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## Learning Objectives

- Compare different note-taking strategies and assess which is most effective for you

Effective note-taking helps students retain what they learned in class so that they can use the material to study and build their knowledge and tackle more complex concepts later on. In fact, research indicates that there's a 34 percent chance that students will remember key information if it's present in their notes but only a 5 percent chance if it's not.<sup>[1]</sup> It doesn't matter whether you prefer to write brief summaries or make visual guides and diagrams in your notes. The important thing is to find a note-taking strategy that works for you. The following are a few recommendations to try out:

- **Stay organized:** Keep your notes and handouts separate for each class. For example, you might have a different notebook and folder for each class, or a large notebook with a different tab for each class. This will save you the time of trying to organize and locate your notes when studying for an exam.
- **Use visual cues:** Try highlighting, underlining, or drawing arrows or exclamation points next to any main or difficult concepts. This will call attention to these sections and remind you to spend more time reviewing them.
- **Group together similar concepts:** Grouping or “chunking” material is a good way to make studying and memorization easier. You can try drawing the main concept and connecting it to smaller, related concepts or making an outline of the information. Either one can serve as an effective study guide.
- **Make notes legible:** Some people have messy handwriting. However, writing as clearly as possible when you take notes will make it easier to review them later. It's also helpful if you're asked to share your notes with another student who missed class. If laptop use is permitted during class, you can also type your notes.

The following video addresses other specific strategies for note-taking:



[Video Link](#)

You can view the [transcript for “Effective Notetaking” here \(opens in new window\)](#).

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1. "Effective Note Taking Strategies." Utah State University Academic Success Center. 1999. Web. 10 Feb 2016. [\\_\\_](#)

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