

Basic Memory Exercises

You know the old joke “How do you get to Carnegie Hall?” – Practice, Practice, Practice. The same applies to “How do I improve my memory?” – Practice, Practice, Practice

There are three main skills involved in remembering; knowing them and actively practicing them can improve your memory.

Observing – Observing is a basic skill involved in remembering. Often an observation (seeing, hearing or feeling) is the first encounter with something we want to remember.

Imagining – Imagining helps us remember using non-linguistic representations (right brain remembering) as opposed to linguistic (left brain remembering).

Connecting – Linking images can help remember them especially if one set of images is connected sequentially, for example to a story.

Here are some exercises that can improve your memory. Do them every day remember – Practice, Practice, Practice. Set some time aside each day for mental exercise and use it to plan your activities.

1 Practice Observation

Try to remember something you have seen during the day. For example, what someone you met earlier was wearing, what you heard on radio or TV or the steps someone took to accomplish a task. When you encounter an interesting scene like a scenic view, a market place panorama or part of a movie make a conscious effort to remember the details and then when you get home write down all the detail you can remember.

2 Create Images

Pick word defining an object at random; some word like: flower, table or steamship. Now try to imagine that object. Embellish your image with details a drop of dew on rose, shadows of a bowl on a table or background clouds illuminated by sunlight. Push yourself to imagine words that do not represent objects; words like stress, freedom, or love.

3 Connect Images

Practice imagining images together. The connections can be logical or illogical, serious or whimsical or they may be based on a specific sequence or acronym. Pick two objects at random (chair and towel, tree and elephant or needle and automobile) and create an image involving them both. Try to create a logical connection between them and then create an illogical or whimsical image.