1. **Label your notes** – At the beginning of a lecture, write down the date and the topic to be discussed. This will make it easier for you to find information when you need it.

2. **Keep your notes segregated by class** – Your history notes should be written in a different notebook than your biology notes. If you take notes on a laptop, keep them in different files.

3. **Write legibly** – If you can’t read what you have written, it will not help you when you go to study.

4. **Use plenty of paper** – Your notes should be easy to read and allow you to add information if you need to without crowding the page.

5. **Be purposeful** – Your job in class is to listen and take notes. This is not an extra activity but your only one. Keep your mind alert and focused on this task.

6. **Begin when the professor begins** – Don’t wait for something to sound important. Start taking notes when the instructor starts lecturing.

7. **Ignore all distractions** – The phone, the text messages, the IM, and the chatty students in the back can all interfere with your concentration.

8. **Do the readings before the lecture** – The assigned readings will give you important background for understanding the lecture, including important vocabulary.

9. **Develop note taking symbols** – Commonly used symbols include w/ for “with,” inc. for “including,” w/out for “without.” Feel free to develop others appropriate for the material you are studying.

10. **Focus on the cause and effect** – College tests ask for more than giving back facts. They ask you to apply the material you learned, discuss the effect of an issue, and to think critically about information. Take notes that will prepare you for this type of test. Write down the “shy’s” as well as the “what’s.”

11. **Review your notes after class** – Spend 5-15 minutes reviewing your notes and rewriting them. The will help to reinforce what you’ve learned in class and is a beneficial method for retaining information.

12. **Attend all lectures** – **Yeah, it’s obvious, but students often underestimate the importance of going to class!**