



# 15 Facts and 20 Tips to help improve Memory

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1. Memory is a hidden skill, it can't be improved by just *watching* people with good memory and good classroom teaching does not always improve underlying memory strategies.
2. There are three stages to memory – acquisition, processing & retrieval. Problems can occur in any or all of these stages.
3. You must understand memory before you can improve it. There are many types of memory :
  - a. short-term memory
  - b. working memory
  - c. long-term memory
  - d. recall
  - e. visual memory
  - f. auditory memory
  - g. sequential memory
  - h. spatial memory
  - i. prospective memory
4. You can be good at one type of memory and not another.
5. Short-term memory is a separate skill from long-term memory.
6. Short-term memory is of a limited size and duration.
7. You have to improve short-term memory before you can improve working memory.
8. Pure repetition does not help some people to transfer information into long-term memory.
9. You can learn something but not recall it at will unless it is in your automatic long-term memory.
10. Memory strategies *can* be taught to those who don't use them automatically.
11. There is a difference between facilitating and improving memory. Facilitating memory does not usually improve underlying strategies.
12. The speed information is presented makes a difference to how much is remembered.
13. The modality in which information is presented makes a difference to how much is remembered.
14. The amount of information presented makes a difference to how much is remembered.
15. More complex information and language is more difficult to remember.
1. Aim for transfer and generalisation from the start – you need to *believe* it is possible to help someone improve their memory.
2. Explain why it will be useful to improve memory skills (develop motivation).
3. Don't make memory improvement just a game - games don't transfer to real life.
4. Explicitly model a range of memory strategies.
5. Mediate memory strategies - don't teach them. Allow the person to work out what works for them - don't tell them.
6. Remember the importance of *discussing* memory strategies - just doing exercises doesn't improve memory in the real world.
7. Explain the language of memory to help a person think about improving his / her skills.
8. Mediate strategies developmentally.
9. When teaching memory skills don't use difficult concepts and vocabulary, allow concentration to be on the strategies not the content.
10. Discuss with a person what strategies work for them, then model some other strategies for them to try.
11. Remember the +1 principle and introduce new expectations slowly. Don't overload a person's memory or they can forget everything.
12. Find their "magic number" (memory span) and practise using it in different situations.
13. Classification and organisation of information helps memory (input, processing and output).
14. Practise strategies in real life situations.
15. Review regularly to develop automatic recall (at increasingly spaced intervals).
16. Remember to remember – remind a person to use a strategy that has been learned.
17. Aim for a person to understand their own memory as that helps them use it better.
18. Don't expect instant changes.
19. Reduce anxiety – stress is bad for memory!
20. Praise improvements (in yourself or pupils).

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\* These tips and facts have been drawn from the Mastering Memory, Memory Bricks, Classi-cards and Time to Revise manuals produced by CALSC [www.calsc.co.uk](http://www.calsc.co.uk) 01797 361318

CALSC helps you to improve the memory and recall of children and adults

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