

EFFECTIVE NOTE-TAKING

Effective active note-taking is an important practice to master. It helps you to engage purposefully and creatively with the many challenges of learning: keeping your mind active and bridging the gap between your own thoughts and the subject you are studying. There is no 'right' way of taking notes. Instead, there are a range of techniques and approaches from which you can choose to create your own style. If you consistently take good notes from your lessons, wider reading and research, they will be an enormous help when it comes to revision.

Why Are Effective Note Taking Skills Important?

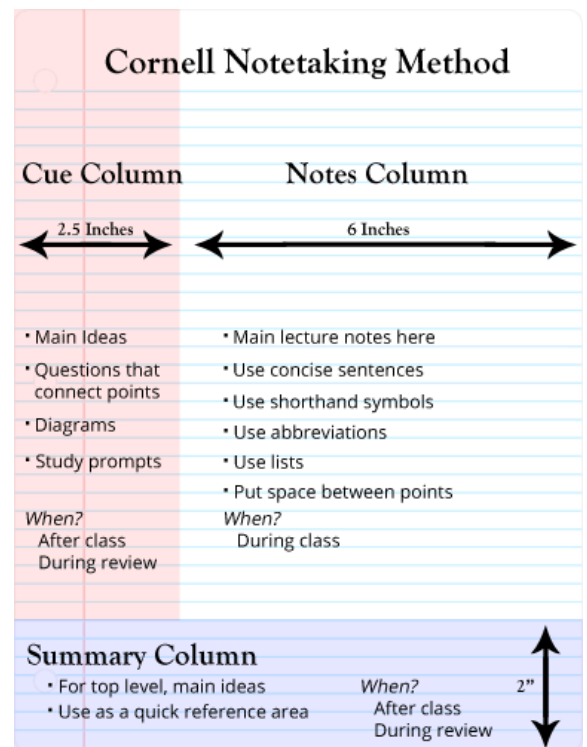
Learning how to take better study notes helps improve recall and understanding because it:

- Ensures you are actively listening to what is being said
- Requires you to think about what you are writing
- Helps you make connections between topics

Great note-taking takes practice. There are a number of different ways to take notes, and it is best to find a method that works for you, and that may change depending on the lesson that you are in (for example, a science class versus a humanities class). However, here are 5 methods that are proven to be successful.

1. Cornell Method

One of the most useful ways of taking structured notes is to use the Cornell Method. As you can see from the template, the Cornell note taking system divides the page up into 3 sections with the main section being used for your notes during class, the lefthand column being used for a list of key issues and questions and the bottom section being used for a brief summary in your own words.



2. The Outline Method

Using the Outline Method will mean that your notes are organised in a structured and highly logical manner. You use bullet points, numbered lists, or arrows to indicate a new thought. Every major topic is placed farthest to the left of the page.

Subtopics are then added using an indent to the right. Each supporting fact or note is then placed below the subtopic, using another indent. This way the notes have a clear structure making it easy to review them after.

Example of Outline Method

1. Main Idea

1.1 Subtopic

- Example
- Example

1.2 Subtopic

- Example

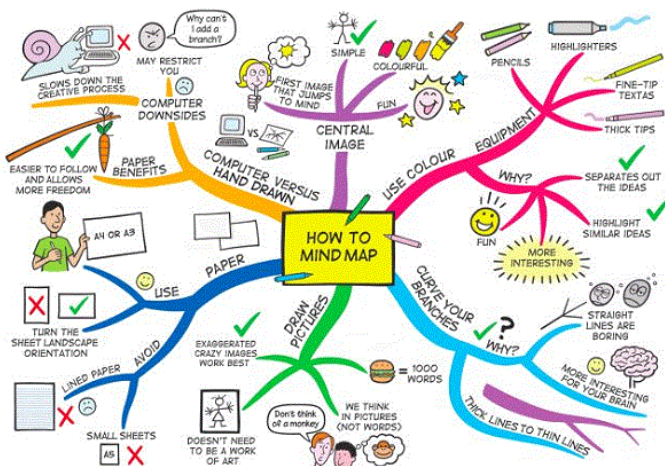
2. Main Idea

2.1 Subtopic

2.2 Subtopic

3. The Mind Mapping Method

Mind Mapping is a more visual way to organise your class notes. This technique is particularly useful for visual learning and helps you remember and connect relationships between topics.



4. Annotation

Annotation involves you adding comments to a text that explain or critique what you have read. These can be written in the margins and may accompany words you have highlighted to identify key information.

5. Symbols and Abbreviations

When you take notes you will not have time to write in full sentences, and sometimes the information comes so thick and fast that you cannot even write full words. Develop your own set of symbols and abbreviations. Some examples are:

& or (+)	and
+	plus, in addition to
>	greater/more
<	smaller/less than
=	is the same as/equal to
.	therefore
. .	because
w/	with
e.g	for example
i.e.	that is, that means
etc.	and the rest
NB	important, notice this
p.	page (pp. = pages)
Info	information
Cd	could
Wd	would
Impt	important