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| Should I copy over my notes? | No. Recopying notes is a rehearsal strategy that requires little thinking. Your time is better spent writing and answering questions about the notes or writing a short summary about what you learned during the lecture. |
| Should I take notes in my textbook? | Generally, no. Most lectures do not follow the information directly from textbooks. Sometimes instructors in literature classes *(plays, poems, or novels)* might refer to specific lines or pages, so making notations in the margins might be helpful. You can also write comments or minor notes in the margins to identify if the material reminds you of previous information or your overall impressions of a section or paragraph. |
| Should I tape record the lecture? | Generally, no. Listening to the lecture again takes up a lot of time from other useful study methods like organizing the information. If English is not your first language or you have serious difficulty following lectures, you may consider tapping them until your language skills improve. |
| Should I stop writing when I don’t understand something? | No. Keep taking notes; use blanks to indicate that you missed some material and question marks (?) to indicate that you didn’t understand something. Ask another student or your instructor to explain the material that you don’t understand. |
| I can’t write as fast as my professors talk. What should I do? | Do not try to take verbatim *(word for word)* notes. Paraphrase and use abbreviations. Insert blank lines and ask a student in your class for the notes you missed. |
| How can I better concentrate on the lecture in order to take effective notes? | Sit in the front of the room. Try to eliminate distractions, such as disruptive classmates and control any “daydreaming” that may arise. Be sure to preview assignments and readings before the lecture. If your mind begins to wander, think about questions you may be expected to answer on exams based on what the instructor is explaining. |
| How do I deal with an instructor who constantly wanders from one topic to another? | Be sure to read the textbook to learn how the information is organized. Attempt to organize notes after class, and compare your notes with other classmates. |
| What can I do about all the vocabulary words that I can’t spell? | Write them phonetically *(the way they sound).* Fill in correct spellings after class when you are editing your notes. |

**Dealing with Note-Taking Problems**