USING ABBREVIATIONS AND SYMBOLS IN NOTETAKING

Developing your own system of abbreviations and symbols will help you become an efficient note taker. Abbreviations should be introduced into your note taking system slowly. Remember that you have to read your notes at a later time. These suggestions should help you begin developing your own system of symbols and abbreviations.

Develop helpful symbols in science and mathematics.

- does not equal
- frequency

Create a family of symbols.

- organism
- individual
- individuals

Leave out the periods in standard abbreviations.

- “exempli gratia” / for example
- department
- New York City

Use only the first syllable of a word.

- politics
- democracy
- liberal
- capitalism

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

- subject
- conservative
- because

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

- associate, associated
- chemistry
- achievement
- biological
- information
- introduction

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

- background
- prepared
- problem
- estimate
- government

abbr = abbreviation
acc = according to
incl = include
lge = large
Use an apostrophe.
   gov’t = government
   am’t = amount
   cont’d = continued
   educat’l = educational

Form the plural of the symbol word or abbreviated word by adding “s.”
   s = areas
   chaps = chapters
   co-ops = cooperatives
   fs = frequencies
   /s = ratios

Use “g” to represent “ing” endings.
   decrg = decreasing
   ckg = checking
   estg = establishing
   exptg = experimenting

Use a dot to represent rate. A dot placed over a symbol or a word indicates the word “rate.”
   v = vibration rate
   f… = frequency rate

Usually spell out short words. Symbols, signs, or abbreviations for short words will make the notes too dense with “shorthand.”
   in at to but for

Omit unimportant verbs.
   went came be

Omit “a” and “the.”

Substitute initials whenever the term, phrase, or name was written out in full earlier in the lecture.
   complete writing: …and the effect of the Modern Massachusetts Party will be felt.…
   notes = MMP

Use symbols for commonly recurring connective or transitional words.
   & or + = and
   w/ = with
   w/o = without
   vs = against
   = therefore
   = leads to