

Effective Note-taking While Reading

Academic Reading – Note-taking

Effective note taking is an essential skill to be developed when you face huge amounts of readings and you need to have a clear understanding about them. Good note-taking allows you to recall information from main ideas, important information and makes reading an active process where you are able to have a conversation with the author as well.

Remember there is not a perfect formula for note-taking effectively, you need to find your own personal style as you do not copy the exact same words as the texts you read, note-taking means writing notes in your own words.

Effective note taking requires:

1. Recognising the main ideas: They are usually located at the beginning of each paragraph, they do not have examples or very specific information.
2. Reducing the information to note and diagram format: If you feel you are a visual learner, the diagram format can work for you as it condenses the information and help you visualize information better.
3. Recording the source of the information: Make sure you take notes about who mentions the information so you can quote effectively. It helps you distinguish between somebody else's ideas and your own.

Effective note-taking steps

1. Underline the key information: identify the reason why you are reading and highlight the most relevant points. You can use different colours to indicate separated sections such as important dates, references to be checked later, vocabulary you find difficult
2. Identify the purpose of the text: Read the preface or abstract to have a clear idea about the content of the text.

3. Include your own ideas: Record your thoughts in a different column, think about how useful they will be for your assignment.
4. Use abbreviations: It can be useful to save time and gives you the opportunity to focus on the relevant aspects of the text.

Note-taking abbreviations

Thus / Therefore	∴	Between betw	
Because	∴	or /	
Equals/same as	=	Definition def	
Does not equal / not the same as	≠	Conclusion conc	
Greater than / more than	>	Regarding / with regard to	re
Less than	<	As against / contrast with	vs
And	&	Before	B4
Important / importance of	NB	Especially	esp
Example / for example	eg	Namely / that is to say	ie
However	but	-ment (e.g. agreement becomes agreem't)	m't
Compare/contrast with	cf	It is/ that is	ie
Without	w/o	Transfer	t/f
-ion (e.g. proposition becomes proposit'n)	'n	Usually	usu

- See more at: <https://www.wits.ac.za/ccdu/academic-skills/note-taking-and-note-making/#sthash.BtOJw7GU.dpuf>

Materials used

<https://www.skillsyouneed.com/write/notes-reading.html>