



## Improving Encoding to ENHANCE Memory

Memory refers to the brain's ability to retain and retrieve information stored in the brain. Memory is dependent on the foundational skill of attention. You need to be able to attend to the information that you wish to remember. Two main types of memory strategies can assist with recall:

**External memory strategies** – reliance on calendar, notes, master checklists, audio alarms and memos, etc.

**Internal memory strategies** facilitate your brain's capacity to retrieve information; some are listed below



Below we have outlined some key **strategies** commonly utilized to improve memory skills:

### **Multi-domain encoding**

1. Using multiple senses can help you better process information you wish to remember
  - Say it out loud
  - Write it down in a note format
  - Read aloud a few times what you have just written
  - Self-talk/discuss it – engage in a dialogue about the item to your self or someone near you
  - Experience the task to help with recall

### **Building associations and links**

1. Associate things that you need to remember based on similarities and differences or other distinct features
2. Assign a number and link sequences of events based on what makes sense to you: for instance numbers 1 through 10 can represent an order of events that need to be completed before you leave home

## Categorize/group, visualize and acronyms

1. Grouping things in a logical way, e.g., instead of remembering 12 individual grocery items you may recall them better if you had 4 dairy, 4 vegetables 2 meat and 2 grain
2. You may visualize a route/map to recall the errands; e.g., categorize your grocery list based on which sections/aisles you go to first based on the store's layout; visualize a map of the places you need to visit when running errands across town, etc.
3. Acronyms can also be used to help you remember a list of chores or items, e.g., WET Wednesdays may refer to Water the plants, Exercise and emptying the Trash can every Wednesday

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**Develop and maintain routines:** Daily routines and structured activities not only help save time but also reduce the need to plan and remember. The familiarity of a routine can help relieve some of the stress and anxiety associated with trying to remember. Spend some time once a week thinking about how you can assign a group of tasks to a routine. The key is to stick to the routine so that it becomes habit!



Exercise

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Remember: Try the various strategies and pick the ones that consistently work for you; Master them over time



Tip!