

EE308L Spring 2007
Hints to good lab book style
Dr. Anders M. Jorgensen

In the business world a lab book is a legal document which belongs to the company you work for. The company will dictate the format of your lab book. The lab book is used to document your work, to serve as your notes for preparing formal reports, can be used by the company as a legal document in legal battles, for your performance evaluation, and as a means for your successor to catch up on your work. For that reason the lab book should be written in a style that not only is clear to you, but also allows others to understand what you did, when you did it, and what the outcomes were. In EE 308 we adopt the following typical rules for good lab book maintenance:

1. The lab book should be written in permanent pen
2. First page reserved for index and grading
3. Write the title of the lab at the beginning of the lab
4. Date all pages
5. Write a short introduction after the title indicating the purpose of the lab and the expected outcome.
6. Pre-lab should follow the introduction (also have a pre-lab to hand in)
7. Fill in the lab book describing what you are doing as you are doing it.
8. Please do not cut text from lab handout. Instead write a description of what you are doing or what questions you are trying to answer.
9. Be descriptive, don't just write "section X question Y"
10. Insert printouts of your programs, traces, and outputs in appropriate locations in the lab book. We prefer that you cut these down to size and glue them into the book at the point where they are discussed in the text as opposed to stapling in large folded sheets.
11. Honestly describe any difficulties you encounter. If you are unable to complete a portion of the lab, describe what you tried and what worked and what did not work.
12. Since you are writing the lab book as you are doing the work, you will sometimes make mistake. Mark mistakes clearly with a single line through the text but make sure that it is still readable.
13. Write a conclusion at the end of your lab.