Memory is like a muscle, the more it is used the better it gets.

Being able to memorise facts and figures is a useful academic and life skill.

While some academic disciplines require more memorisation than others, e.g. remembering new vocabulary when studying a language or remembering maths formulas, we all need to memorise certain things at certain times, e.g. when studying for exams or giving oral presentations.

Memorisation techniques
There are many techniques we can use for memorising but each of us has a preferred learning style-visual, auditory or kinaesthetic-which will influence how we remember things. Try a few different techniques and see what works best for you.

Use your senses. The more senses you use, the more likely the information will be transferred to your long term memory. Try the following:

- **Draw mind maps.** Use symbols, colours, different fonts, etc, the more variety in your mind map, the more likely you’ll remember key points - suited to visual learners.

- **Learn by doing.** Muscle memory is extremely powerful, if appropriate, make models, draw diagrams - suited to kinaesthetic learners.

- **Make rhyming links.** Make up rhymes. Read written material out loud, teach someone - suited to auditory learners.

- **Make physical links.** Combine all senses. Talk about your work, write notes, draw connecting arrows etc.

- **Attach new information to old.** Making connections to what you already know and to your every day experiences helps in memorisation.

- **Make up mnemonics.** Memorise initial or relevant letters, e.g.
  - AIDA (attract Attention, arouse Interest, create Desire, and urge Action) for the key principles of advertising, or
  - Please Excuse My Dear Aunt Sally for the order of operations for maths Parentheses, Exponents, Multiply, Divide, Add, and Subtract.

- **Practise, practise, practise.** Revise new words, terminology, formulas and practise using them every day. Revising within 48 hours of learning new material is recommended.

Don’t rely on a ribbon on your finger.
Your ability to recall information depends on the extent to which
• you understand what you want to recall
• you review and revise the material.

If you want good recall, you need to spend considerable time learning the material you want to remember.

1. If you hear or read material once you are unlikely to be able to recall most of it two days later.
2. If you read and review material a few times, your recall is likely to be minimum (perhaps you’ll remember enough to pass an exam the next day but it won’t remain in your long term memory).
3. If you read information, review it several times by writing it down, talking about it and testing yourself over a two day period, you are likely to have quite good recall.
4. If you do the same as in 3 above but over a three–six day period you are likely to have very good recall. Sometimes this is called overlearning.

Did you know?
You are more likely to be an effective memoriser if you get a good night’s sleep each night.

Did you know?
The main reason we forget things is we because didn’t really learn them properly in the first place.

Don’t waste good study time by falling asleep at your desk.

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