

Active Note-Taking Guide

Use this worksheet to enhance your current note-taking habits. This worksheet works in conjunction with our **“Note-taking Strategies & Tips”** handout.

I. Before Class Meeting

- 1. Determine what the next class meeting is going to be about.** To do this, reference the course schedule, readings, and/or lecture slides.
- 2. Make a note of anything you already know about the topic.** This includes terms, background information, examples, information you learned during previous lectures in this course, and information you learned in other classes. *Be sure to write down anything that you can think of. The more information the better!*
- 3. Establish what you want to know by the time you leave the next class meeting.** What knowledge/information should you leave the lecture with?
- 4. Make a list of key terms and important concepts that stick out to you.** Note headings, key terms, and anything that stands out to you or seems important. Use our **“Important Concepts List,”** to help you get started and stay organized!
- 5. Write down your questions.** What concepts do you want to learn more about? After skimming the lecture slides, what questions do you have about the material or concepts? Is anything confusing?

II. During Class

Attend class and take notes in a format that is comfortable for you. Notate particularly important information.

III. After Class

1. **Reorganize your notes.** If you find you have a hard time following or finding information your notes when you begin to prepare for quizzes and exams, reorganizing your notes can help. You can follow a template, such as our “[Cornell Notes Template](#),” or a format that makes sense to you.
2. **Create a concept list to identify important information.** Be sure to address the following information in your concept list, or use our “[Important Concepts List](#)”:
 - a. What are the key ideas, concepts, and theories from this lecture?
 - b. Explain why these key ideas, concepts, and theories are important? Consider the “why” and “how” of the ideas. *Why does this process work this way? How does it work?*
 - c. How do these concepts relate to or build on previous course material (textbook, other lectures, examples)?
 - d. What are the implications of these theories/concepts/ideas? Consider the “so what?” and “what happens next?” of the ideas.
 - e. Can you think of any good examples of these theories/concepts/ideas?
3. **Visually organize the information to help understand relationships and connections between concepts.** Examples include concept/minds maps, charts, descriptive pictures, etc.