



The Art of Note Taking

Note taking is an important and very useful skill to have! Note taking helps you to properly absorb and learn the content your teacher is giving you in class and ultimately provides you with an awesome resource for studying!

The **four steps of effective note taking** are.

1. **Make it your own work** – the best way to take notes is to actively engage in what your teacher or a textbook is trying to teach you and then writing that down in your own words. It can sometimes be useful to rewrite what your teacher, or the textbook has said (e.g. definitions or quickly noting down something important that your teacher has said in class), but generally you learn best when you are able to put what you were just taught into your own words.
2. **Keep it short and concise** – your notes are for you to learn/remember anything important, so only take notes on what's important! For example, when reading a textbook or listening to what your teacher is saying in class, there will be a few key topics and concepts which they are trying to teach you and that's what you should be taking note of. It's no good rewriting a whole textbook or lesson from your teacher, because that won't help your learning or understanding. You need to be able to extract the key topics and concepts and note them down concisely.
3. **Keep it organised** – notes are no good unless they are organised and easy to read. For some of you that might mean writing neatly on a piece of paper and using a ruler and for others that might mean keeping all your notes on a word document on your computer. Either way, make sure you are consistent with how you take your notes. A good example of how to organise your notes is:
 - **Headings**: have new topics or classes clearly labelled with large headings.
 - **Subheadings**: use smaller subheadings to break up a concept or class into smaller chunks of information.
 - **Important ideas**: use a different colour or make the word bold so that important ideas or words stand out for you to find them later
 - **1., a), -:** use dot points to create short lists or number important steps. This is a great way to break up your notes into sentences or small parcels of important information
4. **Have fun with it!** – note taking doesn't have to be boring black and white pages of words and really it shouldn't be! Use **colour** to **highlight important ideas** and **concepts** and make words jump off the page! Add colourful images where appropriate to make your notes more exciting. Use dot points and headings to help break up your notes so that you don't have to read massive paragraphs.

These four keys to effective note taking are a guide and are meant to help you begin your journey of note taking and figuring out what works for you. So, get creative, have fun with it, and with practice, note taking will become super easy!

You may not have realised, but what you just read above is an example of what effective note taking might look like! Below is an example and exercise on note taking, using Star Wars as our content for today. These are merely examples so do not try and follow them word for word, use them to guide your own note taking.

Example

Star Wars

Tales from a galaxy far far away

The Prequel Trilogy

1. **The Phantom Menace**: the beginning of the Star Wars saga follows the story of two **Jedi knights** who have to save a planet from an army of **battle droids** and the **sith**. However, whilst on this journey our Jedi Knights encounter a young child named **Anakin Skywalker**, who they believe to be the **chosen one**.
2. **Attack of the Clones**: with the army of **battle droids** causing chaos throughout the galaxy, the **Jedi** discover a secret **clone army** that has been built for them. They use this army to fight back against the battle droids and begin the **clone wars**.
3. **Revenge of the Sith**: unknowing to the **Jedi**, the evil **sith lord Darth Sidious** created the clone army and used them to turn on the Jedi! He turned Anakin Skywalker to the dark side and he is now known as **Darth Vader**.

The Original Trilogy

4. **A New Hope**: with the **Jedi** all gone and the evil **Empire** ruling the galaxy, the last Jedi **Obi Wan Kenobi** begins training **Luke Skywalker** to help the **rebellion** defeat the empire and restore peace to the galaxy! They discover and destroy the Empire's super weapon, the **Death Star**.
5. **The Empire Strike Back**: the **Empire** is on a mission to destroy the **rebellion** and they nearly do! Our heroes are separated and lost in different parts of the galaxy and most importantly **Luke Skywalker** learns that **Darth Vader is his father**!
6. **Return of the Jedi**: the **Empire** has recreated their super weapon, the **Death Star**. The rebellion launches a desperate final attempt to destroy the death star whilst **Luke Skywalker** confronts and defeats the evil sith lord **Darth Sidious**. Both the Rebellion and Luke are successful and **bring peace to the galaxy**!

Have a go at doing the same as above with the Sequel Trilogy movies! If you need to find any extra information, now's a good time to practice some research skills and have a google search!