

Strategies for Improving Memory

Many students feel overwhelmed with the amount of information presented to them, and fear that they won't remember anything during a test. Your memory can be trained to go from short-term memory (temporary storage) to long-term memory (permanent storage) which will solidify your learning.

Memory Retention Strategies:

- **Review quickly** – After 24 hours, only 50% of new information can be recalled. Review again weekly, and then monthly.
- **Repetition** – The more often you recall the same information, the easier it will be to retain it.
- **Grouping** – Associate new information with similar information.
- **Reflective Observation** – Relate the material to what you already know.
- **Concrete Experience** – Experience the material. Your brain takes in the information through one or more of your senses.

Mnemonic Devices to Improve Memory:

- **Create a word** with the first letter of each word you need to memorize (SCUBA = self-contained underwater breathing apparatus).
- **Creative sentences** (Musical notes E,G,B,D,F = every good boy deserves fudge)
- **Develop a rhyme or song.** Think about commercial jingles and create one of your own with your information.
- **Loci system** - Create visual associations with familiar locations (your feet are the lowest structure on the human body, and in Biology, the lowest structure of living things is the atom)
- **Peg system** – Key words are paired with numbers (bun 1, shoe 2, tree 3, door 4....)

Flash Cards:

- Index cards can help you to remember key facts – carry the cards with you and review them frequently.
- Shuffle the cards and learn the information in a different order.
- Test yourself in both directions – first, look at questions/terms and provide the definitions/explanations. Turn the cards over and reverse the process.

Teach the Material to or Discuss With Someone Else:

- Consider participating in formal or informal tutoring, or joining a study group – explaining the information in your own words will reinforce your understanding of the material.