**Ten Basic Steps for Good Note Taking**

1. Don’t write down everything that you read or hear. Be alert and attentive to the main points.  Concentrate on the “meat” of the subjects and forget the “trimmings.”
2. Notes should consist of key words, or very short sentences. As a speaker gets side-tracked you can go back and add further information.
3. Take accurate notes.  You should usually use your own words, but try not to change the meaning. If you quote directly from the author, quote correctly and record the citation.
4. Think a minute about your material before you start making notes. Don’t take notes just to be taking notes! Take notes that will be of real value to you when you look over them later.
5. Have a uniform system of punctuation and abbreviation that will make sense to you. Use a skeleton outline and show importance by indenting.  Leave white space for later additions.
6. Omit descriptions and full explanations. Keep your notes short and to the point. Condense your material so you can grasp it rapidly.
7. Do not worry about missing a point. Leave space and try to pick up the material you miss at a later date, either through reading, questioning, or common sense.
8. Don’t keep notes on oddly shaped pieces of paper.  Keep notes in order and in one place.
9. Shortly after making your notes, go back and rework (not recopy!) your notes by adding extra points, spelling out unclear items, etc.  Remember, we forget quickly. Budget time for this vital step just as you do for the class itself.
10. Review your notes periodically. This is the only way to achieve lasting memory.

From Chapman University