

Note taking

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0.1 Context

0.2 Learned in this study

0.3 Things to explore

- What is the read vs write of notes?
- What should be an ideal read/write ratio?

1 Overview

2 My current system

- Use a buffer system, where I initially write down any thoughts I want to preserve. The buffer system is simple. Everyday, a file is created under buffer/\$YEAR/\$MONTH/\$DAY.md. Each time I want to record a thought, I use a keyboard shortcut that creates a timestamp line of the form “Year-month-day hour:minutes:seconds [nid://12345]” where “nid://” can be seen as a protocol/url identifying this note. During a day I may record from 0-25 thoughts.
- I record a lot of different things using the buffer system:
 - Interesting quotes from web articles
 - Questions I ask myself
 - Notes on task I’m working on
 - Observations
 - and many more
- Once a month I will go over the buffer of the month and organize them in a more coherent fashion. I’ll group questions together. I’ll prioritize which questions I want answered and which questions I don’t care about anymore. I’ll see if I can fit my observations into existing articles in order to share them on my blog. Some of the things I’ll have written will start and finish in the buffer, meaning that they’ve only been written down only for a temporary purpose (just like a computer buffer).

2.1 Value

- Taking notes is valuable for two reasons:
 - It allows you to keep your train of thought in a format that you can consume at a later time. Without writing things down, I would spent an unmeasurable amount of time going through the same thought process to reach the same conclusion again. With those notes, it’s possible for me to skip that effort and go back directly to where I left off.
 - Somewhat related to the previous point, it allows me to search my thoughts from the past. Sometimes I’ll think about something, thinking I might have already thought something similar in the past and I’ll do a search which will confirm this suspicion. The benefit is that I’ll also be able to look back at what I was thinking back then, which might be different than what I think now. This allows me to iterate on my ideas, just like I would iterate on a version of some piece of code.

3 Notes

- date/time
- tags
- Use a concept similar to the hierarchical approach used for memory in computers (register, cache, ram, disk)
- Write short-lived ideas and thoughts in a buffer file
- Promote interesting ideas into a journal file (from buffer to journal)

I found the success rate of finding something there vs google was quite low and things quickly became obsolete

If I re-google something vs read a note i wrote down 3 years ago i might hit an article teaching me a new better way to do something instead of being stuck in my old bubble.

Source: <https://news.ycombinator.com/item?id=15476305>

4 Requirements of software

- Easy and fast to insert new content
- Easy to structure and associate content
- Portable/Non-proprietary format (most of what you will want to store is text or images anyway)
- Version controlled
- Easily available on any device
- Easy to timestamp (have a trace of when it was initially written)

4.1 Nice to have

- Geolocation of where the note was taken

5 See also

6 References

6.1 Note taking

- <https://news.ycombinator.com/item?id=15736102>
- <https://joplin.cozic.net/>

6.2 Programmer journal

- <https://peterlyons.com/leveling-up#your-work-journal>
- <https://news.ycombinator.com/item?id=15768123>
- <https://gist.github.com/sent-hil/3444793>
- <https://routley.io/tech/2017/11/23/logbook.html>
- <https://news.ycombinator.com/item?id=14822560>
- <https://news.ycombinator.com/item?id=15473702>
- http://www.webpages.uidaho.edu/mindworks/Capstone%20Design/Project%20Guides/Logbook_Handout.pdf
- <https://www.lesswrong.com/posts/umv3DpkCGKt5ppHqn/managing-one-s-memory-effectively>

6.3 Software

- <https://boostnote.io/>
- <https://notes.sciter.com/>

6.4 Other

- <https://www.flickr.com/photos/hawkexpress/sets/72157594200490122/>