

Study Skills: Knowledge Maps and Notes

How do you use your knowledge map?

Each subject that you are studying has been broken down into its constituent parts, with main sections, sub-topics and supporting details.

- A very useful start is to list all the topics on the course according to this hierarchy and use this as a 'revision checklist' for the subject.
- Tick topics off as you've learnt them.
- Plan the topics into your long-term revision plan so that you come back to them regularly.

Using your notes:

- **Condense.** Fitting notes onto one side of paper makes them easier to stomach, so rewrite and cut down as you go.
- **Highlight.** Target key areas using colours and symbols. Visuals help you remember the facts.
- **Record.** Make it personal, putting important points in your own words, bullet points or mind maps
- **Talk.** Read your notes out loud, it's one way of getting them to register.
- **Test.** See what you can remember without notes, but avoid testing yourself on subjects you know already. Why not ask someone else to test you?
- The purpose of making summary notes on a topic or section is to aid your overall understanding of material, to help you distinguish between what is really important information (*depth*) and what is merely supporting *detail*.

Less is always more

When writing notes, remember they should contain a summary, not an extensive repetition of what is in the textbook.

- Don't crowd the page. Stick to main headings and sub-headings. Use abbreviations where appropriate. Try to reduce what you need to know on the topic down to one A4 sheet.
- Once you have an overview, it is easier to fill out the detail.