

Advanced Memory



A COURSE IN TECHNIQUES AND SKILLS
FOR MENTALISTS, MAGICIANS
AND STUDENTS

MIND
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Memory



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Prologue to the first edition

I would like to thank you for purchasing this short course.

I have been using memory techniques personally now for the last 15 years. I have taken the greatest pleasure in being able to train those with dyslexia - who are often left out of the educational system - and show them that they are not drop outs. Their minds simply work differently and because of that they do in fact have very powerful memories. I have watched such people fly once I have taught them even the most basic of the systems.

I still enjoy it though when I teach someone who claims to have a poor memory a basic system, because it is the look on their face when they realise that with no effort their brain has done something they never thought that it could do.

For me, the adventure started when I knew I was going to college to train as a youthworker - I wanted to know how to remember stuff as I had never been very good at it. I learned the basic system in around half an hour and then moved on in a day to the letter shape system.

I am a slow study, and it took a couple of days for me to get my head around it. But once I had I decided to challenge myself to learn the books of the Bible in order. It seemed impossible but I took on the task, wondering if it would really work.

45 mins later I was recalling the books backwards, forwards, and inside out! I couldn't believe it.

Whilst at college I was the only person not to have post-it notes spread around the house and memorised some 30 important history dates and related information in just 2 hours ... Whilst sat in front of the TV!

I have tried to keep this book as short as possible and keep the anecdotes out as much as possible. My experience of studying other similar materials is that there are always a number of stories and perhaps too many examples. Maybe I have not used enough stories or examples, but I think that the best way of using the memory techniques I have included is to actually use them, not try and tell you what I think!

I hope that as you read through this, the first edition of what I hope will be an annually updated course, you will take the same pleasure as I have in learning to learn. I also hope that the added brain facts, and study techniques will be useful to you. And if you find anything that you feel is in error, or could do with further explanation then please email me - if you bought off ebay you know already where I am!

So enjoy!

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Andy Gray". Below the signature is a simple, hand-drawn smiley face with a wide, open-mouthed grin and two dots for eyes.

Andy Gray

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Disclaimer

Although I have made every effort not to use material from other memory systems without giving credit, it is quite difficult to not do so accidentally, mainly because all systems in the end use a finite number of resources, and most systems rely on ancient principles - such that duplication is inevitable. The purpose of this short book is to combine what I find to be the most useful of all those that I have used over the years, together with what variations I have seen fit to implement to achieve better results. I have been using all these systems for many years, a couple of which are my own invention, and so the material it was originally based on has, for me at any rate, been lost a long time ago. If you are aware of similar source material I would be most grateful for the references so that in future updates to the text I can reference valuable sources. Mindmap and mindmapping is copyright and registered trade mark of Tony Buzan. I have used reference to the phrase mindmap and mindmapping as it is used now widely in education. For more detailed information on mindmapping please consult Tony Buzan publications.

Info@base-ideas.co.uk

Using your memory

Welcome!

In just a few moments you will be using your memory to remember a list of 10 items.

And that's just the start!

We all use our memories all the while, some more than others. If you are a magician or even a student reading this then you probably need to remember an immense amount of information; but most people need to remember shopping lists. But just maybe you are more interested in winning the local pubquiz, or beating the pub quiz machine into submission so that it makes some serious payouts ... or perhaps you want to be the next winner of 'who wants to be a millionaire?' Or amaze people with your superhuman abilities. Then again, you might have recently taken part in a national memory 'battle of the sexes' game on tv and realised that you weren't quite as sharp as you were. Not only that, but it has been shown that for those who are elderly, daily mind gymnastics which include the sort of thing memory requires, keep senility and Alzheimer syndrome at bay. Whatever your reasons, learning to learn is fun, productive and anyone can do it!

Even if you have dyslexia!

If you have dyslexia, or know someone who does, creating a dynamic way of memorizing information is very useful.

In fact I have found that for people with dyslexia they have an advantage over most people – its true!

They have a very powerful VISUAL memory, which is often untapped. They are led to believe that they have a very poor memory. The reason for this is that they are told to learn things from a printed page whilst at school, and much of their energy goes into trying to decipher the text. However, deciphering the text is only one small part of learning. And so in this course you will learn techniques which can be taught to anyone with what some people call learning difficulties, and they will be astounded at the power in their own mind! In just 5 minutes I have taught people who are dyslexic the basic memory system for 10 items and proved once and for all that they are just as clever as everyone else. And the result is such a boost in confidence they go on to much greater things.

How do I know?

