



HOW TO

TAKE

NOTES

FROM

LECTURES

No matter what your major is or if you're still undecided, any class you going to take is going to have some kind of lecture. Many instructors do not allow their lectures to be recorded, making note taking the premier defense against forgetting your class's content. So how do you become a STAR notetaker?

### ★ Get Organized

1. **BINDER.** Three-ring binder. Find out how many assignments you'll have at the start of the semester and pick your size out based on that.
2. **DATE.** Date your notes in the corner for each day. That way you know when they were. A chapter note helps too.
3. **DON'T SKIP.** Honestly, someone else's notes might not be as thorough as yours or as accurate. Trust yourself and remember: combining methods of taking in information increases memory. Hearing + Seeing + Writing is going to help you learn more than just Seeing. Attend class.

### ★ Good Listening

Just because you hear something doesn't mean you're listening. Research is shown that most people who think they're good listeners or not. So what do you do?

1. **PREREAD.** Do your reading assignment before the lecture. This way you already have a basic understanding of the material, so the lecture is used for clarification. It helps you be able to participate in class, too.
2. **SIT WHERE YOU CAN SEE.** Not everyone can sit near the front and center of the class. Obviously there are only a few seats there. Try to get there early and get as close to that location as you can, though, since there are less distractions and more communication with your professor.

### ★ Recording Strategies

1. **CUES.** Instructors usually have some kind of cue to indicate that information is important. They usually organize the material and occasionally will write down something, emphasize or repeat words, change their tone of voice or rate of delivery. Learn your instructor's cues.
2. **DON'T FOCUS ON DETAILS.** Getting caught up on the details in class can cause you to misunderstand the main concepts. Take notes about the big stuff from class, then fill in the details with your textbook after you understand the main parts.
3. **FILL IN BLANKS.** Miss something in class? Ask a classmate for their notes to fill in the blanks. They might not have the same style as you, but something is better than nothing.

### ★ Review & Edit

1. **24 HOURS.** Studies have shown that if you review your notes within 24 hours of taking them, you learn and retain significantly more information.
2. **EDIT.** Sometimes you'll catch information that's not important or miss something. Go back and add in important information you might have missed using a peer or a textbook. This might also be a good time to clarify any unclear words from quick handwriting.
3. **REWRITE.** Take all of your edits and rewrite your notes. Many people might doodle in class or scratch out a lot of things. If you rewrite your notes neatly, they'll be much easier to study from.

Keep this information in mind and you've got a great start to lecture notes that will make your life a hundred times easier in class, while you study, and before a test. There are many other great tricks and tips for making your learning experience more efficient and less stressful. If you'd like to learn more, consider taking a LEARN11: Learning and Academic Strategies class at Long Beach City College. Best wishes!

