

How To Get The Most Out of Your College Education

As a student you will be responsible for learning on your own and for getting the most out of classes, teachers, textbooks, research, study, libraries, and extracurricular activities. An important factor in getting good grades will be your ability to take clear well-organized class notes.

The purpose of class notes is to record the instructor's lesson in a manner that will allow you to review and understand the material afterwards.. Your objective, therefore, is to outline the main and supporting ideas and facts so that they are clear and understandable. Below is a list of ways you can enhance your study skills and get the most out of your college education.

1. **Write rapidly in your own form of shorthand** when taking notes. Don't try to write down everything and keep to the main points. Develop your own style of abbreviating and condensing the important data.
2. **Instructors' teaching methods will differ.** You will have to be alert to each one's style and organization. Often, they start each class with an overview or outline and use it as a framework for their lecture. Therefore, try to be punctual.
3. **Outlines, diagrams or lists that instructors write on the board are usually important.** It is a good idea to record these in your notebook, unless you know that the same material is already covered in your textbook.
4. **Jot down questions as they occur to you in class** and hold them for the appropriate moment. They might be answered or become unimportant in a few minutes. If not, you will want to have them answered, either in class or later.
5. **Be alert to the instructor's tone, emphasis, or questions.** These may be clues to points that may appear on an exam. For example, if the professor says, "Five important reasons for the treaty were..." or "Remember now ... "you can be sure these are things to be recorded.
6. **It is best to write on the right-hand page only.** You can then make your textbook notes on the left-hand page. Your classnotes will reflect the instructor's approach to the topic, which you might find helpful.
7. **Completing textbook or reading assignments before each class will help minimize note-taking in class.** You will know whether the material under discussion is in the text or not. You will already have underlined the important ideas in the book, so you won't have to duplicate these points when the instructor makes them. Typing or rewriting notes is normally a waste of time. If they are legible, accurate and complete, it is much more productive to spend your time reviewing the notes, reading your text and keeping up every day and every week with your studies.

Remember, review your class notes as soon as possible after the session has ended; this will help you to remember the class material while it is fresh in your mind.

Good Luck!

Guidance Associate, (1988). How to Get the Most Out of Your College Education. (Video)