

## Memorization Strategies

Memorizing information can be challenging. The best approaches to memorizing information call for repetition, using multiple senses, and making the information meaningful to you. If you can repeatedly review information, it's more likely to stick. If you can experience that information in different ways (reading, drawing, talking, hearing) you're more likely to remember it. If the information means something to you, you're more likely to remember it. If you can teach the concept to someone else in your own words, and they actually understand it, there's a good chance you will remember the concept and be able to apply it on a test.

First off, make sure you are taking steps to keep your brain in good working order. Eat healthy foods, stay hydrated, exercise, and make sure you are getting enough sleep. Food and water fuel your brain. Exercise gets oxygen to the brain and also decreases stress. Sleep helps your brain process and stow away what you've input during the day. Your ability to retain information depends on good brain function.

### Repetition

Most people don't remember information they only hear once. Make sure you are going over information/concepts several times, not just once.

### Put information into your own words

Textbooks are often wordy and boring. Don't try to memorize the textbook word for word. Try to take concepts and definitions from the textbook and put them into your own words. Talk it out if you have to. Once you put information into your own words, it's more likely to stick in your brain. You could use this technique to write a summary of a paragraph or chapter. Putting information into your own words will help you remember it.

### Chunking

Group similar items/concepts together and memorize them in smaller bits. For example, to memorize your phone number, you'd memorize the area code, then the first 3 digits, and then the last 4 digits.

### Draw a diagram or picture

Sometimes drawing things out helps you remember them. The act of drawing out the concept makes you think about the concept in a different way. Then, once it's on paper, the visual is another representation of the concept itself. Use a mind map or idea tree to detail ideas related to one main concept.

### Use different colored pens to categorize similar concepts/ideas

Using different colours helps your brain categorize information by colour, not just by words. Put all your notes on one topic in red.

### Mnemonic devices

You may have heard this one: Please Excuse My Dear Aunt Sally. This one helps you remember the order of mathematical functions. You may have also learned this as PEMDAS (parentheses, exponents, multiplication, division, addition, subtraction).

Have questions? Contact the Manager of Student Learning Support & Disability Resources.

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### **Make a rhyme, rap, or song**

TV and radio commercials sometimes use songs to help their message stick in your brains. Remember Peyton Manning and Nationwide Auto Insurance commercials? That jingle (Nationwide is on your side) really stuck in his head. Take words/concepts you need to learn and make a song out of them.

### **Teach someone**

Grab a friend or family member and teach them about the concept you are learning. Allow them to ask questions and seek clarification. If you don't know the answer to their question, look it up and get back to them. This interactive process will help you remember the concept you're trying to learn. And if you successfully teach someone a concept without looking in your book, you know that you understand that concept.

### **Ask someone to teach you**

Can't grasp a concept? Ask a friend or fellow classmate to explain it to you in their own words. You'll talk it out and eventually, it'll click. The act of talking it out and putting it in understandable terms will help you remember it when it comes down test time.

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