

CHALKBOARD

The chalkboard is still the commonest visual aid used for teaching, though in our institution there is a trend to switch over to the overhead projector and LCD Projector.

TIPS FOR EFFECTIVE USE OF THE CHALKBOARD

SIMPLICITY:

- Telegraph your message. Write only the key points and not long sentences.
- Do not use non-standard abbreviations. The students copy them verbatim and later on can't remember what they represent.
- Develop the concept on the board as you teach. Do not start the class with a board having matter on it; it will distract the students.
- Use a clean board for each new concept.

LEGIBILITY:

- Write sufficiently large letters, preferably in running hand. Ensure their legibility from the last row before the lecture. You may use pencil guidelines to improve your letters.
- Use white or yellow colored chalk for writing. Other colors are not as clearly visible as these are from a distance.
- Write bold letters; thin lettering is difficult to read, and the lines should be thick enough. This can be ensured by paring the chalk to the desired thickness and using sufficient pressure. *DO NOT USE THE CHALK LIKE A PEN.*
- Avoid those areas of the board not visible to all sections of the audience, such as the sides and the bottom.
- The visibility can be improved by illuminating the board with a tube light above it.
- Use the board systematically. Do not jump from area to area haphazardly, and do not overwrite.
- Templates can be used to draw outlines of diagrams/objects.

OTHER ASPECTS:

- Do not talk while writing on the board.
- Start your lecture with a clean board; and at the end of the lecture do not forget to wipe the board clean.
- Move while you write.

Advantages of chalkboard over other visual aids:

1. Readily available in most of the lecture rooms.
2. Electricity is not necessary for its usage.
3. Sequential development of a concept can be done effectively.
4. Initial and recurring expenditure is minimal.
5. Easy to use (and misuse !).
6. Darkening of the room is not necessary.

Disadvantages of chalkboard over other visual aids:

1. Eye to eye contact is lost while writing.
2. The written material cannot be stored and reused.
3. Advance preparation of material is not possible.