

# IMPROVING YOUR MEMORY

## 12 PRINCIPLES

### 1. SELECTIVITY

Sorting out the main ideas from the insignificant details. If you try to remember everything, you will overload your working memory.

- Notice topics or themes that are repeated
- Use textbooks clues to determine important info

### 2. ASSOCIATION

Making connections between pieces of information. The more ways you've connected info, the more ways you can attempt to retrieve it.

- Link new info to what you already know
- Link info to mental images
- Link info to a personal experience

### 3. VISUALIZATION

Making mental images or "movies" in your mind.

- Visualize yourself doing well on tests, etc.
- When reading, try to visualize what you read.
- Make visual images in your head of terms and definitions.

### 4. ELABORATION

Working with info in new ways to make it more meaningful.

- Ask yourself questions as you learn. "How does this apply? Can I use this? Do I understand?"
- Try to encode info in new ways, discuss it, draw a diagram, etc.
- When possible personalize the information

### 5. CONCENTRATION

Focus your undivided attention on studying. Unnecessary stimuli, such as TV, makes it more difficult for your brain to process info.

- Choose a quiet, well-lit study area
- Use active learning techniques to keep yourself engaged.

### 6. RECITATION

Explain information out-loud, in your own words, in complete sentences

- Practice reciting info before class discussions
- Recite key terms
- Self-quiz by predicting test questions and reciting their answers

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### 7. INTENTION

Set the stage for learning by approaching studying prepared, and in a positive mental state. Set goals for your study time

- List your priorities
- Set specific study goals
- Create a plan to reach your goals
- Tell yourself you should remember this information

### 8. BIG AND LITTLE PICTURE

Understanding main ideas and supporting details.

- In your notes, use main ideas as headings, and list supporting details below them
- Use visual mapping to show main ideas and supporting details

### 9. FEEDBACK

Testing your knowledge of the material.

- Recite info without using your notes
- Use flash cards
- Cornell Note-taking
- After reading a chapter, try to write a summary without looking back.
- After reading a paragraph, try to recite the important info without looking

### 10. ORGANIZATION

Well-organized info is easier to remember

- Categorize info into lists
- Make tables or charts
- Use time-lines or other visual organizers

### 11. TIME ON TASK

Spend sufficient time learning the material. Review material consistently

- Use spaced practice. Review your old notes before class, or before reading the next chapter.
- For each hour spent in class, plan on spending two hours studying outside of class.
- Use 50 minute study blocks. Focus on one subject at a time.

### 12. ONGOING REVIEW

Practicing previously learned information

- Continuously review the information you have learned to create stronger connections in your memory