Because I have the numerical form of dyslexia, dyscalculia. I thought I was stupid – I learnt that I just had never been taught how to remember visually!

Your amazing brain!

Your brain controls every aspect of your being – it processes all those senses that you have. An eye, for example, receives light but without the brain to process the information it will do you no good at all.

You have subconscious processes that go on without you knowing about it, for example breathing. Could you imagine getting up first thing in the morning and needing to remind yourself to breath?

And you have conscious processes, like walking and talking, and thinking!

Memory falls into a strange place because some of it is subconscious, and some of it is conscious.

FACT: did you now that that the brain is made up of chemical and electrical signals which are transmitted and received by something called Neurons? There are more Neurological connectors in the brain than people living on earth!

So lets take a look at how all these connectors work – they are a bit like pathways really, but it's important to know roughly how they work so that you will be able to make the best use of any memory tricks you learn.

The pathways in the brain can be best thought of as being like a small stream that is made in soft sand by a trickle of water.

At first the stream is small, you can disturb the path of the stream very easily. However after a period of time the stream creates a more permanent path down which more water can flow without being disturbed until finally there is a river - solid and unswerving.

In the same ways when a memory is first formed it can be easily lost. However, if the memory is recalled a surprisingly few number of times, then it is retained and cannot be disturbed.

Most people believe that when they remember something once they will remember it for a long time. This is unfortunately untrue. The other error that is made is that if you remember something now you will easily forget it. Again, untrue.

IF YOU USE THE RIGHT TECHNIQUES, BY THE END OF THIS SHORT COURSE NOT ONLY WILL YOU HAVE ACQUIRED THE SKILLS TO USE YOUR MEMORY IN THE SHORT TERM, BUT ALSO IN THE LONG TERM!

Let's get your brain warmed up first though, and prove that you have one!

First, I would like you to find a quiet place and close your eyes, and remember a time in your past that you were really happy – happy memories are easier to recall than sad ones. Where were you, what were the smells?

You now need to 'GO INTO' that picture – by that I mean start to imagine walking around it. Give yourself time. What you are looking for is how intensely you are

able to recall everything about that scene. If you are having difficulties then choose another scene.

This will I hope show you that you have a very powerful memory for images, and to release the power of you memory you need to start to get image generation into your head!

To create powerful images, tests have shown that the easiest memories to recall involve humour, larger than life, colour, smell, taste, sound, touch. So if at any point in this course you are having problems memorizing something just add another layer of power image maker and you will be able to recall it. I call these MEMORY POWER BOOSTERS

The second tip I am going to give you is DO NOT LEARN ANYTHING BY ROTE – that is saying the same thing over and over. That is an old way of learning and will not help you. In the same way, don't worry that if you don't repeat what you have already learned then you will forget it – you won't. Not for short periods anyway, and I will show you how to create a long term memory towards the end of the course.

So where do memory tricks come from? Back in the mists of time the Greeks would hold competitions with one another – the person who could remember the most would win. To do this they would remember their information by imagining it in certain places around a room or the city/town in which they lived. We will use this technique later. I will start by explaining pegging.

Pegging is like taking a coat and hanging it on a recognisable 'peg' which is already in your memory – that peg itself has a way of remembering it. Don't worry, it's not hard, and although at first you think that you are learning more than originally, you need only need learn each system once for it to be used over and over again.

Reputedly, pegging first came about when a doctor was involved in an disaster at sea. He was in the dining room at the time as were many of the passengers with whom he was acquainted, some 100 or so. The ships documents were lost and it was important to find out just who was missing, so the doctor set about

remembering, and in the process made a remarkable discovery. Although he was unable to remember all the names at once, he could remember the tables in the dining room, and he could remember the faces of the people who sat round each table night after night. And these people he knew the names of!

He was able to remember all the names of the passengers and identify who was missing.

What had happened was not that he had found a way of creating memories – our earlier exercise of a past experience should I hope have shown you that you have a powerful memory already. He had in fact stumbled on the crucial element which is ACCESSING those memories – and that requires order.

Imagine two filing systems. The one is what many of us do - a pile in a cupboard some place which is a mixture of bills and letters, documents and junk mail. The other is a neat filing cabinet organised carefully into bills, letter documents, junk - each file in date order. One day you urgently need a dated bill to prove that the gas supplier owes you a rebate. Which do you think will be the easiest place to find the bill? All it took was a little effort to create a filing system but it saved hours of hunting. And the same goes for memory – if you do not create a way of easily accessing the particular memory it will become lost with all the other memories that you have, perhaps irretrievably.

