

excel in YOUR classes

improve your NOTETAKING

50% of what you hear is forgotten in 20 minutes
listening isn't enough ✦ write things down to remember them

Take Notes to Increase your Focus

When you're taking notes, your mind doesn't have time to think about anything else, so you don't have time to get distracted!

Use Good Notes to Improve Test Marks

Tests usually cover material that's been presented in class, so study with good notes to have more success!



Develop a Notetaking System

- ✓ use a 3-ring binder and keep it organized
- ✓ format each note by including the course, date and topic
- ✓ skip lines between ideas/topics; the space will allow you to add additional info later
- ✓ leave a wide margin on the left for key words (topics, people, events) . . . later you can use your notes to study from by covering up the content and quizzing yourself with the key words

USE ABBREVIATIONS

- = same or equal
- ≠ not equal
- > greater than
- < less
- ~ approximately
- ↑ up/increasing
- ↓ down/decreasing
- ★ most importantly
- ∴ therefore
- ± more or less
- w with
- w/o without
- b/c because
- esp especially
- v very

Good Listening Skills Produce Good Notes

- ✦ be an active listener by thinking about and understanding what is being discussed
- ✦ recognize important information by listening for verbal cues about what's important:
 - louder or slower speech
 - information that's repeated
 - phrases such as "main point"

Review Your Notes while the Lesson is Fresh

- ✓ rewrite confusing information
- ✓ fill in missing information
- ✓ highlight important information

STUDY smart

spend less time studying and get better marks

When, Where, and How

- create a study space that's quiet, comfortable, and well-lit
- have a good surface for writing and be equipped with the tools you need (paper, pencils, pens, highlighters, calculator, etc.)
- work distraction free by silencing your phone and social media
- schedule your study time by choosing the time of day that works best for you and reduces interruptions like jobs and other responsibilities
- stick to your schedule and don't let procrastination prevent you from starting; starting with the easy stuff first will build momentum and a feeling of accomplishment

Organization is Key for Efficiency

- ✦ create a study plan by deciding what you will study and how it will be prioritized (focus on the important stuff first!)
- ✦ break large assignments down into smaller, more manageable parts
- ✦ take short breaks every 30 minutes or so to stretch or get a snack (but don't check social media!)

Stay on Track and Make the Most of Your Time

- ✓ exchange numbers with someone in your class so you'll have someone to call if you miss a class or have a question
- ✓ complete work ahead of deadlines to have time to improve your work
- ✓ if you listen to music when you study, try classical music
- ✓ get familiar with the software you use so shortcuts and other features save time
- ✓ form a study group with peers who are focussed on task
- ✓ ask for help right away if you need clarification or have a question
- ✓ review often to move information from your short-term memory into your long-term memory
- ✓ use all your senses to study - pictures, mapping, writing, listening, speaking - to make things less tedious
- ✓ alternate the type of work frequently so you don't get bored or stuck



Doing GROUP WORK

doing it yourself isn't always an option

post-secondary institutions and employers value teamwork → learn now to succeed later

Group Roles

For a successful group work experience, choose a positive role

- ☛ leader – take charge of the group
- ☛ secretary – record the group's ideas and plans
- ☛ encourager – stay positive and support all group members
- ☛ contributor – offer new ideas and ways to complete tasks

and avoid a negative role

- ☛ blocker – oppose all ideas, but doesn't offer suggestions
- ☛ disrupter – off task and wanting the spotlight
- ☛ non-participant – doesn't contribute anything to the group

Tips to Successful Group Work

- set short-term and long-term goals with established deadlines
- share manageable tasks equally and ensure everyone understands what needs to be done
- schedule regular meetings for updates and to stay on track and follow an agenda: (1) progress reports, (2) problems or concerns, (3) questions, and (4) next steps
- don't take negative feedback personally – be open to suggestions

Be on the Lookout for Challenges and Handle Them

When group members don't pull their weight, or you have group disagreements, personality clashes, or unrelated tensions . . .

- ✓ acknowledge the conflict, don't ignore it
- ✓ keep the goals in mind
- ✓ don't take sides
- ✓ discuss a plan to work past the conflict, even if it's just getting to the end of the project, and not resolving the actual conflict
- ✓ ask your teacher for help

Traits of a Team Player

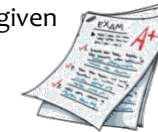
RELIABILITY do what you say you'll do and don't make excuses	FLEXIBILITY be open to change and the ideas of others	DILIGENCE to your share of the work to the best of your ability
HONESTY be truthful about your ability and don't be afraid to give constructive feedback	POSITIVE ATTITUDE be upbeat and optimistic even when things are difficult, frustrating, or boring	CONFIDENCE don't be afraid to express your ideas and ask for help if you need it

taking TESTS

smart test takers use strategies to improve confidence and choose right answers

Test Taking Tips

- ✓ start right by bringing what you need to the test and making note of the things you need to remember as soon as you get the test
- ✓ develop a plan by quickly reading through the whole test so you can determine where to start and how much time to spend on each part
- ✓ don't waste time on questions you are stuck on; go back to them later
- ✓ check all your answers to catch careless mistakes (and bigger ones!)
- ✓ use all the time you are given



Prepare for the Type of Test

Multiple Choice Questions

- try to come up with the answer before you read the choices
- read all the answers carefully and cross out those that are wrong

True/False Questions

- look for key words
 - *all, always, never, every, and none* are usually false
 - *usually, often, and generally* are often true
- if any part of the question is false, then the whole thing is false
- if any part of the question is true, it doesn't mean the whole thing is true

Open Book Tests

- use sticky notes or bookmarks in your book/notes to find things quickly
- highlight important info in your notes
- put all the info you know you'll need on 1 piece of paper

Essay Questions

- read each question and start with the easiest question
- brainstorm all the key words, ideas, and points you want to cover
- use complete sentences and write neatly

Math Tests

- estimate the answer before you solve the problem
- show all your work and write neatly
- use pictures and diagrams to help visualize problems
- don't waste time on tricky questions, go back to them if you have time
- check questions or retry them to see if you get the same answers

Reduce Test Anxiety

- ☛ mentally practice going through the test and visualize success
- ☛ use positive self-talk
- ☛ act confident to feel confident
- ☛ use relaxation techniques

