

Hints for Good Note-Taking / Using Cornell Notes

Preparation

1. Insert a 2 x 2 table in Word (2 columns, 2 rows). On paper, measure out about 2 inches from the left edge of the page and draw a line down the entire page, from top to bottom.
2. The top left column is the recall or cue column, and the top right column is the note-taking column. The bottom right column is the summary section

During the Lecture

1. Date your notes.
2. During readings, lectures, videos, etc. take notes in the note-taking column. Make sure they are legible and are as organized as possible.
3. Use a skeleton outline and show importance by indenting. Leave space for later additions.
4. Don't write down everything you read, see, or hear. Do not copy every word of a PowerPoint. Be attentive to the main points and examples.
5. Use key words or very short sentences.
6. Take accurate notes and ones that will be of real value when you look them over later.
7. If you miss information, leave space and pick up material later through reading, questioning, or common sense.

After the Lecture

1. Use the left column to write "cues". "Cues" are short phrases that act as review questions. Write vocabulary terms (just the word), key words that define the point being made, links to the textbook, or even questions about the material that you might need explained further. These should be written just across from the appropriate material in the notes section.
2. Rework (not recopy) your notes by adding extra points, spelling out unclear items, etc, in the blank space left.
3. Highlight topic subjects using the highlight feature and the important information (not all notes) within your notes.
4. **Review your notes periodically!** Do you understand what you wrote? Do you need to add anything to help your understanding?

When Notes Are Completed

1. Draw a line across the bottom of the notes. There should be at least 3 inches of space; if not, go to the back or a new sheet of paper.
2. Write a summary of the main ideas presented in the lecture, video, readings, etc. Start with the main idea and then add 2 or 3 supporting details.

It is impossible to write down everything a lecturer says. Because time in class is limited, **write only what you need in order to remember what was said. This does not mean you write only things you didn't know, but get down the gist of what was said.** Don't use complete sentences, and use abbreviations and shortened forms of words. As soon as possible after class, you can add more, number, outline and make your notes more complete.