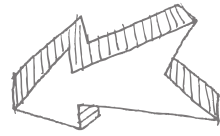


# A NOTE-TAKING SUCCESS STRATEGY



Cornell Notes is a note-taking strategy that many students find helpful. All that's needed is loose-leaf paper, kept in a binder, with rules added to each page as illustrated in the diagram.

## DURING CLASS, RECORD NOTES ON THE RIGHT-HAND SIDE OF THE PAPER

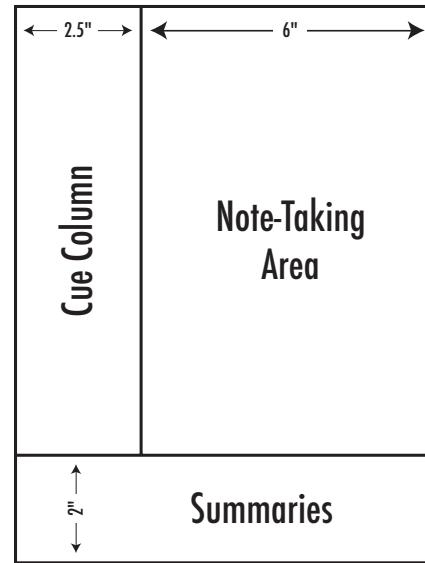
- ✓ Write in paragraphs, skipping lines to separate information logically.
- ✓ Strive to get the main ideas down rather than details and examples.
- ✓ Use abbreviations for extra writing and listening time.
- ✓ Use pictures or drawings when they're helpful.

## AFTER CLASS, REFINE YOUR NOTES AND ADD CUES

- ✓ Check or correct incomplete items and expand notes that are too sketchy.
- ✓ Underline key words and phrases.
- ✓ Write key words and questions in the left-hand column as cues to spark your memory.
- ✓ Sum up each page of notes by writing a sentence or two at the bottom of the page.

## STUDY YOUR NOTES

- ✓ Cover up the right side of the page, read your cues and questions, and recite information as fully as possible. Uncover the sheet to verify information.
- ✓ Overlap several pages of notes from a single lecture or reading and look at the cues in the left columns. Study the progression of the information. Write down your insights.
- ✓ Review by reciting what you know and reviewing your insights.



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Steven D. Herrington, Ph.D., Sonoma County Superintendent of Schools

YOUR FUTURE STARTS NOW

# MIDDLE SCHOOL TO HIGH SCHOOL CHECKLIST



Middle school is the best time to begin exploring the range of education and career opportunities available to you and to learn how you can achieve your dreams.



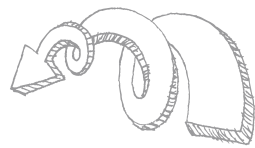
**I**n today's world, education and training beyond high school are more critical than ever before if you want to achieve your dreams. You'll want to take the right high school classes to get into college and achieve your career goals—which is something you should start thinking about *right now*.

Middle school is also a great time to begin exploring the wide range of occupations available to you and to find out what it's like to be a doctor, teacher, mechanic, chef, computer programmer, musician, or whatever career suits your interests and skills. But it's best to plan ahead so you know what you want and are ready to take the classes that will get you there.

To reach your goals, you and your parents will want to talk about high school classes, extra-curricular activities, grade point expectations, and more. These discussions should start when you're in seventh and eighth grade, so you don't miss out on what's available in high school.

This checklist was designed by the Sonoma County Office of Education to help you look ahead and prepare for your future success.

## SEVENTH GRADE



- Make sure your **class schedule** includes a solid set of academic classes.
- If you can, enroll in advanced math classes or sections.
- Find your school library and see if it has an after-school study group or **homework club**.
- Use a calendar or daily planner to organize your homework.
- Learn how to **use a proven note-taking strategy**, such as Cornell Notes, to help you be successful in your classes.
- Learn how to calculate your Grade Point Average (GPA).
- Find out if your school has an **AVID** (Advancement Via Individual Determination) program and see if you qualify. Over 90% of AVID students graduate from high school prepared to enter four-year colleges.
- Find out if your school has a foreign language, performing arts, or career technical education (CTE) program that you can participate in.
- Attend a career day event** at your school or visit the Sonoma County College & Career-Ready Fair, held in September at Windsor High School.
- Attend **parent-teacher conferences**. Learn to interact with teachers and other adults.
- Do your best on your achievement tests. It prepares you for the college entrance exams you'll take in high school.
- Sign up to participate in **summer enrichment** or pre-college programs offered at local universities, such as the EXCEL for Youth or Academic Talent programs at Sonoma State University.
- Remember to keep in mind your online reputation when on social media. The things you say now could potentially be seen by a future employer.

### HOW TO CALCULATE YOUR GRADE POINT AVERAGE (GPA)

Add the point value of the letter grades you receive for each class, then divide the total by the number of classes you're taking. Your grade point average can range from 4 to 0, with 4 being the best.

- A** = 4
- B** = 3
- C** = 2
- D** = 1
- F** = 0



## EIGHTH GRADE



- Make sure your schedule includes a solid set of academic classes.
- See if you can take **algebra or advanced math** and English classes.
- Go to the library and find out how to sign up for an online career and academic planning account, such as Naviance, Kuder Navigator or California Career Zone.
- Continue participating in AVID classes, homework groups, and school clubs.
- Find out if your school has a foreign language or arts program that you can participate in.
- Continue to use your **calendar or daily planner** to organize your homework and class assignments.
- Attend a **career day event** or shadow your parents or other adults at their jobs.
- Visit the Sonoma County College & Career-Ready Fair in September at Windsor High School.
- Learn about the **high school "a-g requirements"** that allow you to attend a four-year college directly out of high school.
- When you schedule your high school classes, make sure you include the a-g classes.
- Learn how many credits you need to graduate high school.
- Do your best on your **achievement tests**. It prepares you for the college entrance exams you'll take in high school.
- Visit your high school.** Learn where some of the rooms are: school office, gym and locker rooms, science labs, counseling and career center, etc.
- Ask about your high school's career pathway programs, core academic programs, and/or small learning communities.
- Visit a local junior college or university.
- If you have an online career and academic planning account, use it to complete a 6 to 10-year plan and set goals.
- Remember that participation in **extra-curricular activities** in high school—sports, cheerleading, student council—requires a good GPA.
- Encourage your parents to go to your high school's **open house**.
- See if your local high school offers any **Step Up classes**. These are after-school or summer classes specially designed for middle school students. The classes focus on specific career areas and are taught by high school teachers.
- Find out when your high school holds **freshman orientation** and attend.

### WHAT ARE THE A-G REQUIREMENTS?

The a-g requirements are a series of 15-18 high school classes that prepare students for college. If you complete these classes with a grade of C or better, you'll be ready to advance to the college or technical school of your choice. The classes you take in middle school provide the foundation for the high school a-g classes.

	<b>HISTORY</b>	A	✓✓
	2 years required		
	<b>ENGLISH</b>	B	✓✓✓✓
	4 years required		
	<b>MATHEMATICS</b>	C	✓✓✓✓
	3 years required		
	4 years recommended		
<b>LABORATORY SCIENCE</b>	D	✓✓✓	
2 years required			
3 years recommended			
<b>FOREIGN LANGUAGE</b>	E	✓✓✓	
2 years required			
3 years recommended			
<b>VISUAL &amp; PERFORMING ARTS</b>	F	✓	
1 year required			
<b>COLLEGE PREP ELECTIVE</b>	G	✓	
1 year required			