

How to take meeting minutes

Minutes are notes you take in a meeting to remind everyone what was discussed and any action points agreed. Here are our top tips to help you to take minutes effectively

Why are minutes important?

The minutes you take in your Eco Club meeting are important, as they help ensure that your Eco Club takes action. They're also useful reading for anybody who wasn't able to attend the meeting, so make sure they are easy to read and follow.

There are four tasks involved in taking minutes:

1. Make rough notes during the meeting.
2. Type or write these up clearly.
3. Give copies to everyone who needs them (or share them somewhere that everyone can access to save paper).
4. Keep all the minutes (and agendas) together in a file.

Top tips for taking minutes

- Make sure you have enough paper and some spare pens or pencils before the meeting begins.
- Make a note of who is attending the meeting. Or you could tick off people's names in the committee register.
- Do not try and write down everything that is said... it's impossible! So instead concentrate on the outcome of any decisions and write down who is going to do what.
- Use the same subheadings as those used in the agenda and underline your headings. Leave gaps between each section in your notes so they're easy to follow.



Don't forget...

Your minutes are important records of your work – and can be used towards Eco-Schools awards.

- You could use letters, abbreviations or symbols for words you use a lot (for example, SOF instead of Switch Off Fortnight). You could even make up your own!
- Remember the minutes need to be understood by someone who wasn't at the meeting, so make sure they're clear and easy to read.
- Write up the minutes as quickly as possible after the meeting. It's much simpler to do this when the meeting is still fresh in your mind.

Remember...

Taking minutes does get easier with time and practise.

Overcoming common problems

- If a meeting is well run, it's easier to take minutes. So make sure everyone keeps to the agenda and discusses one point at a time.
- If everyone talks at the same time, it's impossible to take notes. So if anyone is making your job too difficult, it's ok to tell them off!
- You might need to set some rules for the meeting in order to make your job easier, such as not interrupting, sticking to the agenda, or raising your hand to talk.
- It's sometimes hard to take minutes and join in the discussion at the same time. So if there is a section of the agenda you really want to be involved with, it's ok to ask someone else to take minutes for that section.



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