

Note-taking Abbreviations

Note-taking needs to be concise. You do not need to write down everything word for word. There are many ways of writing notes. The more you experience writing notes, the more you will learn to take notes effectively and find a method which works for you.

Why make notes?

Note taking helps you to concentrate on what the lecturer is saying and provides you with a summary. Taking your own notes will promote a deeper understanding of the content of the lecture. You can take notes from a written source which will help you in writing your essay. You can also include notes about your thoughts on the written source or the lecture you heard to ascertain how you are going to use the information in your essay.

Before note-taking

- Number your pages for easy reference and linking of concepts.
- Prepare to label your notes to identify them as authors' direct quotations or your own comments.
- Remember to include the correct bibliographical information for all sources.
- Become acquainted with symbols and abbreviations to help you to take notes efficiently. (See the list of some common symbols and abbreviations on page 3.)
- If in a lecture look at the course outline to see what has been covered, what will be covered, and how it all fits together.
- Read over your notes from the last lecture.
- Read the material that will be covered in the upcoming lecture.

During note-taking

- Date and give a title to each set of notes and keep them separate for each course you are taking.
- Sit where you can clearly see and hear the lecture presentation without distractions.
- Leave space on the side for expanding your notes when you have more time.
- Write notes in your own words.
- Record definitions of technical terms exactly as given.
- Use different colours, symbols or underlining to highlight points related to important themes.
- Use key words such as 'consequently' or 'therefore' for summaries.
- Include lecturers' examples of abstract ideas to help jog your memory of the concepts.
- Use the time when your lecturer pauses during a presentation to review your notes.

After note-taking

- Review and reflect on your notes soon after lectures to consolidate your understanding.
- Form questions on your notes to find the significance of the content and its application to other fields of knowledge.
- Highlight key points from your notes for exam preparation.
- Review and expand your notes by filling in the missing gaps, correcting errors, and making sure that you understand all abbreviations.
- Make a habit of carrying out short weekly reviews of your notes.
- Practise reciting the information using only keywords.
- Talk with other students about the lecture.

Borrowing notes

Borrowing notes should be a last resort. Note-taking differs between students because of interest, attentiveness and knowledge of the discipline area, as well as individual style and expression.

If you must borrow notes then try to get more than one set.

Abbreviations

When note taking, reduce the language by shortening words and sentences. If you are struggling to write down all the notes you want to take in a lecture, use abbreviations and symbols. Use only the abbreviations and symbols that fit your needs and that you will remember easily. It is better to introduce just a few abbreviations and symbols into your notes at a time.

List of some common symbols and abbreviations

∴	because
+ OR &	and OR plus
?	question OR doubt OR possibility
>	greater than
<	less than
# OR no.	number
\$	dollars OR money OR cost
Δ	change
∴	Therefore OR consequently
/	per OR each
↑	increase OR improvement
→	leads to OR causes
↓	decrease OR deterioration
↔	linked OR interrelated OR connected
↗	does not lead to
=	equal OR the same as
~ OR ≈	approximately OR around OR similar to
≠	not equal OR not the same as

X	not
∞	varies with <i>OR</i> related to
...	etc. <i>OR</i> missing words
etc.	etcetera; and the rest
et al.	and the other authors
eg	for example
ie	that is
NB <i>OR</i> *	note well <i>OR</i> remember this
♂ / ♀	male / female
§	section
¶ <i>OR</i> para	paragraph
p. / pp.	page / pages
c	with / about (circa)
w/o <i>OR</i> \bar{c}	without
1 / 1 st / 2 etc.	one / first / two etc.
@	at
2	to / too
4	for
cf.	compare
am	morning
pm	afternoon
viz	namely
asap	as soon as possible

Other helpful hints

- Make sure you understand your own symbols and actively look for and learn new ones.
- Develop a system to allow you to remember to come back and fill in the gaps, such as using a dash or space when you have missed a portion of what has been said.
- Develop or learn symbols which will help you identify important concepts referred to by the lecturer.

Word truncation/contraction is another useful technique, e.g.

ppl	people
res	research
hist / ling / comp sci / nursg / edn	history / linguistics / computer science / nursing / education
gov / lang / prog / pt / tchr	government / language / program / patient / teacher

Audio-taping lectures

This should be a last resort if you cannot attend a lecture, and you must remember to ask for permission. Audio recordings are generally less informative, because they do not convey the entire lecture, i.e. visual cues. Remember that an audio-recording must still be listened to and this will take the same duration as the lecture itself. If you must use a recording, try to supplement this with notes from at least one other student.

MyMedia Lecture Recording

Lectures may be recorded and placed on *MyUni* by your course lecturer. These are another source to use to review your notes to ensure you understand the information.

Useful resources

Academic Learning and Language (ALL)

ALL Semester Seminars include activity tasks for practice of an academic skill e.g. note-taking, and are delivered by expert lecturers in a relaxed environment. They are non-discipline specific, run for 50 minutes in duration unless otherwise indicated, and no bookings are required. For more information, refer to: <http://www.adelaide.edu.au/clpd/all/seminars/>

Websites

http://www.bournemouth.ac.uk/study_support/note-taking.html

<http://www.dartmouth.edu/~acskills/success/notes.html>

<http://istudy.psu.edu/FirstYearModules/NoteTaking/Materials.htm>

Printables

www.cs.sfu.ca/CC/AEP/pages/NoteTaking.pdf

www.dlsweb.rmit.edu.au/lsu/content/1_StudySkills/study_pdf/notetaking_lecture.pdf

www.sl.psu.edu/Documents/Note_Taking_Strategies.pdf

If you require more assistance with Note-taking Abbreviations, please contact Academic Learning and Language on 8303 5771. Visit the ALL website for additional resources: www.adelaide.edu.au/clpd/all/
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