

# Instructions for Keeping Research Records

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In addition to providing a complete record of your laboratory work which can be understood and repeated by yourself and others, this notebook has been designed to afford maximum patent right protection. Several practices must be followed to give the notebook value as a legal document in possible patent litigation:

1. Enter all data directly in this book; it is permanently bound with numbered pages so that pages cannot be substituted or deleted. Insert a piece of carbon paper between each original and duplicate page in turn such that a copy of all dates, data and signatures are made as work progresses. These copies should be removed from the book and given to our group leader. Do not record data elsewhere for transfer into the book. Write in ink. Never make erasures. Thus, the integrity of the record will not be in question.
2. Record sufficient information. All procedures, reagents, apparatus, sketches, conditions, references, etc., should be entered into the book as the work is done. The purpose and significance of the experiment as well as observations, results, and conclusions should be made clear. What may seem trivial at the time may later prove of critical importance. Your entries should be clear and complete enough for someone else who is "skilled in the art" to read and comprehend what has been accomplished.  
Avoid sweeping negative statements, e.g.: "This procedure is worthless," which could later limit the scope of your claims.
3. Not only is the conception of an invention important, but so is the diligence shown in making a working model or demonstrating that the idea works—"reducing the practice." These two elements of an invention, conception and reduction to practice, must be corroborated by a witness. The records of the inventor(s) are not enough. Thus, each page of the notebook should be read, witnessed, and dated (daily, if possible) by someone who is competent to understand it, but who does not claim to be a co-inventor. Charts, tables, etc., should be complete, and lines should be drawn through any blank spaces prior to witnessing. It may be wise to perform key experiments in front of one or more witnesses. Spectra, charts, etc., should be signed, dated, witnessed, and if they

- cannot be permanently attached to the notebook, they should be referred to with an entry in the book and kept on file. Dates and witnesses can establish your priority of invention.
4. To delete an entry, draw a line through it so that it is still legible. Corrections should be made adjacent to the deleted entry, and they should be initialed and dated by you and the corroborating witness. Changes made after the page has been witnessed should also be initialed and dated by you and the witness. Always use the current date.
  5. The notebook and its contents are to be considered confidential and of great value. Exercise every care in preserving them. Report the loss or theft of a research notebook to your group leader immediately.
  6. Index the contents and return each book as completed (or when not in use) for filing.
  7. New ideas must be recorded and witnessed as they occur to establish priority of invention. Even ideas which do not pertain to the project at hand should be documented in the book.

Keep your research records as if each project were to be patented. Even though the work contained in the book may not result in a patent application, observance of these practices will provide a clear record for reports, publication, or future reference.