

*The main cause of forgetting is failure to learn the material thoroughly in the first place. Other causes include disuse, interference, and repression. Regardless of the reasons we forget, it is possible to train ourselves to remember more by becoming aware of the basic ideas, which govern the way we learn, and by utilizing more effective memory strategies.*

## Ways to Build a Strong Memory

- **Decide to Remember**
  - Things that are disregarded will be discarded, so you must make a conscious choice to remember.
  - Eliminate distractions while studying.
- **Organize the Material**
  - Organize facts and ideas into meaningful categories. When organizing and grouping the material, always keep the big picture in mind; then, learn the information from the general down to the specific.
  - Select what you consider important. In other words, pick out the main points and major details, and make sure you can write and explain these ideas in your own words.
  - Arrange the material you are learning into a logical order by using outlining, mapping, or webbing. The strategy you choose to use should help you understand the relationships between the ideas.
- **Relate New Learning to What is Already Known**
  - Think about what you already know, and relate the new information to your existing knowledge. This linking of ideas helps recall, understanding, and transfer of learning to other concepts.
- **Recite to Remember**

When you recite information repeatedly, the knowledge transfers from short-term to long-term memory. Recitation is effective for a variety of reasons:

  - It uses many of your senses, such as thinking, speaking, and hearing, which affects your ability to recall information later.
  - It deepens the memory path in your long-term memory. The more you use and recall the information, the easier it is for your brain to retrieve it.
  - It lets you know how you are doing. As you recite the information, you may be better able to 'hear' whether your response is correct. Recalling the information silently in your head may allow your brain to skim over hazy areas that require further attention and study.
- **Review Often**
  - Consistent regular review, not cramming, reinforces understanding and therefore strengthens memory.
  - Short, frequent study sessions are more effective because they expose you to the information many times, reinforcing its storage in your long-term memory.

- **Over Learn the Material**
  - Pick the subject apart and learn the material from as many different perspectives as possible.
  - Study the information from the general to the specific; then look at it from the specific to the general.
  - Say it aloud and then write it out the next time.
  - Study the information in a different order.
  - Using varied strategies helps prepare you to recall and use the information no matter how it is presented.
- **“Chunk” Material Together**
  - Memorize material in chunks when possible, so the brain is recalling fewer separate items.  
Example: To memorize a phone number, use a grouping (555-14-72 rather than 5-5-5-1-4-7-2.)
- **Use Mnemonic Devices (memorization tricks)**
  - **Visualization**  
Pair the information you wish to recall with a visual image that reminds you of that information.  
*Example: To remember the name of a woman named Rose, picture her holding a rose in her hand.*
  - **Acronyms**  
Create acronyms using the first letter of each word in a list. *Example: “ROY G BIV” represents the colors in the spectrum (Red, Orange, Yellow, Green, Blue, Indigo, and Violet).*
  - **Sentences**  
Create sentences using the first letter of each word in a list. *Example: To remember the order of the metric system, use the following sentence: “King Henry Danced Boldly Down Centre Main.”*
  - **Rhymes and Songs**  
Create rhymes and songs that help you recall certain pieces of information. *Example: “Thirty days has September, April, June and November”*
- **Useful Graphic Organizers to Make Connections and Show Relationships**
  - Mind Maps
  - Venn Diagrams
  - Flow Charts
  - Tables

RECOGNIZE ▪ SEEK SOLUTIONS ▪ IMPLEMENT CHANGE

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