

Instructions for Using Your Laboratory Notebook

Why is it Important to Keep a Good Laboratory Notebook?

Keeping a complete and accurate record of experimental methods and data is a vital part of science and engineering. Your laboratory notebook is a permanent record of what you did and what you observed in the laboratory. Learning to keep a good notebook now will establish good habits that will serve you throughout your career. It is extremely important that your notebook accurately record everything you did. A good test of your work is the following question: could someone else, with an equivalent technical background to your own, use your notebook to repeat your work, and obtain the same results? For that matter, **could YOU come back six months later, read your notes, and make sense of them?** If you can answer yes to these two questions, you are keeping a good notebook.

Rules for Maintaining your Laboratory Notebook

	<p>Leave several pages blank at the beginning for a Table of Contents and update it when you start each <u>new</u> experiment or topic</p>
	<p>Always use pen and write neatly and clearly</p>
	<p>Date every page on the top <u>outside</u> corner</p>
	<p>Start each <u>new</u> topic (experiment, notes, calculation, etc.) on a right-side (<u>odd numbered</u>) page</p>
	<p>Record the TITLE and OBJECTIVES of each experiment (or notes or calculations) at the top of the first page of the notebook dedicated to this topic.</p>
	<p>If you make a mistake, <u>don't obliterate it!</u> You may need to read your <u>mistake</u> later – perhaps you were right the first time! Use a single cross out and EXPLAIN why it was an error. Initial and date.</p>
	<p>Data typed into the computer must be printed and <u>taped into your lab notebook</u>. Plots of data made in lab should also be printed and taped in your lab notebook.</p>
	<p>When you record an observation in your notebook, include an explanation of what you were doing at the time. If appropriate, you may just record the step number in the instructions followed by your observation.</p>



You must have your lab notebook initialed by Mrs. Williams when you complete your lab each day. Any pages not signed on the day the experiment was performed will adversely affect your lab notebook grade!

Key points in maintaining your Chemistry Notebook:

1. Neat and legible handwriting.
2. Experiment title and purpose clearly stated.
3. Procedure described clearly and succinctly, including errors and the steps taken to correct them.
4. Computations performed neatly showing intermediate steps.
5. Errors crossed out with a single line, explained, date, and initial.
6. All pages dated at the top and signed by Mrs. Williams on the same date as your exit ticket.

Metric	Requirements	Worth
Pen	Write in pen, not pencil.	10%
Date	Date every page at the top.	10%
Right Side	Begin each experiment/topic on an odd page.	10%
Printouts	Attach printouts and plots of data as needed.	10%
Legible	Obvious care taken to make it readable, even if you have bad handwriting.	10%
Mistakes	Mistakes crossed out with one line and explained	10%
Organized	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Table of contents.▪ Title of new experiment or topic on each new odd page.▪ Objectives of experiment.▪ Clear sections of materials, methods, and procedures of what you were doing when.	20%
Informative	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ All required data and information.▪ Descriptive comments of your observations.	20%