This is one of the major blocks to people starting to memorize information, they are put off by the fact that firstly they have to set up their mental filing system. Where as if they were to take the time and trouble they would realize that they could recall huge amounts of information.

Although all memory systems rely on pegging, there are a number of systems I will be telling you about:

Number rhyme

Number shape

Body parts

Letter shape

Story

Journey

Place

Mind-map town

I will also give you some tips on how to get short term memory into long term memory.

The remainder of this course will deal with specific ideas about memorizing the important things of life such as telephone numbers, addresses, dates of history, text contents (for example studying or learning a piece of drama or a story) directions and where you left the car keys!

System 1 - Number rhyme

IN 5 MINUTES TIME YOU WILL BE ABLE TO RECALL A 10 ITEM SHOPPING LIST IN ORDER, BACKWARDS, FORWARDS, AND INSIDE OUT!

Take each number between 1 and 10 - I will be using numbers in the text to make it easier for you to read.

Now create rhymes for each of those numbers. You should do it yourself, but here is what I use. This is not exclusive and you may prefer your own rhymes. What is important is that they are memorable, and solid concrete ideas – emotions will not work. You are working with pictures not ideas!

- 1 Bun
- 2 shoe
- 3 tree
- 4 door
- 5 hive
- 6 sticks
- 7 heaven
- 8 gate
- 9 wine
- 10 hen

MOVE ON TO THE NEXT STAGE ONLY WHEN YOU ARE SURE THAT YOU CAN REMEMBER YOUR OBJECT RHYMES.

Now, when you say the word '1', immediately you should have the rhyme of a bun (in my case). '5' would make you think of a bee-hive. You will get quicker in time, like the trickle becomes a stream, and it will take less effort.

This is your peg system.

Now I am going to give you another list – this time to remember.

Hat
 Coat
 Dog
 Mouse
 Car
 Jacket
 Sofa
 Lightbulb
 Candle
 briefcase

Your task now is to join your RHYME to the appropriate object that you want to remember.

For example the sixth item on our list is a jacket. 6 rhymes with sticks, so imagine the jacket being beaten up with some sticks or a similar image. Maybe the jacket is playing the drums. Do the same for each item on the list. Here is a simple table to help you.

Order place in list	Rhyme	object
1	bun	hat
2	shoe	coat
3	tree	dog
4	door	mouse
5	(bee) hive	car
6	(drum) sticks	jacket
7	heaven	chair
8	gate	lightbulb
9	wine	candle
10	hen	briefcase

As you memorize each picture, try to make it move - have action in it, and keep it clear in your mind. Use the power memory booster tips of humour, larger than life etc. as mentioned earlier. Don't worry about forgetting earlier items. They are still there. Just concentrate on each picture as you get to it.

Now, close your eyes. Say to yourself '1' and recall the rhyme. What was the rhyme linked to

Amazingly as you go through each object you will recall the number, then the rhyme, and finally the picture which includes what you are trying to remember. Try it next time you go shopping!!

But perhaps the what you will find most unnerving is that once memorized, you will find it hard to stop your memory from throwing out the information! Images will tumble out faster and faster as you get used to using your memory. Its very strange at first, but you will get used to it.

System 2 - Number shapes.

A number has a shape all of its own, but needs a little interpretation. The graphics in this section will help you.

0 is an orange



1 is a paint brush



2 is a swan



3 is a camel



4 is the sail of a yacht



5 is a hook on a fishing line



6 is the trunk of an elephant



7 is a cliff



8 is a snowman



9 is a golf club



10 bat and ball



Using the guidelines for number rhymes, this time memorize a new list of 10 items, but this time link the pictures of the SHAPES system to the objects. I.e. Link your first item with a paintbrush (for 1) the second with a swan, the third with a camel etc. So a car at position 5 might be imagining pulling a car from a river using a hook and line.

How to turn 10 into 100!

A bit clever this Firstly, you will need to decide which system you like best, rhymes or shapes. If it is rhymes, then that is the BANK, and the shapes become the PATCH. Vice versa if you preference the other.

It works like this.

Lets assume that you prefer rhymes. 1-10 is the same as a simple list. 11 upwards you create COMBINATION IMAGES. Each image will always have a 'bun' in it, but the bun interacts with the 10 shapes lists. So for example number 11 would be a paint brush painting a bun a colour. Number 15 would be a bun on a fishing line. All the numbers from 11 to 19 are the shapes, but the bun means it is HAS A 1 AT THE FRONT. In the THIRD 10 (21-30) then each 'shape' will interact with a shoe! So number 28, would be a snowman wearing a pair of shoes. See the table over for further clarity.

