

Memorization Tips

- **Sort Information:** Help your retrieval system by putting new information into categories. You can group by dates, people, formulas, etc. It may help to make a chart as you study.
- **Frequent review:** Studying new information the same day you heard or read it will improve memory significantly. On average, we forget more during the first hour after learning than during the next 24 hours; and we forget more during the first day than we will during the next thirty days. A small review each day is essential for remembering.
- **Use humor or exaggeration:** Information stays in memory longer if it is related to something novel and interesting. Make up something funny or exaggerated that ties into what needs to be memorized.
- **Explore the senses:** Try learning the information visually, verbally, and kinesthetically and find which sense works best for you. Some people need to combine two or more senses.
- **Color code:** By using colored pens, highlighters, post-it notes and flags, index cards, etc. you can make an impression on your memory. This is a way of sorting information for storage as you assign colors.
- **Make visual aids:** Draw pictures or cartoon characters, graphs, tables, charts, time lines, etc. to aid memory. Even simple stick figures and drawings are useful if you are a visual learner. Pay attention to pictures, charts, etc. in textbooks.
- **Rehearse aloud:** Verbal rehearsal is an effective memory tool. Study with someone or use a tape recorder to say what needs to be memorized aloud.
- **Make it physical:** Adding a physical activity such as pacing, jumping, throwing a ball, or writing enhances the memory for many people. Typing or rewriting notes is a very effective memory device for people who need to learn kinesthetically.
- **Think about it:** A fact doesn't belong to you until you have used it. Use about half of your study period to read your lesson. Use the other half doing something with what you learn. Think about what you have studied, write down notes on it, and explain it to somebody else.
- **Logical memory:** Associate new ideas immediately with facts or ideas that are already firmly lodged in the mind. This association revives and strengthens the old memories and prevents the new one from slipping away by anchoring it to the well-established framework of your mental world.

Adapted from Pauk, W. (1974) How to study in college (2nd ed). Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co. Adapted from Hoover, A. (1998) Memory tips for students.