Note-Taking: Checklist Before, During and After Lecture

Note-taking skills are an essential tool for success that you can use in your courses, student organizations, and career. It is one thing to write down information on paper during lectures, but taking quality notes allows you to process and integrate new knowledge, record the information in your own words, and organize the new material. Note-taking is more than just an in-class activity. For the most benefit, use your note-taking skills before, during, and after class.

	Completed? (Check Y/N)	Task List
Pre-Lecture		**Read Assignments and Review the Text:** This will give you a heads up of the terms, concepts, and information that will most likely be covered in the lecture. It can also give you an idea of how to structure the information.
		Identify Unfamiliar and/or Difficult Content: If you find certain terms, concepts, or information confusing, you will know to take more specific notes during the lecture. You can also be sure to ask questions so that the instructor can clarify the information.
		Class Preparedness: Go to class prepared with the needed tools (notebook, laptop, tablet, etc.) to take notes.
		Seating in Classroom: Sit near the front of the room.
		Organization of Course Material: Organize your notes by subject in binders, notebooks, etc.

	Completed?	Task List
During Lecture		**Date and Format Your Notes:** Find a style of note-taking that works best for YOU and the course. This might be using one style or a combination of styles so that your notes are the best resource they can be.
		Write the Most Important Information: Don't worry about recording every word the instructor says or your grammar and spelling. Instead, write down the most important information, main ideas/terms, and examples discussed in class.
		Abbreviating and Use of Own Words: Create a key for high frequency words by shortening words (ex: maximum to max) by removing vowels or using acronyms. Also, be sure to summarize concepts in your own words to help with better internal understanding.
		Content Relationship: Indent examples and details under main ideas to show their relationship.
		Questions: Record the questions asked during lecture and leave space in the margins to resolve any confusing ideas.
		Be Cognizant of instructor cues and signals for important information.
		Take Advantage of class time and take notes until class is officially dismissed.

	Completed?	Task List
Post Lecture		**Review within 24 Hours:** To minimize forgetting and maximize information retention, review your notes within 24 hours after your class.
		Underline & highlight important words or phrases.
		Fill in Gaps: During class, you might not have been able to write down all the information on a topic or an example you thought of after the lecture– add that information to your notes! This is also a chance to fix any spelling or grammar errors you might have made while quickly recording notes.
		Test Yourself: Use notes to create a **practice exam**.
		Summarize the Information: At the end of your notes for each class, write a short summary or synopsis to what you learned in class. This will help you focus back on the main ideas of the lecture and can serve as a quick review before your next class to help refresh the content covered.

Adapted from: Stahl, J.R., and Henk, W.A. (1991). Enhancing students' notetaking through training and evaluation. *Journal of Reading*, 34(8), 614-633. https://www.jstor.org/stable/40014606.