



# THE CORNELL NOTE-TAKING SYSTEM

an effective strategy for learning lecture material



# Note-taking Page Setup

- Use 8 ½ by 11 inch paper
- Utilize a three-ring binder
  - Keep notes and classroom handouts together
- Draw lines down and across paper



2 1/2 Inches

# Prepare

6 Inches

←-----→  
**Recall or Cue**

**Column**

Reduce ideas after class into as few words as possible. Incorporate questions here.

←-----→  
**Record Column**

Record the lectures as fully as possible. Include details here.

↑-----↓  
Summarize

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Condense main ideas. Put them in your own words



# Record

## Record in Class

- During the lecture, write as many facts as you can.
  - Use shorthand to get the full ideas down.
    - Be consistent with any short cuts (abbreviations or symbols) and make a key to remember what they mean.
  - Leave spaces between ideas so you can fill in more later.



# Reduce

Reduce after Class – if possible due this prior to leaving the classroom.

- Condense these ideas and facts in as **few** words as possible in the Reduce/Cue column.
  - Demonstrates relationships between points/facts to strengthen memory.
  - Prepares you for exams gradually and ahead of time.



# Recite

## Recite from the Recall/Cue Column.

- Cover the Record Column with a note card.
- Using only the words in the Recall column, say over the facts as fully as you can **in your own words.**
- Then, uncover your notes and compare what you have said from the facts in the Record column.
  - Helps to transfer ideas to your long-term memory !



# Reflect

- Reflect on possible test questions and mark unclear points.
- Make sense of your notes by finding relationships and order in the material.
- Put ideas in categories and tie previous material to new notes.
- Think about which points might appear on tests and **highlight** any unclear points. Ask questions **before** the next lecture.



# Review

## Review to Improve your Memory.

- Spend 10 minutes a day in a quick review of your notes, to retain most of what you have learned and help relate the facts and ideas to present lectures or readings.





# Note-taking Tips

- Keep a separate section of your notebook or binder for each course.
- Start a new page for each lecture.
  - Date your lecture notes and number all pages.
- Condense your thoughts and ideas.
  - Use a phrase in place of a sentence or a word instead of a phrase.



## Note-taking Tips Cont'd

- Use indentations to distinguish between major and minor points.
- Put most notes in your own words, but the following should be noted exactly:
  - Formulas, definitions, and specific facts
- Use abbreviations and symbols wherever possible.
  - Note unfamiliar vocabulary and unclear areas.



## Note-taking Tips Cont'd

- Develop a code system of note marking to indicate questions, comments, important points, assignment due dates, etc.
- Ensure that you can understand what you have written. Clarify if needed.
- Fill in missing information by consulting the professor, a classmate, your textbooks or additional resources.

**GOOD LUCK!**