

Memory Can Be Learned

The Academic Resource Center, 332 Murphy Center, Viterbo University

1. Be positive about learning, be motivated to remember.
2. Pay attention
 - focus your full attention on the topic; this helps you exclude irrelevant details and distractions
 - concentration increases in direct proportion to the attention you pay to learning
3. Make certain you understand the information
 - if it doesn't make sense, it's difficult to remember
 - test and retest yourself by asking a lot of questions about what you want to remember
 - concentrate on understanding rather than memorizing only key phrases
4. React actively
 - repeat it
 - review the material within 24 hours for the greatest effectiveness
 - remembering is always assisted by repetition
 - repetition should be spaced at regular intervals rather than attempted all at once
 - time between study sessions allows time for information to consolidate into long-term memory
 - write it down
 - recite it
 - put the information into your own words and say it aloud
 - group things together (we remember things chained or linked together in some way)
 - use mnemonic devices
 - create mental pictures, visualize the concepts as much as possible
5. Spread out memory work
 - shorter periods of memory work (not more than 2 hours) prevent boredom, help avoid fatigue, and improve motivation, delays forgetting
 - never study for more than an hour without a break – we recall more just before and just after a break (remember last things and first things)



6. Break down tasks

- it's easier to stay focused and actively involved in your learning when you're dealing with small amounts of material

7. Overlearn

- continue to work on material even after it's learned
- can help with test anxiety – over-learned material is less susceptible to the debilitating effects of anxiety because you can retrieve the over-learned information without having to think very much about it

8. Use your prior knowledge

- connect all new learning to what you already know about the subject or what you know that is related to the subject or relate it to you as a person
- your mind uses these related connections as hooks to hang the new information on

9. Understanding

- concentrate on understanding rather than memorizing only key phrases

10. Reviewing memory work within 24 hours of the first study session is the most effective way to master the material

- ▶ Students often don't spend enough time practicing retrieval of information. They become frustrated after studying for many hours when they then can't remember very much.
- ▶ Your attitude about learning the material can influence how well you will attend to it, organize it, and store it. If you are trying to prepare for an exam, it is important that you feel interested in the material and motivated to learn and remember. Negative self-talk often leads to negative results.