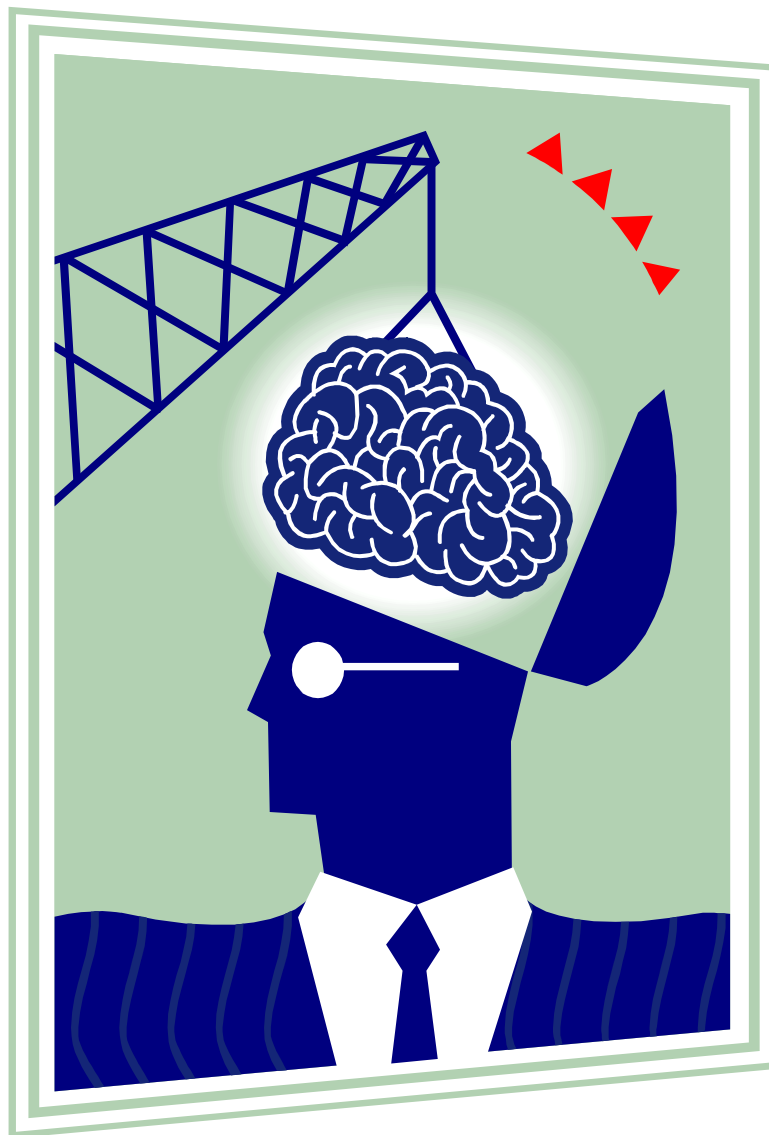


# MEMORY TIPS



# Memory Strategies



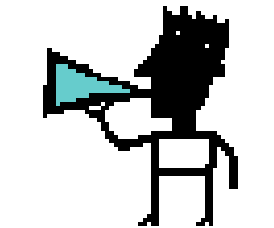
1. **Write it down.** When you write down information, you are reinforcing learning by using your eyes, hand, fingers, and arm. Writing uses different parts of the brain than do speaking and listening.
  - Taking notes in class prompts you to be logical and concise and fills in memory gaps.
  - Underlining important information and then copying it onto note cards reinforce information.
  - Summarizing in your own words helps transfer information to long-term memory.
2. **Go from the general to the specific.** Try to outline from the general (main topic) to the specific (subtopics). Read, listen, and look for general understanding, then add details.
3. **Reduce information.** You don't have to memorize certain types of information, such as deadlines, telephone numbers, and assignment due dates. You just have to know where to find this information. Use an address book, student planner, and calendar to help you remember information.
4. **Eliminate distractions.** Use a quiet study area. If something is bothering you, write it down and tell yourself that, as soon as your study time is over, you will address it. In this way, you can reduce distractions and focus completely on absorbing important information. The Learning Assistance Center is a great place to study.

