

Others download crib notes onto the music players and hide them in the "lyrics" text files. Even an audio clip of the old "Schoolhouse Rock" take on how a bill makes it through Congress can come in handy during some American government exams.

Kelsey Nelson, a 17-year-old senior at the school, said she used to listen to music after completing her tests — something she can no longer do since the ban. Still, she said, the ban has not stopped some students from using the devices.

"You can just thread the earbud up your sleeve and then hold it to your ear like you're resting your head on your hand," Nelson said. "I think you should still be able to use iPods. People who are going to cheat are still going to cheat, with or without them."

Still, schools around the world are hoping bans will at least stave off some cheaters.

Henry Jones, a teacher at San Gabriel High School in San Gabriel, Calif., confiscated a student's iPod during a class and found the answers to a test, crib notes and a definition list hidden among the teen's music selections. Schools in Seattle, Wash., have also banned the devices.

The practice is not limited to the United States: St. Mary's College, a high school in Sault Ste. Marie, Ontario, Canada, banned cell phones and digital medial players this year, while the University of Tasmania in Australia prohibits iPods, electronic dictionaries, CD players and spell-checking devices.

Conversely, Duke University in North Carolina began providing iPods to its students three years ago as part of an experiment to see how the devices could be used to enhance learning.

The music players proved to be invaluable for some courses, including music, engineering and sociology classes, said Tim Dodd, executive director of The Center for Academic Integrity at Duke. At Duke, incidents of cheating have declined over the past 10 years, largely because the community expects its students to have academic integrity, he said.

"Trying to fight the technology without a dialogue on values and expectations is a losing battle," Dodd said. "I think there's kind of a backdoor benefit here. As teachers are thinking about how technology has corrupted, they're also thinking about ways it can be used productively."