Note Taking Strategies

Purpose of Note Taking
Lecture notes, combined with the textbook material, are an excellent source of review.

Before the Lecture
1. Keep each course/section separated
2. Do the readings before the lecture
3. Try to get an overview of the material
4. Identity unfamiliar terms and concepts
5. Note material that’s unclear
6. Look for other gaps in information
7. Review previous notes from the class

During the Lecture
8. Each lecture should begin on a new page
9. Date and number all pages
10. Take notes continually
11. Make notes brief
12. Look for verbal & non-verbal cues
13. Use abbreviations and symbols
14. Put most notes in your own words
15. Note instructor’s lecture style
16. Note unfamiliar vocabulary
17. If you miss something – leave a blank space
18. Use a separate line for each main point
19. Use margins for mini self-notes
20. Develop a code system for abbreviating & organizing
21. Draw quick sketches or diagrams

After the Lecture
22. Review your notes as soon as possible after the lecture
23. Clear up illegible handwriting & check for errors
24. Fill in any further facts & examples
25. Underline to emphasize an important point
26. Tie several minor points together
27. Manipulate/Reorganize the material so it makes sense to you
28. Review as soon as possible after the lecture
29. Review and associate your notes with previous notes
30. Review your notes, don’t re-learn them

Some examples of abbreviations & symbols
aka also known as = equals + plus, positive
imp important ≠ not equal - minus, negative
qty quantity < less than & and
w/ with > more than # number of
w/o without % percentage @ located at