- Create a mind map of your notes:



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Taking Notes

- For some students, recopying their notes is the best method for review.
- For other students, typing notes works great.
- Once a week, review all of your notes from the entire week. This review should be longer, at least 30 minutes. By doing a weekly review, you won't have to spend as much time studying when exams come around.

Other Notes on Notes

- Label (course title/number/lecture topic) and date all of your notes.
- Use graphic symbols and standard abbreviations, such as:
*, (), +, =, #, @, ex. [example], b/c [because], btw [between], w/ [with]
- Be aware of a wandering mind! If you notice you are starting to daydream and are not paying attention to the instructor, refocus. Concentrate on your handwriting. Stretch your legs.
- Note-taking is not just a school activity. In the “real world” you'll take notes during meetings and as you work. If you learn how to do it well, you will succeed both in college and in your career!



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