

Study Smart: Tips and Tools for **Note Taking** and **Studying**



I. **Note taking**

- a. *Why take notes in class or on class readings?*
 - i. Writing helps you **remember** concepts from class
 - ii. It **engages** you in the class lecture when your attention may otherwise wander
 - iii. It helps you **recall** key concepts faster

- b. *What to write (or type) down:*
 - i. Anything your professor **repeats** more than once
 1. Questions your professor asks the class
 - ii. Any points your professor **emphasizes** as being important either with the words they use or the tone they take
 1. Example phrases to listen for: Furthermore, It is key to note, Additionally, Important concepts include...
 - iii. **Examples** your professor provides that you find helpfully illustrate the concepts they're covering in class
 - iv. Parts of their **lecture** not included on the slides

- c. *Setting up your note-taking space:*
 - i. At home:
 1. Make sure to have your **textbook/** assigned **readings** and any materials from class
 2. Make sure you can **hear** and/ or **watch** your professor's lecture; invest in good headphones if possible
 - ii. In class:
 1. Have **material to write with and on**
 - a. pens, pencils, highlighters, etc. and a good notebook or laptop/tablet
 - i. If possible, write instead of typing because you remember more when you write it down
 2. Bring your **textbook(s)** and/or lecture slides to class whenever possible
 3. Sit where you can **hear** and **won't be distracted** by classmates, windows, sound, etc. if you're easily distracted
 - iii. Either place:
 1. Use **different color or styles of fonts** to distinguish key words
 2. Make **copies** of key charts, visuals, etc. so you can study them at your own pace

- a. [Ask your professor](#) if you can take a picture or screen shot if you can't find a copy elsewhere

II. Studying your Notes

- a. *Methods:*
 - i. [Give yourself time](#) to study. Just like a good paper isn't written the night before, a good test is crammed for the night before
 - ii. [Take breaks between study sessions](#). Go and watch a TV show, take a break with TikTok, or switch to a new academic task.
 1. Making this move gives your brain time to absorb the new material.
 - iii. Use [study aids](#)
 1. [Flashcards](#) (Quizlet is great for the online version)
 2. [Peer review sessions](#) (try to get a group together on Zoom or Google Meets)
 3. [Practice exams](#) or reviews of questions your professor has asked in class
- b. *Best Practices:*
 - i. The night before a test, get [quality sleep](#).
 1. Use a [noise machine](#) app or a [meditation](#) app to soothe yourself. (See resources for our favorite suggestions!)
 - ii. [Eat](#) before your exam. This food will feed your brain and give you energy.
 - iii. If possible, [be early](#) to your exam space so you make sure you get a seat where you want in the room.

III. Resources

- a. [Your Student Success Tutors](#): they'll guide you through tips and trips to taking tests and notes in an orderly fashion
- b. [Quizlet](#): a free way to make flashcards online; also has other useful study tools
- c. Your professor and/ or CET's [office hours](#): if those don't work for you, email them and ask to meet at an alternative time or via Zoom
- d. [Breathe](#) is a great app with free, guided meditations, hypnotherapy, and sounds.
 - i. [Calm](#) is another great choice.
- e. Ames Library's [Lib Guides](#) which can provide more material if there are still concepts you don't connect with or find challenging
- f. If you have one, a [Course-Embedded Tutor](#) (CET) can go over topics that are proving difficult for you