

MATHS OR STATS LECTURE NOTES

Lectures involving maths or stats will often “tell a story” written in algebraic language, so a lot of the content **is written out on a whiteboard or screen by your lecturer.**

Don’t just copy down what you see. You can get a lot more out of maths lectures (and produce great notes you can use later) with these handy tips.

Listen to what your lecturer says

Sounds easy, right? Well, actually, it’s hard to listen and write at the same time. Listen for phrases such as

- *I’ve done this step because I need to get x out of the denominator.*
- *I’ve left out a few steps here which you can fill in later.*
- *If that method isn’t suitable you’ll have to do this instead.*
- *This step works because . . .*

- *After trying a few other methods, this one worked.*
- *Now, this is the clever part . . .*
- *This would make a good exam question.*

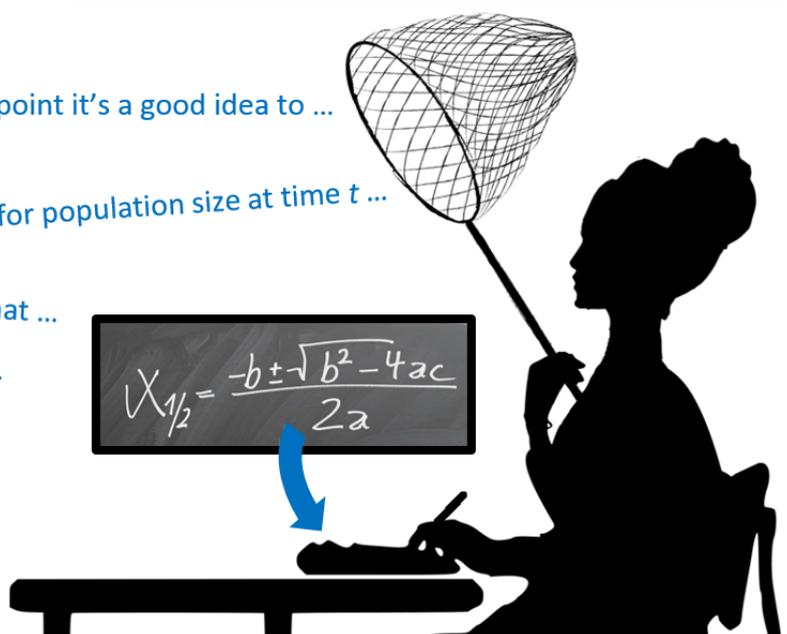
Jot down summary notes alongside what appears on the screen so you know *why* a step was taken, where several steps have been left out, etc.

By using “**active listening**” you will get a better set of notes, get lost less often and be able to concentrate for longer.

TIP

Stretch or shift position if you feel drowsy. By pulling your shoulders back you will inflate your lungs and send more oxygen to your brain!

- ... at this point it’s a good idea to ...
- ... this is an excellent shortcut ...
- ... $P(t)$ stands for population size at time t ...
- ... using logarithm laws we can see that ...
- ... make sure you practice this a few times ...



TIP

Many lectures are recorded as videos. If you miss something or get lost, note down the time and fast-forward to that part of the video later.



You can also speed up the video if your lecturer talks too slowly (or slow it down if they talk too fast).

Written notes & textbooks can create the impression that solving problems involves blindly following a rigid set of “perfect” steps. In lectures your lecturer’s voice reminds you that it actually involves **educated guessing, logical reasoning, trial-and-error** and there are often **multiple pathways to the same solution**.

Don't panic when you get lost in lectures

No-one can concentrate hard for more than about 20 minutes at a time (especially if this is your third lecture in a row!) and some concepts are going to be difficult to pick up first time.

In maths lectures it's important to keep writing and listening when you get lost. With a good set of notes you can pick up the thread later.

Quick notes for maths or stats lectures

- *Get to know your neighbour. They might pick something up that you miss. Sometimes it's just nice to hear someone say “yeah, I'm lost too!”*
- *Sit close to the front if you can. There are less distractions and you'll see and hear the lecture better.*
- *Try reading ahead before going to the lecture. Even if you find it difficult, the lecture will make more sense.*

TIP

The skills you use in other lectures can be different. See our **Get the most from lectures** Survival Guide.



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