Note-taking: Before the Lecture

Description	*Learn to improve your note-taking by preparing effectively before the lecture.*
Link	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1-wdkrKKCHE&feature=youtu.be

Key Steps before the Lecture

1. **Complete the Class Readings BEFORE the Class**

   - Pre-reading allows you to become more familiar with the terminology being used, which limits confusion and helps you to determine what content's important.
   - It's easy to be selective of with your notes because:
     o You know what information is already recorded in the textbooks.
     o As the information is not brand new to you, it's easier to resist the temptation to write everything down, and also…
   - Reading the content helps you to clarify areas of concern or confusion. As a result, you know what areas to focus on during the lecture.

2. **Review**

   - Take a few minutes before the lecture to review your notes from the previous lecture, while also looking ahead to what will be discussed in future weeks. Doing this helps to familiarize yourself with all the content, which could be referenced in the present, lecture and contextualize content which may be discussed in future weeks.
   - Keep the syllabus in mind. Knowing the course outcomes, expectations, and assessments can help you identify content in each lecture, which may require more emphasis in your notes.

3. **Be in the Right Place at the Right Time**

   - Of course you can choose to sit anywhere in class. But generally the closer you sit to the front and centre of the class, the better. Not all lecturers are as audible as others. So it's better to be close to the source of the sound. It may also be easier to stay attentive when you're in a more visible and engaged seating position.
   - Also, be on time, as missing the start of the lecture means you could miss key information, which can lead to disorganized notes.

Lastly…

4. **Come Equipped**

   - So, get your equipment - your laptop, pens, notebooks - ready so once the lecture has started, the only thing you need to focus on is taking notes.

- It's really useful to have your textbook available as the lecturer may mention specific passages which you may want to cross reference. You can also see which aspects of the lecture are already recorded in the textbooks, which also means that it kind of helps to select which information to include in your own notes.

Digital Vs Paper Notes

Whether to use digital or paper notes is an individual decision that's really based on your learning preferences and the content delivered. It's important to make the decision regarding which format to use before the lecture so you've got the necessary resources and equipment in place. Here are some benefits of both methods, which should be considered:

Benefits of Digital Notes

- So, for many people, typing is going to be faster than writing by hand. So for them, that's a primary focus of why they would use digital notes.
- The fact that you can delete, cut, copy, paste, and insert, also makes digital notes easier to edit later on.
- Digital notes also allow you to highlight and emphasize text, so for example, changing fonts, colours, sizes and so on. Of course to be able to do that, you don't need any additional equipment. For example, in the case of using paper notes, you may need different coloured highlighters.
- With cloud-based applications, notes can appear on multiple devices and not just on one notepad, which gives you that extra flexibility.
- It's also a faster way of sharing and comparing notes with others.
- Also, handwriting can become unclear when writing fast whereas typed notes remain clear and consistent.

Benefits of Paper Notes

- So, carrying a notepad for making notes can be less burdensome than carrying around a laptop and also the charges that's going to be needed.
- There can be a lower cost since all that is needed in most cases are pens and paper, whereas digital notes require the cost of the device and also any possible software costs for the note-taking apps.
- They are also extremely adaptable as you can change the format quickly and at any time. In addition, you can merge styles. So for example, you can include sketches with linear notes.
- Finally, some note-takers have a very visual style. So which may include sketches, charts, and doodles. A free flowing paper based note-taking style makes this easier for them since trying to sketch in a digital way may be something that is not as easy or maybe something that many people are not quite comfortable with.