

MEMORY AND LEARNING SKILLS



How does YOUR brain work best?

There is no one-size-fits-all strategy for learning. Different strategies work for different people. Some people really struggle with working memory. This can make university life challenging. The important thing is to understand how your brain works and what strategies do/don't work for you. Try different options until you find ones that are effective.



Think about

- What time of day do you work best?
- Are you a morning or an evening person?
- Is staying focused a challenge?
- How do you currently memorise material?
- Do you have a revision timetable? Do you stick to it?
- Do you tend to put things off?
- How do you create and organise your revision notes?
- Do you keep all your notes on a topic in the same place?
- Are you a visual thinker? If so, how can you use this strength?
- Do you prefer to listen rather than read print?
- In what sort of physical spaces do you work best?
- Do you like silence or having people around you?
- Do you enjoy learning with others or work better on your own?
- Can you improve your current study environment?



Some active learning techniques

- [Test yourself](#) at the end of a study session.
- [Write questions](#) for yourself and then try to answer them.
- [Spaced repetition](#) - start the revision process early and go over your revision notes after 24 hours, after 7 days, after 2 weeks.

- [Draw a mind map/flow chart.](#)
- [Create a Memory Palace.](#)
- [Devise a mnemonic](#) (e.g. ROY G. BIV for colours of the rainbow)
- [Make flash cards.](#)
- [Record yourself](#) as you talk through a concept.
 - [Get a friend/classmate to test you.](#)
- [Add your own reflection](#) about *why* something is important.
 - [Find examples given in the lecture.](#)
- [Simulate exam conditions](#) (time, answer format etc) and answer a past exam/tutorial question. Discuss your answer with a classmate or tutor.
- [Put your notes into question format](#) and try to answer them.



Life Balance

If your brain is tired, memorising is hard. A university degree is a marathon not a sprint. Prioritise:

- sleep
- healthy eating
- frequent breaks (See Pomodoro technique)
- drinking lots of water.
- seeing your friends but cut down on late night socialising near exam time

In other words, look after yourself so your brain can work efficiently.



Useful links

Why I can't remember things: how ADHD affects working memory
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HszXKZO_H18



Related resources:
[All study resources](#)

