

How to take notes effectively on a laptop

Effective note taking skills are a very useful tool when you are in college. If you have clear and concise notes, it will make studying for tests easier and learning and retaining information will be a breeze. With all of the technology in today's society, some students travel from class to class with their laptops instead of the traditional paper and pen. They take notes using their laptop. This can be a faster and more effective way of taking notes if you follow some helpful tips:

Organize

If you are using your laptop for multiple classes, then create a folder on your hard drive for each class. This way when you save your documents for each class, you can save them in class specific folders.

Improve Your Typing Speed

Of course taking notes on your laptop is only effective if you are proficient with typing. Improve your typing speed by taking a typing class on your college campus or even try some typing exercises online. Most people type faster than they can write, therefore improving your typing speed can be beneficial.

Go Over Your Notes

Try to go over your notes immediately after class or later in the day. If you go over your notes and expand on any shorthand you may have used, you will have an advantage since the material is still fresh in your mind. You can even organize or outline your notes to make it easier to study for future exams.

Use a Note Taking Program

There are a few note taking programs on the market to assist students and even professionals to take notes while listening to lectures. These programs help you take notes, organize them, and even share them with others. An example of a popular program is OneNote which is licensed and distributed by Microsoft and can be downloaded from their site. Other examples of online note taking programs can be found here.

Invest in a Smaller Laptop

There are new laptops on the market now called mini notebook computers. These usually average \$300 or so in price. They are small, lightweight, and perfect for simple note taking. You can even access the Internet from these computers. Since they are smaller, they are easier to carry around campus than a traditional laptop, which can be bulky and heavy.

Other Tips:

- Check with your professor first before using a laptop in class. Some professors may not approve.
- Keep your notebook handy just in case your professor draws a graph or diagram on the board, which you cannot easily duplicate on a laptop.
- Carry your AC adapter or plug with you or even an extra battery just in case your current battery runs out during class.
- Be sure to pay attention to the lecture while you take notes so you do not miss any important demonstrations.

Using your laptop can be more effective than the traditional pen and paper method, however if you think you cannot pay attention and take notes on your laptop, you may want to consider using just a notebook and pen.

