

Two Ways to Take Better Notes

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New York Magazine:

If you ask ten people what the best way to take notes is, you'll probably get ten different answers. Ultraorganized note-takers (a group to which I cannot claim membership) come up with all sorts of crazy schemes involving bullet points and different-colored pencils and diagrams connecting ideas and so on. Others, like me, just use a series of dashes followed by semi-coherent summaries of ideas. Which systems work best? It's an open question, but one researchers are making progress on, and a new study in the *Journal of Applied Research in Memory and Cognition* lends some helpful insights.

Science of Us contributor Christian Jarrett has a helpful summary up over at the the British Psychological Society's Research Digest website. The researchers, Dung Bui and Mark McDaniel of Washington University in Saint Louis, had a group of study participants take notes on a 12-minute lecture "about breaks and pumps" using "a skeletal outline," "an illustrative diagram" showing how the systems being explained work, or just a blank sheet of paper. They were then, after a period of distraction, tested in a few different ways on their ability to recall what they had learned.

Read the whole story: [New York Magazine](#)