Smart Note Taking Tips

Note taking is an important and improvable skill that it is essential to academic success! College students only capture 30% to 40% of important information in their class notes! Quality notes can strengthen your knowledge base and ability to process and learn new information. It organizes your thoughts and facilitates active engagement in the content and substance of a lecture. Here's some tips to help you take great notes!

Before Class...

YES, BEFORE class!
Review the Text: preview the topics, terms, and information from an upcoming lecture. This can aid in structuring this information for optimal note taking.

Identify Unfamiliar/Difficult Content: Certain terms, concepts, and information from course readings can pose a challenge to even the most prepared student.

During Class...

Format Your Notes: Find a style of note taking that works for YOU. This could mean sticking to one method or trying out a few different techniques depending on the course.
Record Important Information: Focus on the main points, information, ideas, and examples. Your course instructor will often give you cues. Follow their lead, don't try to write down everything!

After Class...

Review Within 24 Hours: To minimize forgetting and maximize retention, find a time after class to go over your notes with a fresh perspective.

Fill In Gaps: You might not have obtained everything you wanted from the lecture. Add this information to your notes to make them stronger.

Other Tips...

· Come to class with a fully charged laptop or a pen/pencil/notebook setup.
· Sit in the front of the classroom. Research correlates students that emphasize this seating option are more engaged, are distracted less often, listen attentively, and take better notes.
· Try different note-taking methods. You might be a visual learner or you may prefer an outline.

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