Patch										
Bank	1.brush	2.swan	3.camel	4.yacht	5.hook	6.elephant	7.cliff	8.snowman	9.club	10.bat & ball
See note	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
1:bun	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20
2:shoe	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30
3:tree	31	32	33	34	35	36	37	38	39	40
4:door	41	42	43	44	45	46	47	48	49	50
5:hive	51	52	53	54	55	56	57	58	59	60
6:sticks	61	62	63	64	65	66	67	68	69	70
7:heaven	71	72	73	74	75	76	77	78	79	80
8:gate	81	82	83	84	85	86	87	88	89	90
9:wine	91	92	93	94	95	96	97	98	99	100

Note: for the first bank it is not necessary to have a number, as the first 10 will stand on their own. However if wished you could have NIL = HILL. If you decide that your Bank should be the shapes system, and the patch should be the rhyme system then use the following table.

Patch										
Bank	1.bun	2.shoe	3.tree	4.door	5.hive	6.sticks	7.heaven	8.gate	9.wine	10.hen
0:orange	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
1:brush	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20
2:swan	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30
3:camel	31	32	33	34	35	36	37	38	39	40
4:yacht	41	42	43	44	45	46	47	48	49	50
5:hook	51	52	53	54	55	56	57	58	59	60
6:elephant	61	62	63	64	65	66	67	68	69	70
7:cliff	71	72	73	74	75	76	77	78	79	80
8:snowman	81	82	83	84	85	86	87	88	89	90
9:club	91	92	93	94	95	96	97	98	99	100

The way to use this system obviously is to introduce the object to be remembered into this new composite image. So if you wanted to remember a clock at number 86 (IN THE FIRST TABLE), then you would have an elephant stood knocking (movement and sound) on a gate, and on his back is a giant clock. The reason for needing the idea of a BANK and PATCH system is that an image is just that, an image. So when you DECODE the image you will need to know which came first. Otherwise you would be asking yourself if your placement of the clock was at number 86, or 68. This confusion would create an unstable memory image that might be forgotten. In fact, in this version number 68 is sticks and a snowman. Look now at the second table – what would the image be for a car at number 73? Work out which system you prefer and then stick to it!

How and why does it work?

We can retain separate images in our minds quite easily, and by using this kind of system of combining different elements the images remain quite distinct from one another. Because they are sequence based with a system we are already used to – that of counting – we are sure that we have not missed anything vital.

But there is one more thing which I will touch on now, but will be dealt with a little more later on, and that is the process of recall and long term memory.

The act of re-remembering creates the effect of strengthening the chemical bonds of a memory – or in the analogy of the stream, it widens it to a river. If you simply look again at the information to remind yourself then you are not actually remembering. There are optimum times for this process to be efficient, which will be covered later. But for now it is worth realising that using a systematic approach you will be able to recall far more information without the need to recourse to the quick glance to remind yourself if you have forgotten anything. Such glances keep memories in the short term area of your mind, and true power memory is information which goes into long term memory.

In fact the amazing thing is that once the memory has been firmly fixed in the mind, you will no longer need the system to recall the information as it will become part of your normal thinking, so do not be concerned that you are going to end up with 1000's of elephants running around in your head because the systems covered here are simply a tool to help you 1) retain the information in the first place 2) get it into long term memory.

What about erasing information?

Now that is the really clever bit. You can either let your mind lose the information over time (around 4 days!) or you can erase it 'manually'. All you have to do is to go through the images without their attached items and you are ready to start over – a bit like erasing a tape recording or recordable cd which has just been re-formatted.

One last thing as we move on. Hopefully you will be realising that your memory is very impressive – in fact why not start impressing others now by doing a demonstration? It's a strange feeling the first time you manage it because somewhere inside of you you probably didn't think that it would work without all the strain and effort that you used to, or still do, put in at school. In fact because it is all just about remembering pictures you probably quite enjoyed it!

FACT:When Albert Einstein died they opened up his head to look at his brain – it was smaller than the average size! However, he used much more than most people. Doing memory stunts will enable you to retain larger amounts of information and genius is not so much about being clever, but seeing how one part of life fits with another part of life. The more you know, the more you can link them together. So start thinking like a genius!

System 3 – body parts (and how to turn 100 into 1000!)

For kinaesthetic learners – that is people who learn best by moving around – this is for you! It involves the body and movement, at first anyway.

