

Do Your Notes Impede Your Learning?

Below are note organization formats that students use to help them learn. These formats are arranged *from the most time consuming and least efficient to the most efficient in promoting learning*. Where does your current note organization format fit in this continuum? **Would you like to know if your note organization format promotes learning, or instead, impedes it?**

Format 1: Rereading/Highlighting

Rereading is not really a note-taking format, but it illustrates a common method by which students attempt to learn. Look at the text below. On the right page is a sample of text from an Economics I class that has been highlighted. No taking of notes is done here with this means for studying.

Goals of Macroeconomy

The definition of macroeconomy is the economy of a whole society. There are five expectations in a macroeconomy. One, is full employment which means literally 100% employment of a labor force. Developed societies don't have full employment because of health problems, people changing jobs, and changing technology where some jobs become obsolete, but new ones open. A second expectation of a macro-economy is price stability. The problem here is that sharp increases in prices erode the purchasing power of money. A third expectation is economic growth where the goal is greater output of a wide range of goods and services of high quality. Fourth, environmental protection is an expectation because economic activity could have a negative effect on the environment. Finally, increased individual well-being is an expectation in macroeconomies.

Format 2: Word for Word

This format involves using notepaper to record information. Notes are recorded almost **word for word**. This style of notetaking is impossible for most students during a lecture and totally unnecessary from textbooks.

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Format 3: Main Ideas and Details

Notes are organized with **some separation of main ideas and details**. Many unessential words and phrases are omitted without losing main ideas and related clarifying details.

Goals of Macroeconomy

Definition of macroeconomy - economy of a whole society.

Five expectations in a macroeconomy

Full employment - 100% employment of labor force. Developed societies don't have full employ. because of health probs, people change jobs, & changing technology-some jobs become obsolete & new ones open.

Price stability - problem is that sharp price increases erode purchasing power of money.

Expectation is economic growth - goal is greater output of a wide range of high quality goods and services.

Environmental protection - economic activity could negatively affect environment.

Increased individual well-being.

Format 4: Outline Format

This format **separates main ideas and details using numbers and letters**. This note organization format shows order and denotes relationships of main ideas to each other and main ideas to details.

Goals of Macroeconomy

I. **Macroeconomy** - economy of a whole society.

II. 5 expectations in a macroeconomy

A. **Full employment** - 100% employment of labor force. Developed societies don't have full employment because:

1. health problems,
2. people changing jobs,
3. with changing technology, some jobs become obsolete but new ones open.

B. **Price stability** - problem is that sharp price increases erode purchasing power of money.

C. **Economic growth** - goal is greater output of a wide range of high quality goods and services.

D. **Environmental protection** - economic activity could negatively affect environment.

E. Increased individual well-being.

Format 5: Cornell System

Notes are organized with **some separation of main ideas from details** in a manner that facilitates self-testing. This format makes it easy to discover what has and has not been learned before a test is taken when something can still be done about it.

To self-test, cover up the details on the right side of the line and by only looking at the main ideas on the left, recite aloud, from memory, as many of the details for that main idea as possible. Then check the details for completeness and accuracy.

Goals of Macroeconomy

<p>Macroeconomics</p> <p>5 expectations in macroeconomy and meaning of each</p> <p>3 reasons developed societies don't have full employment</p>	<p>Economy of a whole society.</p> <p>Full employment - 100% of labor force employed.</p> <p>health problems people changing jobs changing tech. = some jobs become obsolete and new ones open</p> <p>Price stability - prob. = sharp price increases erode purchasing power of money.</p> <p>Economic growth - goal = greater output of a wide range of high quality goods and services.</p> <p>Environ. protection - econ. activity could negatively affect environ.</p> <p>Increased individual well-being.</p>
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Format 6: Cornell System with Questions, Numbers, and Letters

This format **shows the relative importance of each piece of information to other pieces of information, indicates order, and facilitates self-testing.** Making questions from main ideas also speeds learning and improves recall.

