

Cornell Notes

The Cornell Notes is a simple, efficient note taking system. The notes will be organized and easy to review, effectively forming a study guide.

Directions

1. Divide the paper

- A loose leaf notebook or similar is recommended.
- Divide the paper vertically by drawing a line from top to bottom about 2" from the left side of the page.
- Write on one side of the page only.

2. Document

- Write documenting information at the top of each page: student name, course, date, and page number.

3. Record notes

- During lectures, record the main ideas and concepts on the right side of the page. This is the Notes Column. Rephrase the information in your own words as you write it down.
- Skip one line between ideas and several lines between topics. **Use** the blank lines to add comments or rewrite definitions into your own words later.
- Avoid writing complete sentences; use symbols and abbreviations instead.

4. Review and Clarify

- As soon after class as possible, review the notes in the right column and clarify any ambiguous information.
- Compare the information with the book and/or other students' notes.
- Then pull the main ideas, concepts, terms, places, dates, and people from the Notes Column and record them in the Recall Column.

5. Summarize

- Summarize the lecture material at the end of each page of notes.
- Only include the main ideas from the lecture.

6. Study

For example:

Name		Date
Course		
Recall column 2.5"	Notes column 6"	
Detailed and Concise	Record the lecture as fully and meaningfully as possible in this section. Write definitions concisely.	
Reword	Skip a line and later rewrite the definition in your own words.	
Recall Cues	Write key words in Recall Column	
Summarize	Skip several lines at the end of lecture. Later summarize the key ideas in short sentences or phrases.	
Record notes in right column. Place associated key ideas in left column. Summarize notes at bottom of page. Review notes regularly.		

Studying with Cornell Notes: The 5 R study system

The Cornell method provides an excellent platform for the 5 R study system:

1. **Record.** During the lecture, record in the main column as many meaningful facts and ideas as you can. Write legibly.
2. **Reduce.** As soon after as possible, summarize these ideas and facts concisely in the Recall Column. Summarizing clarifies meanings and relationships, reinforces continuity, and strengthens memory. Also, it is a way of preparing for examinations gradually and well ahead of time.
3. **Recite.** Now cover the Notes Column, using only your jottings in the Recall Column as cues or "flags" to help you recall, say over facts and ideas of the lecture as fully as you can, not mechanically, but in your own words and with as much appreciation of the meaning as you can. Then, uncovering your notes, verify your recollection. This procedure helps to transfer the facts and ideas into your long term memory.
4. **Reflect.** Think about the information. Reflecting will give you the opportunity to make connections that are not immediately apparent. Reflection is necessary to reconcile contradictory information, categorize new information, and develop a global understanding from individual concepts.
5. **Review.** If you spend 10 minutes every week or so in a quick review of these notes, you will retain most of what you have learned, and you will be able to use your current knowledge more effectively.