Structuring Your Notes

# Headings

Every page must have a heading that includes:

* Class name or number
* Date and time
* Page number

# Margins

Leave 1½ to 2 inches on all sides of the page to keep notes from looking crowded and to give the student room to add his or her own notes later.

# Skip lines between ideas

Do not crowd a lot onto one page. "White space" on a page makes the notes easier to read and lets students write their own comments.

When a page is packed with writing, it is hard to see what is important.

# Signal important information

Use a box, stars, or other indicators to mark important information, such as:

* Key formulas or concepts
* Assignments and due dates
* Class announcements (such as cancellations or room changes)

Whatever indicator you use, be consistent so it means the same thing every time.

# References

When the teacher refers to a textbook, video, or other source, make it clear.

# Charts, diagrams, and drawings

If a concept is easier to convey as a picture instead of words, do it that way, especially when the teacher provides a model.

Make sure you label diagrams correctly.

# Indicate activity

Try to reflect activities other than lectures such as:

* Demonstrations -- Example: Lighting the Bunsen burner - check the connection, position the lighter before turning on the gas.
* Videos or other media slide -- Example: Manet's "Olympia": stark lighting, confrontational gaze.

# Indicate Speakers

Note if a comment in the notes came from someone besides the teacher. Some indicators notetakers use are:

* SA: Student Answer
* SC: Student Comment
* SQ: Student Question
* TA: Teacher Answer
* TC: Teacher Comment
* TQ: Teacher Question

# Abbreviations

If you will need to write the same name or term many times, use an abbreviation, being sure to say what it is and use it consistently.

* 1498: VDG arrives in India (VDG = Vasco da Gama).
* Many people are familiar with the term \*TR but not the real meaning \*TR = Einstein's Theory of Relativity.

## Figure – Example of Notetaking Structure

