

Listen for Cues

Don't try to write everything down. Listen for cues from your teacher about what is important. When you hear "The reasons why..." "Here is how..." or a change in tone of voice, that indicates something noteworthy is about to be said. Write down dates, names, definitions, and formulas, and why they are important. Write down the gist of any examples or stories your teacher gives when explaining a point or concept. These will help you remember the material.

Use Abbreviations

Abbreviations let you write more quickly. To abbreviate, condense a word or phrase into initials, or use a symbol. For instance, use b/c for because; w/ for with; w/o for without; and govt for government. Always use the same abbreviations for the same words and phrases so you'll immediately know what they stand for.

Keep Organized

Keep notes for the same class together, along with any handouts.

Check the Board

When your teacher writes something on the board or projects it, that's a signal that the information is important. Copy everything down, and note that it was on the board.

Review and Highlight

Go over your notes after class or after school while the lecture is still fresh in your mind. Complete any partially recorded notes and clarify any unintelligible sections as quickly as possible. Add information that will help you comprehend the material. Use a highlighter or a different color of ink to highlight, underline or circle important words and phrases.