

## Field Notebook Basics

Field notebooks are kept by scientists who work outdoors, in the “field.” The notes and sketches that scientists record allow them to make detailed observations of spatial patterns and relationships. Below is a short list of suggestions for keeping a geology and geomorphology field notebook.

*Each page should include the following identifying features:*

- Name and partner’s name (if applicable)
- Date
- Descriptive title
- Page number
- The name or location where you are working. This can be a place name, latitude/longitude, or other creative way to make sure others who read your field book know where to go.

*Sketching Tips:*

- Plan what you want to show and at what scale you want to show it before you start.
  - Put a scale on your drawing, and do your best to draw to scale.
  - If your drawing isn’t to scale, say so in a note.
- Make sketches as large as possible.
- It’s okay to use a ruler or other straight-edged object if lines are needed.
- Make a “Detailed Area” with a larger scale if you need to show a “zoomed-in” area.

*Annotate your sketches.*

- Notes are used to clarify sketches. For example, you may need to describe a rock type or geomorphic feature, or record measurements.
- Notes can be used to record questions about an area.
- Use your best printing so that the notes are neat and clear.
- Place notes in empty spaces so they don’t detract from the sketch.
- Assume that you’re writing for someone else. That means you should be clear and concise.

**For more detailed field notebook guidelines and examples of geology field notebook pages, check out the [Fundamentals of Field Notes](#) by Dr. Christie D. Rowe of McGill University.**