

## Abbreviations and Symbols for Note Taking

Note Taking is hard work. If you find it impossible to write fast enough to get the information down and still be able to read your notes, you may want to use some abbreviations and symbols in place of words when taking notes. You should use only the abbreviations that fit your needs and ones that you will remember easily. A good idea is to introduce only a few abbreviations or symbols into your note taking at a time. Remember, within 24 hours you should review and edit your notes. At that time you may want to write in the complete words if you think you may have trouble remembering their abbreviations. Listed below are some frequently used symbols and abbreviations you might find useful to you when you take lecture notes.

1. Leave out the periods in standard abbreviations.

PhD	doctor
Dept	department
NYC	New York City

2. Borrow technical symbols.

&	and
+	and, plus, positive
-	minus
/	divided by
x	times, multiplied by
=	equals, is the same as
<	less than, is increasing to
>	greater than, is decreasing to
	is parallel to, parallel
%	percent, percentage
#	number
\$	dollars
c	cents
()	parenthetical
@	amount, the amount of, at
?	question, the question is
!	here's a surprising fact

3. Use standard abbreviations from Engl and other langs.

cf	compare
eg	for example
c/o	care of
lb	pound

4. Use the entire first syllable and only the first letter of a second syllable.

subj	subject
cons	conservative
tot	totalitarianism
ind	individual

5. Eliminate final letters. Use just enough of the beginning of a word to form an easily recognizable abbreviation.

assoc	associate, associated
ach	achievement
boil	biological
info	information
intro	introduction
chem.	chemistry
conc	concentration
max	maximum
rep	repetition

6. Omit vowels from the middle of words, and retain only enough consonants to provide a recognizable skeleton of the word.

bkgd	background
ppd	prepared
prblm	problem
estmt	estimate
gvt	government

7. Use an apostrophe.

gov't	government
am't	amount
cont'd	continued
educat'l	educational

8. Use "g" to represent *ing* endings.

decr <sup>g</sup>	decreasing
ck <sup>g</sup>	checking
est <sup>g</sup>	establishing
expt <sup>g</sup>	experimenting

9. Generally, spell out short words such as *in*, *at*, *to*, *but*, *for*, and *key*. Symbols, signs, or abbreviations for short words will make the notes too confusing with "shorthand."

10. Leave out the words *a* and *the*.

11. If a term, phrase, or name is initially written out in full during the lecture substitute initials whenever the term, phrase, or name is used again.

Initial writing:       Modern Massachusetts Party  
Subsequently:       MMP

12. Use symbols for commonly recurring connective or transitional words.

&	and
w/	with
w/o	without
vs	against