Think of your body as your own filing system, beginning at your feet. There are no numbers involved this time, just placement. The pegs are (in order from bottom to top)

Foot

Knee

Thigh

Bottom

Waist

Chest

Arms

Neck

Face

Hair

As you will see, there are 10 places once more. For the next ten minutes do the following. Say each part of your body out loud and then touch it. Remember what it feels like – firm, squidgy, lumpy etc.

Leave it for 5 minutes (make a cup of tea or coffee)

Now come back and close your eyes, picture yourself going through the actions again touching each part of the body as you did before BUT ONLY DO IT IN YOUR IMAGINATION, NOT PHYSICALLY. Do this for 5 minutes.

You are now ready to start using your body as the next peg system. Find yourself 10 things and write out a list.

In your imagination take each item and attach it to each body part as you go through the list – use power memory booster tips on the way through to reinforce the memory image.

For example, let's say that you wanted to remember a pound of butter from the local store, and it was the third item on the shopping list. You would imagine perhaps that you were on a hot beach somewhere sunbathing, and you had to put some suntan lotion on. Unfortunately you have forgotten it ... but you do happen to have some butter in your bag – so you take it out and rub it on your THIGHS.

The way to make this peg system work is movement.

And now memorize and recall your own list!

Easy wasn't it?

So how do you turn 100 into 1000 memory places? Using the same principle of BANKS and PATCH, you simply put another layer onto your existing combined system. So the first 100 items takes the NUMBER and RHYME combined system, and introduces a new element – your foot! Everything in the first 100 involves kicking it in some way. So if you need to remember goldfish at number 60, you imagine kicking (FOOT) a beehive and at the same time playing bat and ball with a gold fish. If you want to put that same gold fish elsewhere, say number 572, then you would imagine yourself in heaven, and there would be a swan swimming around you nibbling at your waist, which tickles! It makes you laugh so much that you fall over and land on a slimy gold fish.

Remember that you must DECODE the image in the order in which you prefer your systems otherwise you will get confused. In the examples above the order of decode that I have preferred is BODY, RHYME, SHAPE

TIP: When you come to review information it is not necessary to decode the information every time - in fact it is preferable NOT to do so. I find that once every 3 - 5 reviews is about right. This is because the important part of the memory is the imagery formed, and as you get better at it you will fall into your own patterns of forming images that are understood and easily decodable.

System 4 – letter shape

It's all getting a bit complex now so we will now simplify it again, and look at a system that was discovered many years ago whereby whole words could be made out of letters.

We can see that numbers are the easiest way of organising the information, but unfortunately numbers in themselves are fairly abstract. So a system had to be found which would enable numbers to take on flesh and blood. This would have two advantages – the first would mean that you could create an infinite number of memory places without having to keep the images becoming more and more complex with patches and banks; the second was that you could retain dates, telephone numbers and other strings of complex digits.

The system is based around each number having a shape which relates to the shape of a letter, or rather the shape of the letter AND ANY OTHER PHONIC SOUND PRODUCED BY SIMILAR LETTERS OR COMBINATION OF LETTERS. For example ' f ' in fish is the same sound as ' ph ' in elephant.

These are the letters, and the ways of remembering them

1 t,d – the vertical stroke down starts the letter, it is the sound produced with a flick of the tongue on the teeth

2 n – the two downstrokes on the letter n in lower case

3 – m similar to n, in that there are 3 downstrokes

4 – r The last letter of the word four

5 – L When you look at your right hand palm upwards and thumb out, it will form the letter L. It is also Roman for 50.

6 – soft g sound – it is the number 6 upside down. As in badge. Equally the sound works for a j, so 6 is also j.

7 – K, hard ch sound, hard g sound (as in girl). Take two mirror versions of a 7 and put them back to back 

8 – F, ph,v, th sounds. Similar to a hand written  and sounds are alike.

9 – P or b . 9 is a mirror image of p, lower case b is 9 rotated 180 degrees. They are both formed on the lips with a faint pop sound.

0 – S or Z, sch, sh. Z starts the word Zero, both s and z are formed with air escaping through a small hole formed by tongue and teeth.

Take some time learning these letters as they do take time, and it is worth getting right now.

All other letters including vowels and such letters as w, y etc are filler letters and do not stand for any number, but help in the formation of words.

The first 10 numbers can be a bit tricky because of the words necessary, but then I will drop in a few of the higher numbers up to the number 100 as guide.

0 – Sea

1 – Day (a calendar?)

