

Note-making - symbols and abbreviations



The art to taking notes in lectures is not to try to write down everything verbatim (word for word) but to choose the important parts to note and to write in an abbreviated way. This will help you to ensure that you keep up with the lecturer and that converting the points to abbreviations and symbols you will also lodge them in your memory.

Symbols

Below are some common shorthand symbols useful for speedy note making.

∴	therefore				
∵	because				
÷	statement/answer is correct				
x	statement/answer is wrong				
?	question; is the statement correct?				
/	or (this/that = this or that)				
& or +	and/plus				
-	a dash (often used to join ideas and replace words or punctuation marks that have been omitted)				
" "	ditto (means the same as the words immediately above the ditto marks)				
≠	does not equal, differs from, is the opposite of	≤	is equal to or smaller than		
		≥	is equal to or larger than		
=	is/are/have/has>equals	>	larger than	<	smaller than
∴	leads to/results in/causes				
∴	does not lead to/result in/cause				

Abbreviations

Many of the common general abbreviations useful in note making are found in an appendix in a dictionary; however, some of these are listed below:

e.g.	for example
i.e.	that is
etc.	etcetera: and so on
c.f.	compare
viz.	namely
c.(or ca.)	about/approximately
N.B.	note
C19	nineteenth century; similarly C20 etc.

1920s	i.e. 1920-1929; similarly 1970s etc.
approx.	approximately
dept	department
diff.(s)	difficult(y)(-ies)
excl.	excluding
govt.	government
imp.	important/importance
incl.	including
info.	information
lang.	language
ltd	limited
max.	maximum
min.	minimum
1st	first
2nd	second
3rd	third etc.
G.B.	Great Britain
U.K.	United Kingdom
Eng.	English
Brit.	British
Q.	question
A.	answer
no.	number
p./pp.	page/pages
poss.	possible/possibly
prob.	probable/probably
probs.	problems
re-	with reference to/concerning
ref.	reference
sts	students
tho'	though
thro'	through
v.	very
s/t	something
s/o	someone

Source: James, K., Jordan, R. and Matthews, A. (1991), *Listening Comprehension and Note-Taking Skills*, London: Collins.