

Effective preparation, focused note-taking, and follow-up activities can help to compensate for difficulties in listening to lectures.

Note-taking strategies

- I. Before class:
 - a. Read the assigned read and write out central points or a thesis and argument.
 - b. Identify unfamiliar vocabulary words.
 - c. Try to anticipate what the professor will say.
- II. During class:
 - a. Sit near the front of room
 - b. Watch professor's lips and facial expressions
 - c. Only take notes on a laptop if this makes learning easier for you.
 - d. General note taking tips:
 - i. Organize chronologically. Write the date and topic at the beginning of each page.
 - ii. Outline, not paragraph (use headings, subheadings, bullet points)
 - iii. Leave White Space. *Here is an example of a page of notes written according to the Cornell Method. This method uses ample white space for later reflection and review*
<http://coe.jmu.edu/learningtoolbox/cornellnotes1.html>
 - e. Save space and time by using abbreviations. *Here are some commonly used abbreviations.*
http://www.ilile.org/events/past/Seminar_08_03/lesson_plans/Wheelersburg/NoteTakingSymbolsandAbbreviations.htm
 - f. Active Listening
 - i. Listen for TAC (Thesis, Argument, Conclusion)
 - ii. Ask for clarification when you don't understand.
 - iii. Keep pace. Don't worry if you don't know a word. Leave a space and keep going. You can fill it in later.
 - iv. Notice cues from Professor
 1. Structures and Transitions *Here are some commonly used phrases which can signal clues about the structure of a lecture.* <http://www.uefap.com/listen/listfram.htm>
 2. Facial Expressions and Body Language (for example, repetition, change in tone, writing on the board)
- III. After class
 - a. Read over your notes
 - i. Fill in gaps
 - ii. Look up new vocabulary words
 - iii. Compare with the assigned reading.
 - iv. Figure out what you do not understand.
 - b. It is common to miss some points in a lecture
 - i. Work with your classmates to exchange notes or form a study group and talk through the notes.

- ii. Visit your professor during office hours or make an appointment.

IV. Practicing Listening

- a. On-campus lectures
- b. Daily news (TV/radio) while you cook, clean, etc.
- c. Active listening in conversations: ask questions for clarification and to check understanding