

Great **note taking** takes practice. You have to find a method that works for you, and that may change depending on the class that you're taking (for example, a science class versus a humanities class). Here are 5 methods that are proven to be successful. Read over each one and decide if there's one that might work for you.

These styles are described in the format you would use to take notes in class. You might find that a comfortable method is a combination of 2 or more of the ones listed here, and that's fine.

Figure out what works for you and stick with it!

1/ THE CORNELL METHOD

Page

Today's Date

Layout of the page and where to write

You physically draw a line vertically down your paper, leaving $\frac{1}{4}$ of the page on the left and $\frac{3}{4}$ of the page on the right.

Organization of concepts

This allows you to take notes on the right-hand side of the page leaving space on the left to summarize the main point with a cue word or phrase.

When the instructor moves to a new topic, skip a line.

It is also a great idea to use some organizational structure to your whole page.

Like using bullets!

✓ Or using an indented system – kind of like outlining.

You can underline important words.

Filling in blanks.

If you aren't able to completely write down an idea before the instructor moves on to a new topic, *fill it in after class.*

Reviewing and Studying

After class, test your knowledge of course material by covering up the right side of the page, reading the cue words, and trying to remember as much information as possible. Then check to see if you remembered correctly. *Also write page and date summaries.*

Advantages

This method is simple and helps you easily identify main points and study the material. It can be used in any type of class.

2/ THE OUTLINING METHOD

Page #

today's date

Class Topic: How to Outline Notes

- I. The first level is reserved for each new topic/idea and is very general.
 - a. This concept must always apply to the level above it (I)
 - i. This concept must always apply to the level above it (a)
 - ii. This is a second supporting piece of information for the level above it (a) but is equal to the previous information (i)
 - iii. This information is a sister to (i) and (ii)
 - b. This concept applies to the level above it (I) and is a “sister” to (a)
- II. You don't have to use Roman Numerals, Letters, and Numbers – try only indents, dashes, and bullets!
- III. Outlining requires listening and writing in points in an organizational pattern based on space indentation
 - a. Advantages to outlining
 - i. It is organized
 - ii. It groups related material
 - iii. It makes review/studying easy
 - iv. The need to edit after class helps reinforce content
 - b. Disadvantages to outlining
 - i. It may require editing afterward to clean it up
 - ii. It may be more challenging in classes that aren't structured or sequential in nature

3/ THE CHARTING METHOD

Page #

Today's Date

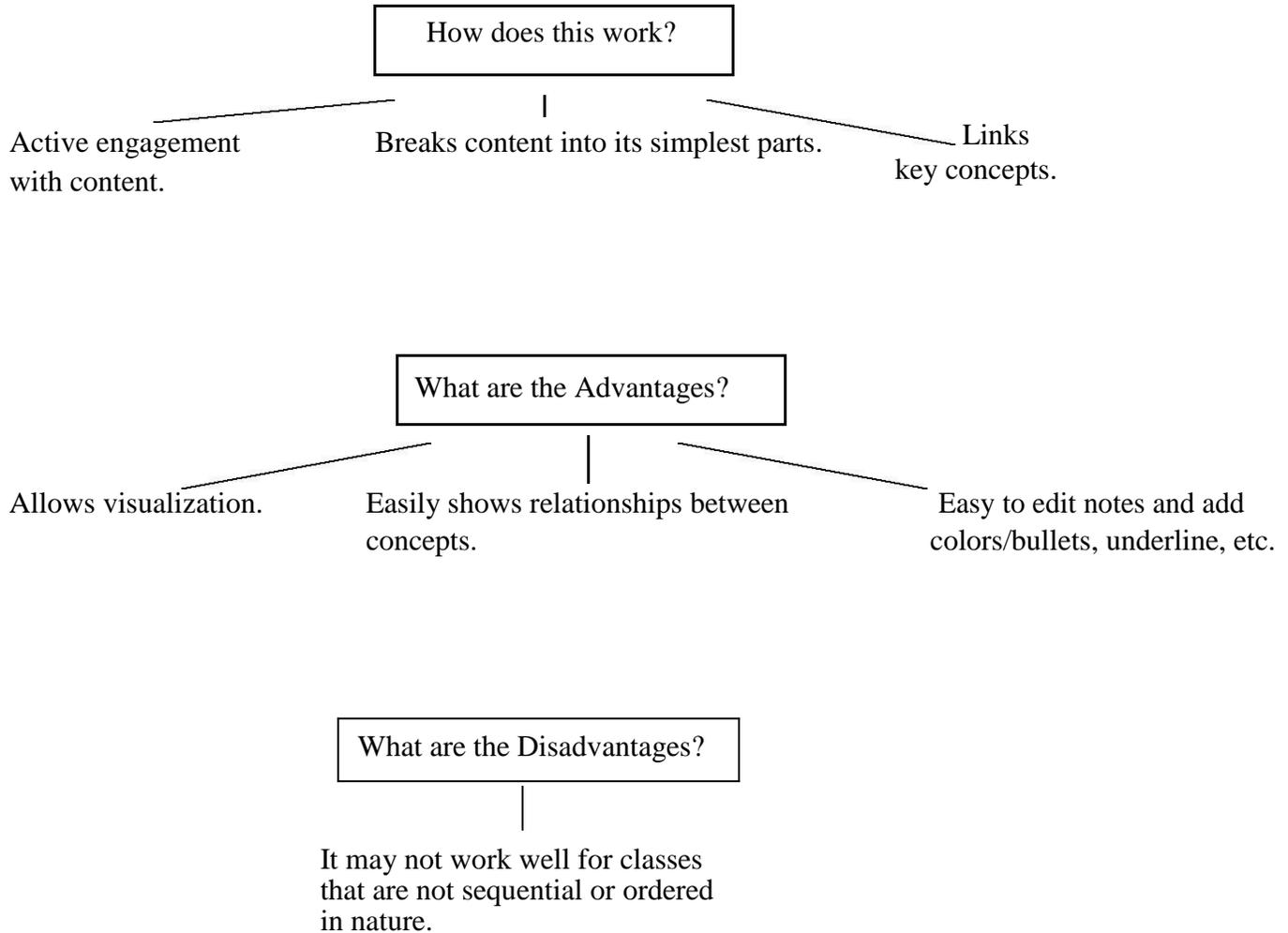
How to Use	Advantages	Disadvantages	When to Use
Set up your paper in columns and label headings related to content.	Identify important information quickly.	May need an outline of information to be covered in advance.	If you'll be tested on facts (like people, places, dates, events) and chronology.
The headings could be categories covered in the lecture, main ideas, or chronological.	Easily see things to memorize and study.	May not work well in classes that lack structure or are not sequential.	If you know the outline or overview ahead of time.
Insert information from the lecture into the labeled columns by heading.	See the big picture in one page.		If you need to identify overarching themes and main points.

4/ THE MAPPING METHOD

Page #

Today's Date

DIAGRAMS CONTENT



5/ THE SENTENCE METHOD

Page #

Today's Date

1. Write everything from the lecture into a sentence, and make a new bullet/number for each sentence.
2. Advantages: the method is easy and most people use it at some point; it helps you record ALL the info; it does not require organization.
3. Disadvantages: it may be difficult to keep up with it in fast lectures; it does not lend itself to easy editing to add additional numbers, bullets, etc. You may need to organize it after class.
4. This method is helpful in lectures with lots of content where you need to take extensive notes.