

# MEMORIZATION

## Memorization Basics

Putting information in long-term memory takes TIME and ORGANIZATION. This helps us consolidate information so it remains connected in our brains. Information is best learned when it is meaningful, authentic, engaging, and humorous (we learn 30% more when we tie humor to memory!). Rehearsing or reciting information is the key to retaining it long-term.

## Types of Memory

There are three different types of memory:

1. **Long-term:** Permanent storehouse of information and can retain information indefinitely
2. **Short-term:** Working memory and can retain information for 20 to 30 seconds
3. **Immediate:** “In and out memory” which does not retain information

If you want to do well on exams, you need to focus on putting your information into long-term memory.

## Why is Memorization Necessary?

Individuals who read a chapter textbook typically *forget*:

- 46% after one day
- 79% after 14 days
- 81% after 28 days

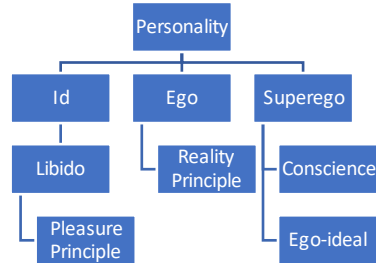
Sometimes, what we “remember” are invented memories. Events are reported that never took place; casual remarks are embellished, and major points are disregarded or downplayed. This is why it is important to take the time to improve your long-term memory.

## Memorization Tips

1. **Put in the effort and time** to improve your memorizing techniques.
2. **Pay attention** and remain focused on the material.
3. **Get it right the first time**; otherwise, your brain has a hard time getting it right after you correct yourself.
4. **Chunk or block information** into smaller, more manageable parts. Read a couple of pages at a time; take notes on key ideas, and review and recite the information. This will improve your ability to recall the information later.

- The magic number is 7.** Short-term memory has a capacity of about 7 items at a time. Complex information is better retained with chunked into 7 items or less, so identify what you want to learn and organize it in a meaningful way.
- Categorize and classify** information to make them easier to remember.

*Example:*



- Use mnemonic devices.** These are powerful memory strategies, so look up common mnemonic devices or create your own!  
*Examples:*  
*ROY G BIV* to recall the colors of a rainbow (*Red, Orange, Yellow, Green, Blue, Indigo, Violet*)  
*Never Eat Soggy Waffles* to recall the compass directions (*North, East, South, West*)
- Make connections or associations** to what you already know. Try to find some way to connect to new knowledge as it will strengthen your memory.
- Use the Method of Loci.** You can best remember places you are familiar with, so if you can link something that you need to remember with a place you know very well, the location will serve as a clue that will help you remember. Visualize yourself going through a familiar location and incorporate the new material to better recall information.
- Create a story** and incorporate the information you are trying to remember into it. Using your imagination and creativity requires you to think critically about the information, which increases the likelihood of remembering it.
- Use pictures** to help recall information. Find a photo; draw a picture, or create a mental image.
- Recite and rehearse** what you want to remember. It is best to read or recite the information aloud. The more you review and repeat the information, the more likely you are to remember it. Try reviewing and reciting information a little each day for best results.
- Take breaks from studying.** Our brains need breaks to function properly to retain information. Work no longer than 30 to 60 minutes at a time and take a quick 5-minute break to re-energize.

**For more information and support, contact:**

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