

YOU HAVE 7 MINUTES: NOW IMPROVE YOUR MEMORY!

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Can't remember where you put your car keys? Can't remember why you just walked into the kitchen? Or where you and your spouse had your first date, or the name of your high school English teacher? Or even the names of all your children?

Relax, you're not alone. Everyone experiences lapses in memory, even with these seemingly simple tasks. It doesn't mean you're weak-minded, getting old, or are slipping into dementia.

It also doesn't mean that you're powerless to stop it. There are things you can do to improve your memory, whether it's for small tasks such as where you put those elusive car keys, or the more difficult items, such as phone numbers and grocery lists.

But improving your memory is hard, isn't it? It takes time, concentrated effort, and the help of an experienced hypnotist ... or does it?

The answer is NO! You can actually improve your memory quickly, in just a few minutes, using a few simple tips we're going to outline for you here.

No need to set aside a chunk of your free time, no need to get frightened or overwhelmed, no need to have that hypnotist on speed dial – you're going to improve your memory here and now, quickly and easily.

Ready? Let's begin!

Tip #1: Rhyme.

For some reason the mind is geared to remember rhyming words and phrases more easily than others. Try to recite your favorite non-rhyming poem, verse, or even scripture, and you might have a hard time recalling it exactly.

But try remembering a poem, limerick or song verse that does rhyme and the words seem to roll right off your tongue, seemingly without any effort on your part! Even rhyming words and verses from books you read when you were a child have probably stuck with you for years – most people can recall the Dr. Seuss book, "One Fish Two Fish Red Fish Blue Fish," or the limerick "Hickory Dickory Dock."

As a matter of fact, sometimes rhymes seem to almost get "stuck" in your head where you find yourself repeating them over and over, even when you don't want to!

This may be due in part to how the spoken word and sounds themselves work together. If you say the word "mark" out loud, you've already got the "ark" sound in mind, so it will be easier to remember the word that rhymes with it – lark, park, stark, and so on.

When words rhyme, they also seem to have a certain rhythm or flow to them, much more so than non-rhyming words and verses. This rhythm or lilt makes the next word or phrase easier to remember, as you're going to expect it to have the same ending syllables. Your mouth knows what to expect, so to speak.

So use this to your advantage and rhyme words and phrases that you're trying to remember.

For example, many people have a hard time remembering names when they're newly introduced to someone. However, you can repeat (to yourself, of course) a word or phrase that rhymes with the name, if possible.

Try it:

"Bill the pill."

"Mark the lark."

"Sarah, looks like Farrah."

"Tony, rhymes with macaroni."

Again, you need to use discretion in saying these things out loud, especially to people you're just meeting, but if you repeat these phrases in your head you're sure to remember their name easily!

This trick can also be used when trying to remember short lists, such as for the grocery. If you need to pick up milk, butter, eggs, and bread, you can make up a nonsensical rhyme:

"Milk and butter, makes me flutter, eggs and bread, hard to spread."

By repeating this phrase to yourself, you're much more likely to remember all the components of that list because they now rhyme.

So try rhyming any phrase, word, list, or anything else that you need to remember and see if you can't recall these things with ease!

Tip #2: Remember the alphabet.

If you need to remember a short list, such as for groceries, try making up a sentence where each word begins with a corresponding letter of the alphabet.

For example, suppose your grocery list is eggs, apples, bread, hamburger, and milk.

You might remember the sentence, "Everyone always brings hats of mine."

The sentence of course makes no sense but you see the corresponding letters – e, a, b, h, and m – of the list and the sentence.

One of the reasons that this works is because simple sentences always have a subject and a verb, and usually an adverb or two as well. By putting your words into a sentence, therefore, you know when you're missing an item if you have no verb (in this sentence, it's "brings") or no subject ("everyone").

Try it for yourself. Make up small lists and practice creating sentences that correspond to them, and see how you do. Again, they don't need to make sense at all, and should always be "short and sweet" so that they're easy to remember as well!

Tip #3: Concentrate!

It may seem very simplistic, but most memory problems are probably due to a lack of concentration.

Why can we say this?

Simply put, there is a difference in our brain between where it stores information for short-term memory and long-term memory. And this information needs to be thought about for at least 8 to 15 seconds before the brain moves it from short-term storage to long-term; sometimes it requires even more than that.

This is something of a protection for us as humans. Think about all the many millions of bits of information that you come across every day that you really don't need to remember – the license plate of the car that was in front of you this morning, the total of your order every time you get food at the drive-through or of your last grocery bill, the name of your waitress when you last ate out, and so on.

If our minds attempted to permanently store every bit of information we ever learned or came across, well, we'd probably either explode from this overload or need brains the size of small cars!

And one of the ways that the brain differentiates between what's necessary for short-term memory and what should be stored away permanently is our conscious thought about this information. The more we think about or dwell on a bit of information, the more likely we are to store it away permanently.

This is probably one of the reasons that many people have a hard time remembering the names of people they've just met. When you're at a party or other social situation, chances are you're thinking about many things – the outfit you're wearing, how your shoes are pinching your feet, whether or not you're making a good impression, the loud music, the great food, if your spouse is paying too much attention to that other guy/girl, and so on – and it's easy to get distracted when you hear someone's name.

Additionally, when you're introduced to someone, you're probably bombarded with information about them, not just their name. "This is Sherry, she used to be my husband's secretary but now she works over in the Accounting department; you remember I told you how her son is in the same grade as yours? And she and her husband just went on that fabulous trip to Vegas. Tell us about that ..."

Whew! Think of all the information you just heard about ... what was her name again?

Not concentrating on one bit of information for that necessary 8 to 15 seconds is one of the reasons you're probably going to have a hard time remembering it, even moments later. All of that other information pushed the name aside and didn't give you enough time to think about it, so that your brain could move it from short-term to long-term storage.

So keep this thought in mind the next time you need to remember anything – names, the errands you want to accomplish while you're out, shopping lists, things to take with you to work tomorrow. You need to really concentrate on the important items, and do so for more than just a second or two.

Practice clearing out your mind and visualizing just what it is that you're trying to remember. If it's a grocery list, think seriously about

the few items you're going to buy; picture them in your mind. Do so without distraction.

And do this when meeting people for the first time as well. Set aside the other information you're hearing, and all those distractions that come with it, and really focus on their name. Repeat it to yourself (silently, of course) so that your mind gets the necessary time to move it from short-term to long-term storage.

So there you have it. Seven seconds of work, and your memory has probably already improved. These are not difficult tricks or overwhelming steps for anyone; but if you put these tips into practice, you're sure to be able to remember anything and everything with ease!