

How to Take Notes

Taking notes during a lecture helps you stay attentive, understand what is being discussed, and remember the important points. Your notes will also help you study and revise.

Whether you use a notebook, a computer, or the slides on eClass, these suggestions can help:

1. Record the date, title, and lecturer so you can quickly find the right notes later.
2. You do not need to write everything. Use keywords and short phrases instead of complete sentences.
3. Identify and record what matters. Notice what the lecturer emphasizes, and mark points you think are particularly important.
4. Use abbreviations (they are useful beyond chatting!), symbols such as arrows, =, +, and >/<, or a quick sketch. What matters is that you can understand what you meant to remember, rather than producing polished prose.
5. Organize your notes logically. Does the lecture have sections and subsections? Which points are key concepts and which are examples? Are some points linked or more important than others? Make these relationships visible with numbering, position, colour, arrows, stars, or underlining.
6. Record anything you find especially interesting or puzzling and would like to investigate later.
7. Compare notes with classmates. Did they identify something else as important? Add to your notes if they persuade you. You may also discover a better way of taking notes.
8. When you have a chance after class, fill in any gaps while the lecture is fresh. Turn a few headings into questions and try to answer them without looking. Do not spend time rewriting everything neatly. Notes are there to help you focus and remember, not to be published. Your next set will be better.
9. Return to your notes when preparing for the tutorial or exam. They will remind you where each lecture placed its emphasis. See what you can explain from memory and check the points you cannot yet recall.
10. Practice makes perfect. You will soon find the note-taking method that works for you!

* Check the current course timetable and materials on eClass for the chapter covered in each lecture.