

Taking notes

Getting to the heart of the matter

How do we take notes?

What is the point of taking notes?

Before we begin...some simple questions.

Do you know how to take notes?

If you do, what do you already know about note taking?

What would you like to know about taking notes?

General points about taking notes: -

Forms of Note-Taking

1. **Outlining** – main idea, followed by one or two important details
2. **Patterning:** flowcharts, diagrams
3. **Making lists**
4. **Make notes in the margin**
5. Use your **highlighter** if you are given a packet or copy of something that you can keep

Ways to Reduce and Streamline Notes

1. **Eliminate small connecting words** such as: is, are, was, were, a, an, the, would, this, of. Eliminate pronouns such as: they, these, his, that, them. **However, be careful NOT to eliminate these three words: and, in, on.**
2. **Use symbols** to abbreviate, such as:
 - + , & for and, plus = for equals - for minus
 - # for number x for times > for greater than, more, larger
 - < for less than, smaller, fewer than w/ for with
 - w/o for without w/in for within
 - leads to, produces, results in ← comes from

For example: "The diameter of the Earth is four times greater than the diameter of the Moon."

Becomes: "Earth = 4x > diameter of Moon."

3. **Substitute numerals with symbols, for instance:** Substitute "one" with 1 Substitute "third" with 3rd
4. **Abbreviate:** Drop the last several letters of a word. For example, substitute "approximately" with "approx" Drop some of the internal vowels of a word. For example, substitute "large" with "lrg", or substitute 'knowledge' with 'kwidge'.

Taking notes from a textbook

This involves reading pages from a textbook and then making your own notes on index cards, in a journal, or paper to be carefully kept in a binder. Have your work checked by an adult to check comprehension, and to make sure you haven't missed any important points. As you get better at taking notes, you will not need an adult to check your work. The idea is to make you able to be the boss of your own learning!

Practice these skills: -

1. STP : Stop – Think - Paraphrase
2. Retelling or re-writing the page or paragraph in your own words
3. Learn to tell the main points apart from the details
4. Do NOT try to write down every word.
5. Retell or rewrite ideas in your own words
6. Organize your notes in some sort of order
7. Be brief – write down only the main points and important information
8. Write legibly – use your best handwriting at all times! Notes are useless if you can't read them later!
9. Don't be concerned with spelling and grammar

Taking notes when a teacher is talking

Write down the important points. The teacher is usually making an important point if he or she:

1. Pauses before or after an idea
 2. Uses repetition to emphasize a point
 3. Uses introductory sentence before an important idea, like in a paragraph
 4. Writes an idea on the board
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Taking notes from a video or TV program

Taking notes from a DVD or VHS is easy. You can press pause or rewind anytime you want, so as long as you know how to take notes and write them, you're good to go!

If you are taking notes from a TV program that cannot be stopped, then pretend the TV program is a teacher, and take notes like you would if he or she were talking to you.