

How Memory Works

Small amounts of new information that are learned are kept in the **short-term or working memory** area of the brain. This allows you to remember a person's name after being introduced.

Information that we need to keep needs to be moved into the **long-term memory** area of the brain. This information can be kept for long periods of time, even indefinitely. The trick is moving information from the working memory to long-term memory and then recalling it.

Two basic principles to help move information from short-term to long-term memory are:

1. Connect the new information to what is already known
2. Encode the new information by using as many brain functions as possible

General Ways to Improve Memory

Be Good to Yourself

- Your attitude counts! You need to *want* to improve your performance.
- Sleep is important to the learning process.
- Exercise aids learning.
- Eating good foods and drinking lots of water helps your brain to function well.
- Don't let stress get to you. Stressed brains don't learn the same way as non-stressed brains.

Encode the New Information

When you need to move new information to long-term memory, use as many functions of the brain as possible to encode the information. This will help you to put the same information in many areas of the brain.

The Five Senses

- Taste it.
- Touch it.
- Smell it.
- Hear it. Rhythm – give your image movement and a beat.
- See it.

Color – the more colors, the better. The use of colors alone may improve your memory as much as 50 percent.

Exaggeration – make the image BIGGER than normal

Contraction – make the image smaller than normal

Humor – make it funny

20 Memory Techniques

Organize It

1. Learn from the general to the specific: Skim your reading before studying the details.
2. Make it meaningful: How does what you're learning connect with what you know or want?
3. Create associations: You can recall information easier if it is stored with similar information that you already know.

Use Your Body

4. Learn it once, actively: People remember 90 percent of what they do, 75% of what they see, and 20% of what they hear. Walk, stand, do something while you study.
5. Relax: We can be active and relaxed, which is an alertness that is free of tension. By being relaxed, your mind can use many of the other memory tricks.
6. Create pictures: Draw diagrams or cartoon to link facts with relationships.
7. Recite and Repeat: Reciting works best if you use your own words using a normal voice.
8. Write it Down: Repetitive writing helps us to be more logical, coherent, and complete

Use Your Brain

9. Reduce interference: Study in a quiet location
10. Over learn: Don't stop studying when you think you know a subject. Keep studying
11. Escape the Short-Term Memory Trap: A short review within minutes or hours of study can help move the material from the working memory to long-term memory.
12. Use daylight. Study the most difficulty during the day.
13. Distribute Learning: Take breaks. It will help to refresh you, you will learn more, and you can use them as a way of review.
14. Be aware of attitudes: Acknowledge your attitudes about what is boring or difficult. Look for connection in this material to what interests you or what you find easy.
15. Choose what not to store in memory: Concentrate on the core ideas that you will be tested on. Don't worry about the rest.
16. Combine memory techniques: Draw a picture, make a song about it, take breaks

Recall it

17. Remember something else: Try to remember related information since information is usually stored together
18. Notice when you do remember: Find out what techniques work for you and develop them.
19. Use it before you lose it: Find a way to make contact with this information regularly.
20. You never forget: Adopt the sayings: "I recall information easily and accurately, my memory serves me well, or I never forget!"