

Memory Tune™ Course



Day Nine

Today's Memory Skill: Verbal Memory (Remembering words)

Verbal memory is fundamental to almost every other skill.

Rewiring your brain for an alert, responsive memory takes conscious effort. Using the three-step process of **focus** – **connect** – **rehearse** is important when creating a strong memory trace. Today we will concentrate on 'focus'.

Brain Wake Up

- a.
 - i. Recite the days of the week in reverse order starting from Saturday.
 - ii. Recite them now in alphabetical order.
 - iii. Recite them in reverse alphabetical order – all as fast as you can!
- b. As fast as you can, count backwards from 200 subtracting 7 from your total each time – 200, 193, 186...



Did you know?

There are about one trillion (1,000,000,000,000) glial cells in the brain.

Glial cells are non-neural cells that perform “housekeeper” functions such as clearing out debris and excess materials. Glial cells support neurons by providing support and nutrition.

Verbal Memory Skill

Chunking

Verbal memory, like most other memory skills, relies on short-term memory, the ‘gateway’ for everything you want to remember. Only a few active items at any one time can stay in the short-term memory so your aim is to increase that number of items that can ‘pass through’ to your long term memory. Many things are forgotten because your short-term memory becomes overloaded.

Good news! You can trick your short-term memory by ‘chunking’; your short-term memory processes an entire group of words as if it were one item. In this way the short-term memory can handle a great many more items than the expected 7 or so.

Look carefully at the word list which has been chunked into groups of three words.



Study the list for about 45 seconds.

mouse, flower, ball
 path, money, caravan
 horse, tent, hedge
 wish, circus, print
 buzz, road, box

Cover the list, and write down as many of the words as you can remember. How did you do?

If you remembered 12 or more, your short-term memory is working well.

'Chunking' is an effective memory technique. You may already use it to remember telephone numbers? How much easier it is to remember the 'chunked' number as 064 3354 1969 than seeing all digits at once - 06433541969.

Remembering Stories

Of course, learning a word list is not the only reason you will want to remember words. Have you experienced the frustration of reading a news story, only to forget the details soon after?

Here are two little stories. Read them carefully several times.

Professor James Paton is now a geologist at The University of Auckland in New Zealand. He moved there from Glasgow in February 2008 and he teaches earthquake geology. His students study the history, effects, and mechanics of earthquakes within the earth's crust. Professor Paton's special interest is earthquake prediction.



Miss Jeanie York was born in Bellshill, Scotland in 1935. After moving to Colorado in the USA with her family, she took up skiing. In 1950 she became a member of the Aspen Ski team and was soon in contention for the USA Olympic team. Sadly, after a skiing accident, she was confined to a wheelchair. She spent forty years coaching junior skiers from her specially modified chair. Jeanie received an award for her dedication.

As you start today's verbal memory skill, remember '**Focus, connect, rehearse**'.



What does it mean to focus?
How focus can help you remember well.

Paying attention is vital to remembering. Develop the following key components of 'attention'.

Interest – Develop your curiosity and take an interest in things you want to remember. The details you notice will capture your attention and focus.

Motivation – Be determined to achieve your goals and develop your memory potential; strong focus and attention will come from perseverance.

Concentration – People differ in the intensity and duration of concentration but knowing how important focus is to memory will help you banish distraction.

Emotions – Positive self-belief and the expectation that you will remember well, will enable you to focus. Fear of forgetting can also focus the mind!

Environment – A quiet, undisturbed environment aids concentration and focus.

Cover the stories and write down the facts about each person from memory. Which story did you find the easiest to remember? Did having the picture help? Think back to the stories over the next few days, trying to recall as many facts as possible about each person.

Taking Verbal Memory a Bit Further

Try these Memory Tune exercises, using words.

You will find the solutions at the end of today's Memory Tune.

- a. **The following words are written backwards.** Which one shouldn't be in this group?

ysnap, llebeulb, mossolb, tuntsehc, llidoffad, nemalcyc, teloiv

- b. **Read aloud the sentence below and count the times the letter 'f' occurs.**

Finished files are the result of years of scientific study combined with the experience of years.

How many F's did you count?

- c. **Fill in each step of each ladder with a word,** changing one letter at a time as you climb down, so you end up with the word at the bottom.

1	2	3	4
BOOK	GIVE	NAIL	CALM
-----	-----	-----	-----
-----	-----	-----	-----
-----	-----	-----	-----
READ	TAKE	FILE	RAGE

Check your solutions at the end of today's Memory Tune.

Off Shopping!

Imagine you are off to do the shopping. You can't find a pen anywhere, so will just have to remember the list.

Choose how you will remember the items. Will you use 'chunking', remembering three or four items at a time and practising each 'chunk' to help you remember?

Will you choose categories, remembering all the meat items together, the dairy products grouped together and so on?

Or will you visualize walking around your familiar supermarket, taking each item from the shelves?



Study the list for ninety seconds, cover the list, and write down your shopping list – thank goodness you found a pen!

butter	sausages	sugar	milk	oranges	chicken
flour	strawberries	beef	cheese	apples	salt

Did you remember everything? If not, try again.

Sleep – Why Is It Important For Memory?

Poor sleep patterns can leave your brain foggy and forgetful, making it difficult to focus. Studies on sleep and brain function consistently find that poor sleeping habits affect performance on memory tasks.

If you are not sleeping well enough to wake refreshed in the mornings, try these strategies to improve your sleep.



Check your diet

Avoid big meals too close to bedtime.
Limit caffeine and alcohol.

Exercise

Include any form of exercise, particularly cardiovascular, in your daily routine
Avoid exercising too close to bedtime.

Relax before bedtime

Avoid working right up until the moment you fall into bed exhausted.
Read, meditate, or listen to music before sleeping. Keep your bedroom quiet and dark.

Keep regular hours

Try to keep regular hours for sleeping. Know how long you need to sleep as this varies person to person. Avoid sleeping in too long in the mornings!

This week, keep a sleep diary. Write down:

1. Activities each day – Exercise? Catnaps? Did you feel tired? Alert and energetic?
2. How you prepared for bedtime. Did you read?
3. What time did you go to bed? When did you wake up?
4. Do you have difficulties falling asleep or waking up too early?
5. How much time did you spend in bed not sleeping? Were you tossing and turning, or relaxed and comfortable?
6. Total sleep hours. Do you feel refreshed after this amount?

If sleep is a problem for you, try the strategies above. For more serious sleep issues, consult your doctor.



Stretch your Brain

Have you experienced leaving the kitchen to fetch something you need for the task you are completing? You walk out to the garage – and have no idea what you came to find. If a particular memory won't come back, pursue it until it does.

Develop the habit of expecting success and always challenge yourself to recapture elusive information.

Short-term memory is the gateway to remembering.
Tomorrow you will give your short-term memory a good workout!



Solutions to Word puzzles

- a. Odd one out – chestnut
- b. Counting F's. Did you count six? Many people count only three. Why? Because you set your brain the task of 'listening' for the 'f' sound, the brain overlooks 'of' where the 'f' sounds like a 'v'.
- c. Word Ladders.
 1. BOOK, rook, rood, road, READ.
 2. GIVE, live, like, lake, TAKE
 3. NAIL, fail, fall, fill, FILE
 4. CALM, palm, pale, page, RAGE

You may have found an alternative solution. If you have, well done!



Memory Tune™

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