

MEMORY IMPROVEMENT

Students often feel apprehensive about a course because they fear their memories aren't good enough. Some of them even memorize long lists of words, facts or numbers in the hope that they will improve their memories, just as athletes build muscles when they exercise. Unfortunately our brains don't work the same as our biceps. If you as a student waste your time on fruitless "memory building" try the following:

1. **Avoid Memorization.** It's the most inefficient mode of learning so avoid it and try to **comprehend** the material. Find the organizations, observe the pattern, learn the principles and you won't have to memorize. For example: if you want to remember the number series 1-3-6-10-15-21-28, memorizing the numbers will take a lot longer than finding the pattern.
2. **Study by Wholes.** Where you have a large, integrated body of facts or ideas to memorize, go over the material once, and then try to recall the whole thing. Don't break into parts material that you have to know as a whole. If you do, you'll just have to memorize the information twice: first, when you learn in pieces; second, when you learn the whole.
3. **Rhymes Can Jog Your Memory.** Mnemonic devices, such as "Red sky at night – sailor's delight." Or "Thirty days has September ..." are some patterns used to remember facts that may not fit into a pattern. Since people remember poetry better than prose, and lyrics better than dialogue, putting facts into jingles may help. The only drawback is that you have two things to remember, the rhyme and the principles or concepts behind the information you're rhyming.
4. **Secondary Association Means Connection.** Connection with something you already know is especially helpful in learning a foreign language or any subject that you know little about. For example: if you can't remember the affectionate Japanese word for mother (haha) and you think your mother is funny, with secondary association you can connect haha with (funny) mother.
5. **Above All – Integrate Your Learning.** The more you can transfer principles from one course to another, and the more connections you can make between courses, the less time you'll have to spend memorizing bits and pieces. The less time you spend memorizing, the more time you'll have to spend comprehending.