

5. **Practice Restating**—Re-stating or writing the material being learned in your own words will later make it easier for you to recall the information.
6. **Recognize Attitudes** - Watch out for negative attitudes. They are an obstacle to initial learning and recollection.
7. **Organize Material in an Effective Way** - Grouping facts and ideas meaningfully is called **CHUNKING** and it can help you remember better.
8. **Understand the Material You Are Studying**— First, comprehend the underlying principles involved before trying to learn facts and details. Then, try to associate new principles with information that already makes sense to you. Organizing and remembering new information by association is easier than memorizing isolated ideas or facts.
9. **Create and Use Images**- Visual images, such as pictures, diagrams, flow charts, and mind maps can be helpful in learning and retention. Besides abbreviating the information, images, pictures and symbols give your brain another "link" to associate things with.

10. **Use memory cues ("MNEMONICS")** - When reading a textbook, try to find a key word or phrase which symbolizes the main point in each paragraph. By memorizing a few key words, it is usually possible to reconstruct all of the major ideas in the chapter. Some mnemonic devices are:

- a. **Acronyms or "new words"**: Use the first letter from a series of words or phrases to form a new word. For example, "HOMES" for recalling the Great Lakes: Huron, Ontario, Michigan, Erie, and Superior.
- b. **Acrostics or "creative sentences"**: Make a phrase (even if it sounds like nonsense) so that the first letter of each word represents something about the information you are trying to learn. For example, "Every Good Boy Does Fine" for the E, G, B, D, F, lines of the treble music staff.
- c. **Rhymes and songs**: Music is POWERFUL, reason why ad jingles are so effective! How did you learn your ABC's? Make up short, catchy sayings that include the essential information.



Improving Memory Skills



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Charleston Campus - 651-7367
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THE TRUTH ABOUT MEMORY

What we call "forgetting" is due to one of four things:

1. **Fading** - If we don't use it, we lose it. Unused facts, ideas and skills gradually fade with the passage of time.
2. **Interference** - When information fights for a spot and can't be effectively stored. An example would be new information getting in the way of recalling earlier material.
3. **Repression** - We tend to remember selectively, based on what is consistent with our interests and beliefs and tend to reject what does not fit our personal likings. Consequently, ATTITUDE towards a class or teacher may affect learning and memory.
4. **Under learning** - Not really learning the material well in the first place or not encoding it in a manner that makes later retrieval possible. "Cramming" for a test is an example of both instances and therefore not an effective memorization technique.

THREE THINGS NEED TO HAPPEN FOR RECOLLECTION TO TAKE PLACE:

1. **Encoding** - Interpreting information in a meaningful way.
2. **Storing** - Organizing information in long term memory.
3. **Retrieving** - Getting the information back from the long term memory.

Ultimately, remembering is a skill that takes some effort. **Make learning an active process by studying over longer periods of time, at regular intervals, and organizing information into a meaningful system!**

Start by properly **CONCENTRATING**:

- Hunger, tension, and tiredness diminish concentration. **Take care of your physical needs first.**
- **Set a goal** for what you want to accomplish during each study session. This will assist you in focusing your attention on the specific tasks and provide you feedback about your progress.
- **Focus on the task at hand.** If you find yourself to be uninterested, identify the cause. It could be due to lack of background knowledge, finding the assignment meaningless or too difficult, or because of personal problems you are experiencing. If you cannot get over these distractions, seek help from available resources at CCSN. Start by visiting the office of Student Retention.
- **Maintain a regular place for studying, free of distractions.** TV, people, the fridge, cell phones, etc., can be very distracting. Also, to avoid getting up, keep all necessary materials (books, notes, etc.) near you.



- If music is a necessity during your study sessions, make sure it is instrumental. Vocal music can deter concentration.

EFFECTIVE MEMORY TECHNIQUES AND STRATEGIES FOR IMPROVING MEMORY:

1. **Minimize Interference**- Space out studying for courses with similar subject matter content. Thus, it would be much better to study chemistry after your French, than to immediately turn to your Spanish assignment.
2. **Distribute Learning** -Retention is much better if you divide up the study of a subject into a number of shorter study sessions. Study in short (1 hour) sessions, then take a 5 minute break, then move on to another topic, and repeat the same schedule. If while studying a particular subject you "hit a wall" and can't retain any information, change subjects and then come back to it.



3. **Over Learn Material** - Use as many **active learning techniques** as you can (i.e. note taking, restating, study groups, outlining, flash cards, etc.)
4. **Review Immediately**— Most forgetting takes place immediately after initial learning (up to 70% within the first 48 hours). An effective technique to improve remembering is to reinforce memory through immediate recall - mainly by reviewing. **Successful reviewing requires active discussion, recitation, and writing in your own words.**