Note-Taking in Chemistry Class

When taking notes in class, listen actively; intend to learn from the lecture.

1. Write down the instructor's explanatory remarks about the problem.
    A. Note how one gets from one step of the problem to another.
    B. Note any particular conditions of the problem.
    C. Note why the approach to the problem is taken.

2. Try to anticipate the consequences of a theorem or the next step in a problem. During a proof, keep the conclusion in mind.

3. Note any concepts, rules, techniques, problems that the instructor emphasizes.

4. Question your instructor during class about any unclear concept or procedure.

5. If you miss something in the lecture or don't understand what's being presented, then write down what you can catch — especially key words. Be sure to skip several lines so you can fill in the missing material later.

6. As soon as possible after class, summarize, review, and edit your notes.

    A. Quickly read through your notes to get an overview of the material and check for any errors or omissions.
    B. Fill in any information — especially explanatory remarks (see # 1 above) — that you did not have time to write down or that the instructor did not provide.
    C. Use the margin or the back of the opposite page to summarize the material, list key terms or formulas, and rework examples. You can also use this space to take notes from the textbook.
    D. Note any relationship to precious material; i.e., write down key similarities and differences between concepts in the new material and concepts in previously learn material.

7. Review your notes at regular intervals and review them with the intent to learn and retain.