Active Listening

BEFORE LISTENING
Prepare prior to class each class:
• Review the material from the previous class (text, notes)
• What were the main points in the last class?
• What was your assignment for the class?
• Skim the new/next chapter for main ideas and new vocabulary.
Prepare physically:
• Sit near the front of the classroom.
• Avoid distractions like noisy students or seats near the doorway.
• Arrive early and give yourself time to get settled.
Prepare mentally:
• Make a decision to listen actively – you can’t listen if you’re talking!
• Think ahead; anticipate what the teacher is going to say.

WHILE LISTENING
• Connect new material to the ideas in previous lectures, the textbook, and your own knowledge and experience.
• Look at the speaker.
• Listen for what is being said, and for what the teacher emphasizes or repeats.
• Write down only the main ideas.
• Be ready to comment and ask questions to expand and clarify ideas.
• Listen for cues that indicate what the instructor considers important:
  ✓ “This is important…”
  ✓ “You need to know this…”
  ✓ “This will be on the quiz/test…”
  ✓ “Three reasons for this are…”
  ✓ “Consider the following…”
  ✓ “To summarize…”
  ✓ “These are the steps…”

AFTER LISTENING
• Fill in the gaps in your notes as soon as possible after the class.
• Highlight / underline important points.
• Take good notes (listening is the first step).
• Review, review, review!

Note: Hearing is not the same as listening.