5. **Study in short sessions.** After about 50 minutes, the brain needs a break to process information effectively. Even when you are working on something more complex, such as completing a term paper or studying for finals, you are more effective when you take frequent, scheduled breaks.
6. **Use all your senses.** Memory is sensory, so using all your senses (sight, hearing, touch, taste, smell) will give your brain a better chance of retaining information.
  - *Visualize.* Be a keen observer of details and notice differences and similarities. Look at illustrations, pictures, and information on the board.
  - *Listen.* Actively listen in class, tape lectures, and play them back later. Recite definitions and information aloud.
  - *Move.* Read aloud; read while standing; jot down notes; lecture in front of the classroom to yourself or to your study group; go on field trips; draw pictures, diagrams, and models; and join a study group. Practice reciting information while doing physical activity, such as walking, jogging, or showering.



## More Memory Strategies

7. **Use note cards.** Note cards are visual and, when the information is recited out loud or in a group, the auditory element enhances learning. The information is condensed and written so the act of writing is kinesthetic and holding cards is tactile. Flashcards with keywords, formulas, and questions can help memory.
8. **Recite.** Recite and repeat information, such as a name, a poem, a date, or formulas. Repeat again and again. You may find this recitation technique helpful when you are dealing with difficult reading materials. Reading aloud and hearing the material will reinforce it for you and help move information from your short-term memory to your long-term memory.



# Mnemonics

Mnemonic devices are memory tricks that help you remember information. Since memory tricks don't help you understand the information or develop critical thinking skills, they are best used for sheer rote memorization. Some mnemonic devices include:

- **Rhythm and rhyme.** In elementary school, you might have learned the rhyme, "In 1492, Columbus sailed the ocean blue." It helped you remember the date of Columbus' voyage. Rhythms can also be helpful. Many people learned how to spell Mississippi by accenting all the *I*'s and making the word rhythmic.



- **Acronyms.** Acronyms are formed from the first letters of a series of other words, such as HOMES for the Great Lakes (Huron, Ontario, Michigan, Erie, Superior). Consider creating your own acronyms.
- **Acrostics.** Acrostics are made-up sentences, in which every first letter stands for something, such as *Every Good Boy Does Fine*, to remember the sequence of musical notes, E, G, B, D, F. Acrostics are sometimes used in poetry, where the first letter of every line combines to spell something, such as the poem's title.

# More Mnemonics

- *Association.* Suppose you are learning about explorer Christopher Columbus' three ships. Think of three friends whose first names start with the same letters as the ships' names: Nina, Pinta, and Santa Maria (Nancy, Paul, and Sandy). Vividly associate these names with the three ships, and you should be able to recall the ship's names.

- *Chunking.* Chunking, or grouping, long lists of information or numbers can break up the memory task and make it easier for you. Most people can remember up to seven numbers in a row, which is why phone numbers are that long.



- *The Stacking Technique.* You simply visualize objects that represent a point and stack them on top of each other. For example, if you were giving a speech on time management, you would start with a clock with a big pencil on it to represent how much time is saved when you write information down. On top of the clock is a big calendar, which reminds you to make the point that you must set priorities in writing. You stack an object to remind you of each of the key points in the speech.



- *The method-of-place or Loci technique.* This method, which is similar to stacking, is effective because it uses imagery and association to aid memory. Memorize a setting in detail and then place the item or information you want to remember at certain places on the memory map. Some people like to use a familiar street, their home, or their car as a map on which to place the information. For example, if you were trying to remember the presidents, you could place Washington in your kitchen, Lincoln in your living room and Jefferson in your bedroom. Then, as you take a mental tour of your home, you will remember the information you placed at different locations.



## Helpful Websites with More Memory Tips

<http://www.csi.edu/ip/adc/lap/resources.htm>

Take a Learning Style Assessment

<http://www.mindtools.com/memory.html>

A variety of different ways to remember things

<http://www.netnaut.com/mnemonics.html>

Mnemonics for many different subjects

[http://www.eudesign.com/mnems/\\_mnframe.htm](http://www.eudesign.com/mnems/_mnframe.htm)

Mnemonics for many different subjects

<http://www.studygs.net/memory/>

Memory Strategies

<http://www.okstate.edu/ucs/memory.html>

Tips from Oklahoma State University