ACCESS
Study Skills Tip of the Week

The Three R’s of Memory
Reception
Retention
Recollection

Reception
Here are some tips to improve how you receive information.

• Become more attentive and observant. If you stay alert in class and keep your attention focused, you will be a better receiver.

• Engage as many of your senses as possible when receiving information. In a lecture, look at the speaker, listen attentively to what he or she says, take notes to help you remember information and to keep you alert. If you do these things, you will be making full use of your visual, auditory, and tactile senses.

• Ask questions as needed to aid understanding. Remember you can’t recall what you don’t understand. This step is especially helpful when the chapter covers a topic that is new to you.

Retention
Here are some ways to make remembering and “holding on” to information an active and effective process.

• Become an active reader. Underline and mark your textbook while you are reading.

• Review frequently. The more often you review information that you hope to learn and remember, the longer it will stay in your memory.

• Recite to yourself or out loud. When you repeat information to yourself that you want to remember, you are activating your auditory sense and opening another pathway into your brain. You can recite information from note cards and study guides that you make.

• Do all homework assignments. Homework provides proactive using new information or procedures. Frequent practice helps you internalize information.
• Find a reason to remember. Motivating yourself to learn because you want better grades is a start, but try to get beyond grades. Really think about what you are learning and how it relates to your goals and your hopes.

Recollection
If you still need to improve your ability to remember, try one or more of these suggestions.
• Before a test, organize the information you want to study in a way that is meaningful to you. Make summaries or set up categories in which you group similar items.
• Use your preferred sensory mode. If you learn best visually, make diagrams, charts, or information maps of material you want to remember. Picture these in your mind while you are studying and when you are responding to test questions. If auditory modes work best for you try reciting aloud information you want to remember. You could also study with a partner and quiz each other orally. If you are a tactile learner, try combining reciting with a physical activity such as pacing the floor or doing sit-ups. In this way you are engaging both your auditory and tactile senses.

And….
• Give yourself practice tests. Try to anticipate test questions and write some of your own. Answer them, then check yourself against your textbook and your notes.
• Go over old test. Review material that gave you trouble in the past. Past mistakes are clues to information that you haven’t retained and have difficulty remembering.

Ways to Increase Your Memory Power
• Decide to remember. Resist passivity. Become an active learner by making a conscious, deliberate decision to remember. Follow through
on this decision. This is the most important step you can take. Unless you decide to remember, none of the other techniques will work.

- Try a relaxed review. Don’t wait until the last minute before a test to do your reviewing. Review regularly, and do it in a relaxed way. When you are tense, you cannot concentrate on the material you are trying to learn.

- Combine review with a physical activity. Each sense that you use while reviewing provides another pathway for information to reach your brain. Recite, either silently or aloud, while riding a bicycle, while doing aerobics or calisthenics, and while walking and running, feel good about yourself for exercising your body and your mind.

- Use mnemonics. Mnemonics are tricks, games, or rhymes that help you remember things. You learned some as a child, for example “In 1492, Columbus sailed the ocean blue.” Also, you may have learned the rhyme that begins “Thirty days has September”; it helps you remember the number of days in each month. Here is one that you probably haven’t heard: “Tyranny nixed in ’76.” This rhyme recalls the year the Declaration of Independence was signed.

For more information see:

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