

Cheatsheets are vital to your success in Science Olympiad. Good cheatsheets = good results.

Definition: These are essentially pieces of paper with notes on them, and you're allowed a few sheets (it varies, some allow 5 sheets, some allow none) for each event.

The process of creating them allows you to better absorb information, and they're excellent resources during competitions.

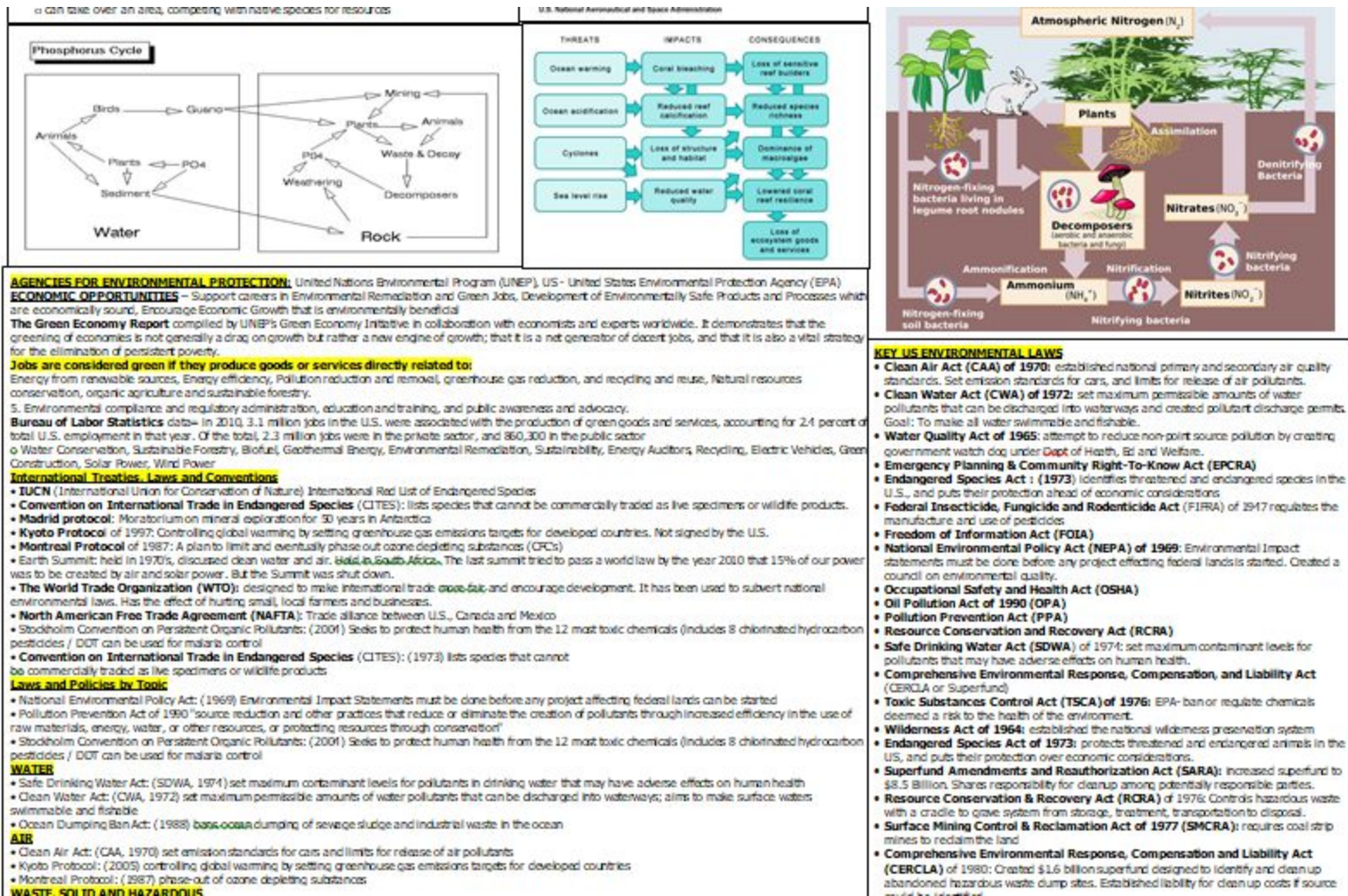
#### *DO's*

- Make your cheatsheet WELL IN ADVANCE of tryouts and competitions!!
- Familiarize yourself with the layout and content of the cheatsheet.
  - This is NOT a replacement for studying.
- TINY (but readable) font
  - Tahoma/Arial/Verdana are best (serif fonts can be difficult to read) (In general stick to simple sans serif fonts)
  - 4-6 point
  - Comic Sans is actually really legible at small sizes lol if you want to use that
- TINY margins
  - The smallest space your printer can handle
- Good organization, logical flow of information
  - E.g. for an enviro event - put everything about ecosystem ecology on one page, biomes on the next, wastewater treatment on another, key terms and definitions on the last. Don't have random topics scattered throughout.
- Lots of highlighting, bolding, etc.
- Focus on diagrams, timelines, key terms, equations
  - Aka things you'd normally have to memorize
- Use text boxes or columns to minimize space!

#### *DONT's*

- Don't make your cheatsheet the day before tryouts or competitions
- No paragraphs
- No non-essential information
- No serif fonts like Times New Roman (they can be difficult to read)
- Don't include anything that you could reason out with some simple common sense
- Don't copy straight from Wikipedia!
- Don't format it like your actual notes - you want as little white space as possible

Here's an example of what a section of a good cheatsheet looks like:



^This is 5 point tahoma. It looks illegible here, but it'll be fine once you print.

If your event is a binder event, it's kind of the same concept as cheatsheets but with bigger text. Again, good binders = good results.

DO's

- Make it well in advance. Familiarize yourself with the layout and content of the binder.
- Size 10 or 11 font. Not too big, not too small
- ORGANIZATION is key! Alphabetize, section things off, etc.
- Highlight and bold text, use bullets, etc. Paragraphs are hard to read.
- Use multiple factsheets or consolidate their info all into one page
  - You want to try to get as much info as you can in there
- If you need to identify organisms/rocks/etc.:
  - SEPARATE PHOTOS FROM INFORMATION
  - Searching through a billion pages to look for id pictures is too time-consuming.

DONT's

- Don't procrastinate or get lazy (You are going to regret an incomplete/bad binder. Don't make excuses for yourself.)
- Don't use size 4-5 font. You have plenty of room and you don't want to waste time looking for things.
- Don't use enormous font. Flipping takes time.