



Outlining Method for Note Taking

The outlining method is perhaps the most common form of note taking used by college students; an outline naturally organizes the information in a highly structured, logical manner, forming a skeleton of the textbook chapter or lecture subject that serves as an excellent study guide when preparing for tests.

This method of note taking is extremely useful in most instances; however, in classes, such as math or chemistry, where a lot of formulas, graphs, or structures must be drawn, the outline method should be replaced with a better note-taking system.

HOW TO USE

- Write points in an organized manner based on space indentation.
- Place major points farthest to the left.
- Indent each more specific point farther to the right (level of importance is indicated by distance away from left margin).

ADVANTAGES

- The outlining method emphasizes content as well as relationships between the material.
- It reduces the time needed for editing and allows for easy reviewing.

DISADVANTAGES

- This method requires more thought for accurate, understandable organization and, therefore, cannot be used during lectures that move too quickly.

EXAMPLE

How to study from an outline:

- I. Read through one line at a time
 - A. Explain the information and connect the idea to others presented
- II. Check the accuracy of the information
- III. Add clue words
 - A. Jot down keywords or details that you didn't originally include in the outline
 - B. Use these keywords to jog your memory when studying from the outline
- IV. Recite information from the outline aloud
- V. Write a summary of the information presented
 - A. Use your own words to connect the various ideas presented in the outline in a logical manner

Adapted from: Wong, L. (2006). Essential study skills (5th ed.). Boston: Houghton Mifflin.

<http://blc.new.uc.iupui.edu/academic-enrichment/study-skills/note-taking-strategies/outlining-method>