

# Be AGILE Strategy: Cornell Method

The most common note-taking approach is writing down as much of what the professor says as possible. However, there is other important information to document while in class, including key terms, ideas about what might be on the exam, and your own “cues” that connect the class information to something memorable. One approach of note-taking that creates space for all these information sources is the **Cornell Method**.

To maximize your time inside class, follow the steps outlined below. More detailed information on this and other effective note-taking strategies can be found on our website, [usm.maine.edu/AGILE](http://usm.maine.edu/AGILE).

## *How do I use this approach?*

1. Write the topic of the lecture at the top of the page. Also include your name, the date, and any relevant textbook or assigned reading page numbers on either the left- or right-hand sides.
2. Divide your paper into two sections by drawing a line vertically down the page. The left-hand side should consist of approximately 1/3 of the space, and the right 2/3.
3. Be sure to leave a blank section (about 1 inch) at the bottom of the page.
4. Record your notes during class within the right-hand section, making sure not to write in the left-hand column.
5. After class (the sooner the better but certainly within 24 hours), reread through your notes to predict possible exam questions, summarize ideas, and clarify terms. Write this information within the left-hand column.
6. Write a brief summary of your notes at the bottom of the page.
7. When it comes time to prepare for the exam, cover the right side of the page (the section that has your in-class notes), and use the left column as a self-test or study guide.

\*Special thanks to our colleagues at Texas State University's Student Learning Assistance Center for granting permission to adapt their handouts.

Sources: D., Dochen, C. W., & Hodges, R. (2015). Academic transformation: The road to college success (3rd ed.). Boston, MA: Pearson Education.

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