

Catch the key ideas, connect them to useful cues, and make a quick summary.

DATE _____

Key words, prompts, names

After the session, close your notes and write the main idea in your own words.



Make the columns work for you

There is no single right way to take notes. This page is a flexible starting point.

THE SHORT VERSION

Capture the useful details on the right. Add cue words or questions on the left. Later, use those cues to remember the main ideas without rereading every line.

1 BEFORE

Add the subject and date. If you know what the session is about, jot down a question or two in the cue column.

2 DURING

Put key points, examples, or short phrases in the notes column. You do not need to write every word.

3 AFTER

Turn key points into cue words or questions. This helps you see what matters and what you want to ask next.

4 REVISIT

Cover the notes column and use your cues to remember the ideas. Then check the notes and add anything you missed.

QUICK EXAMPLE

Topic: The water cycle

Cue: Evaporation

Notes: Heat changes liquid water into water vapour.

Summary: Heat helps water move from a liquid into the air.

MAKE IT EASIER ON YOUR BRAIN

Use abbreviations, symbols, colour, or a quick sketch. Leave blank space and come back later. If writing while listening is difficult, ask for notes, record key words, or use speech-to-text when available. You can also use this sheet for a conversation, appointment, video, or book.

Your notes are for you - they do not have to look perfect to be useful.