

Making the most of Lecture Recordings: A Guide for Students



01

Attend the Lecture



- ◆ Don't be tempted to skip a lecture just because you will have access to the recording. Recorded lectures are not a substitute for attendance.
- ◆ There is a link between attending lectures and getting better grades.
- ◆ Live lectures are more engaging and memorable than recorded videos.
- ◆ Attendance at lectures gives you the opportunity to build relationships and develop a support network.
- ◆ Lecture recordings should only be treated as a supplement to your learning.

Lecture attendance is a significant predictor of achievement

(Nordmann et al., 2019)

02

Consider your Environment



- ◆ Find a quiet place where you can fully concentrate on the recording.
- ◆ Watch recordings on a large screen to prevent eye strain.
- ◆ Minimise distractions by closing unused tabs and putting your phone on airplane mode.
- ◆ Consider using the Pomodoro Technique to remind yourself to take frequent, screen-free breaks.
- ◆ Ensure you have a stable internet connection to avoid lagging.
- ◆ Refrain from multitasking.



Media multitasking is detrimental to a learners' academic capacities

(May & Elder, 2018)



03

Take Good Notes



- ◆ Taking notes is important for learning and revision.
- ◆ Research shows that it is better to paraphrase (summarise), as opposed to taking notes verbatim (writing what your lecturer says word-for-word).
- ◆ Paraphrasing during live lectures can be difficult, so don't stress if you can't keep up.
- ◆ Structure your notes using a system like the [Cornell Notetaking Method](#).
- ◆ Use the lecture recording to revisit difficult parts of the lecture and fix/complete your notes. If you are still struggling, rewind and replay a section of the recording or slow down the speed.



You need a proven note-taking system
(Pauk, 2010, p. 243)



04

Be Selective



- ◆ Do not waste time by watching recordings in full; be selective.
- ◆ Engage in retrieval practice before watching the recording i.e. try to recall as much of the lecture as you can from memory.
- ◆ Identify some problem areas of the lecture which you need to revisit.
- ◆ Use the chapters feature or the table of contents to easily navigate the recording and find the section you need.
- ◆ Alternatively, use the 'search' feature to locate keywords in the transcript.

Students who fast-forward to a specific section of the recording and watch it once achieve significantly higher grades
(Owston et al., 2011)

05

Time it Right



- ◆ Schedule the best time to watch lecture recordings based on your timetable.
- ◆ Wait 2-3 days after attending the lecture before watching the recording.
- ◆ Watching the recording too soon, or leaving it too long, is less effective for retrieval practice.
- ◆ If your lectures are delivered in a chronological order, try to watch the recording before attending the next lecture in the series.
- ◆ Don't binge-watch lecture recordings; distributed learning is better.

Distributed practice at the optimal time of the day seems to be the key

(Jost et al., 2021)

06

Get Caught Up



- ◆ Make every effort to attend your live lectures.
- ◆ Try to watch the recording of the missed lecture in its intended sequence.
- ◆ After 2-3 days, engage in retrieval practice to identify potential problem areas and rewatch only those sections of the recording to complete your notes and consolidate understanding.
- ◆ On the first viewing, watch the recording as if you were in the class i.e. watch the full video and take notes without pausing, rewinding or adjusting the speed. This ensures you have spent the same amount of 'time-on-task'.
- ◆ If you are unable to attend, make sure to watch the recording within one week of the lecture.

Watching lecture recordings at 1.5x speed
has a detrimental impact on recall

(Song et al., 2018)

07

Seek Help



- ◆ Even if you have a lecture recording, you should still seek help when needed. Students who ask for help perform better.
- ◆ Use the recording to test your knowledge i.e. by pausing and trying to summarise a particular section.
- ◆ Contact your lecturer or attend their office hours.
- ◆ There are great benefits to group learning. Consider watching lecture recordings with peers.
- ◆ Pause the recording to make use of third-party tools such as Google or generative AI.

**Seeking academic help is a critical behaviour
that will help students achieve their goals**
(Payakachat et al., 2013)

References

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