Goals of Macroeconomy

<p>Macroeconomics</p> <p>5 expectations in macroeconomy and meaning of each</p> <p>3 reasons developed societies don't have full employment</p>	<p>Economy of a whole society.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Full employment - 100% of labor force employed. <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. health problems b. people changing jobs c. changing tech. = some jobs become obsolete and new ones open 2. Price stability - prob. = sharp price increases erode purchase power of money. 3. Economic growth - goal = greater output of wide range of high quality goods and services. 4. Environ. Protection - econ. activity could negatively affect environ. 5. Increased individual well-being.
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Format 7: Notecard System

The Notecard Format separates main ideas from details which makes self-testing easier and the organization of main ideas and details simpler. **Place only one main idea and its details on each notecard.** Learners can then separate notecards in to 2 piles: the “*learned*” and the “*not yet learned.*” This way they can quickly see what has and has not been learned before a test is taken, when something can still be done about it.

<hr style="border: 1px solid red;"/> <hr style="border: 1px solid cyan;"/> <hr style="border: 1px solid cyan;"/> <hr style="border: 1px solid cyan;"/> <p style="text-align: center;">Expectations in a macroeconomy</p> <hr style="border: 1px solid cyan;"/> <hr style="border: 1px solid cyan;"/> <hr style="border: 1px solid cyan;"/> <hr style="border: 1px solid cyan;"/>	<hr style="border: 1px solid red;"/> <p>Full employment - 100% of labor force employed</p> <p>Price stability - prob. = sharp price increases erode purchasing power of money.</p> <p>Economic growth - goal = greater output of wide range of hi quality goods & services.</p> <p>Environmental protection - econ. activity could negatively affect environ. Increase individual well-being.</p>
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Format 8: Notecard System with Questions, Abbreviations, Underlining, Numbers, and Sources

Here, notecards **are formatted with questions made from main ideas and answers made from related details.** Abbreviations are added to shorten notes. The lecture date or textbook page numbers make referring back to lecture notes or texts fast and easy, if necessary. Formulating questions and building answers to them speeds understanding and learning.

The details tell learners what kind of question can be made. For example below, the details contain expectations of a macroeconomy. Therefore, the possible test question is “What are 5 expectations of a macroeconomy?”

<p style="text-align: right;">Lecture 2/14</p> <hr style="border: 1px solid red;"/> <hr style="border: 1px solid cyan;"/> <hr style="border: 1px solid cyan;"/> <hr style="border: 1px solid cyan;"/> <p style="text-align: center;">What are 5 expectations in a macroecon.?</p> <hr style="border: 1px solid cyan;"/> <hr style="border: 1px solid cyan;"/> <hr style="border: 1px solid cyan;"/> <hr style="border: 1px solid cyan;"/>	<hr style="border: 1px solid red;"/> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Full employ. - 100% of labor force employed 2. Price stability - prob. = sharp price increases erode purch. power of \$. 3. Economic growth - goal = greater output of wide range of hi qual. goods & services. 4. Environ. protection - econ. activity could negatively affect environ. 5. Increase indiv. well-beind.
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Format 9: Notecard System with Questions, Abbreviations, Underlining, Numbers, and Sources and Mnemonics

The addition of a memory aid called a **mnemonic** speeds learning and recall even more. To make a phrase mnemonic, the first letter of each detail below is arranged to form a word in a phrase that aids in recall. A key word from the main idea is included in the mnemonic phrase to avoid confusion with other mnemonics.

Lecture 2/14

What are 5 expectations in a macroe-con.?

1. Full employment
2. Economic growth
3. Environmental protection
4. Price stability
5. Increased individual well-being

Expect a **FEE** for **PI**!

Format 10: Notecard System with Questions, Abbreviations, Underlining, Numbers, Visuals, and Sources

The most efficient note organization format!

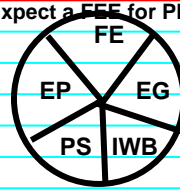
Adding visuals such as sketches, charts, diagrams, graphs, etc. speeds understanding and learning even more. Shorten the question while retaining its full meaning if possible. Compare this notecard with the text on page 2.

Lecture 2/14

5 expectations in a macroecon.?

1. Full employ.
2. Environ. protection
3. Econ. growth
4. Price stability
5. Incr. indiv. well-being

Expectations



Full emp. Environ. protect. Econ. growth Price stability Increased indiv. well-being