2 – Noah

3 – Ma

4 – Ra (a type of boat, also an Egyptian God)

5 – Law – imagine a court room

6 – jaw

7 – key

8 – fee (an entrance ticket perhaps?)

9 – bay

10 – Toes

32 - man

59 – Lab

73 – comb (note that the b is not sounded, so this is a legitimate word for 73.

Were the b sounded it would be number 739!)

98 – Bath

You will need to come up with the other words yourself. As it is the best way of learning and making any system personal to you.

With this system it is comparatively easy to come up with a list up to 9999 long! You need to break it down though.

Dominic O'Brien is a world memory champion, and he suggests using these letters in a quite remarkable way. Break the four digit number into two parts, so you have two digits followed by two digits. The first two digits are represented by the kind of list that you have above, but the second two are famous movie stars, represented by their initials. So Sean Connery is 07 (no relation to James Bond either!) If you had a number to remember, or wanted to place something at position 5907, then you would imagine that item in a Lab with the chemist as Sean Connery making some potion or other.

Of course, you don't need to limit yourself to short 4 letter groupings. If you can manage to then any word can become a number, but it must be a touchable object or person. The word Dressing Gown for example would represent the number 1402772 ... which looks suspiciously like a phone number! In which case if your friend who is called Arthur has the number 1402772, you would imagine Arthur, holding a phone (so you knew what it was about) in a dressing

gown. This demonstrates how you use different systems at different times and places, which I will discuss later on when I suggest some pointers as to how to remember some of those dates that you might have to learn in history!

The following pictures are suggestions only of words that could be used to encode numbers as pictures. I would not be so bold as to suggest that I had come up with them however! From research I believe that the first person to use these words as part of a system was Harry Lorayne in the '50's. It is important however to make the effort to come up with your OWN words, and the following have been provided only as a guide and with due respect to Harry.

- | | | | | |
|-------------------|--------------------|-------------------|----------|-------------------|
| 1. tie | 11. tot | 22. nun | 23. name | 32. moon |
| 2. Noah | 12. tin | 24. Nero | | 33. mummy |
| 3. ma | 13. tomb | 25. nail | | 34. mower |
| 4. rye | 14. tire 15.towel | 26. notch | | 35. mule |
| 5. law 6. shoe | 16. dish | 27. neck | | 36. match |
| 7. cow | 17. tack | 28. knife | | 37. mug 38. movie |
| 8. ivy | 18. dove 19. tub | 29. knob | | 39. mop |
| 9. bee | 20. nose | 30. mice | | 40. rose |
| 10. toe | 21. net | 31. Mat | | 41. rod |
| | | | | |
| 42. rain | 53. loom | 65. jail | | 76. cage |
| 43. ram 44. rower | 54. lure | 66. choo choo | | 77. coke |
| 45. roll | 55. lily | 67. chalk | | 78. cave |
| 46. roach | 56. leech 57.log | 68. chef 69. ship | | 79. cob |
| 47. rock | 58. lava | 70. case | | 80. fez |
| 48. roof | 59. lip | 71. cot | | 81. fit 82. phone |
| 49. rope | 60. cheese | 72. coin | | 83. foam |
| 50. Lace | 61. sheet | 73. comb | | 84. fur |
| 51. lot | 62. chain 63. chum | 74. car | | 85. file |
| 52. lion | 64. cherry | 75. Coal | | 86. fish |
| | | | | |
| | 87. fog 88. fife | 98. puff | | |
| | 89. fob | 99. pipe | | |
| | 90. bus | 100. thesis or | | |
| | 91. bat | disease | | |
| | 92. bone | | | |
| | 93. bum 94. bear | | | |
| | 95. bell | | | |
| | 96. beach | | | |
| | 97. book | | | |

System 5 - Story

Stories have captured our imagination since time began, it is part of who we are. We can probably all remember our favourite story and recall many of the details.

But even if you are not the most creative person in the world you can use the power of story to help you to remember lists. It actually brings together two ideas, one of story and one of linking images.

To link images you simply take your first image and link it in a humorous way to the second image, the second to the third, the third to the fourth and so on. It's important as it was in the other systems that you focus on the link each time and just the two images rather than trying to concentrate on the whole picture.

Here's another list of 10 – a shopping list this time.

Carrots

Bananas

Milk

Cheese

Orange juice

Butter

Washing up liquid

Shoe polish

Duster

Lemonade

Before I make my suggestion, why not take a moment to look through the list and link each item in a funny way. One extra note, link the last item (the lemonade)

back to the first (the carrots) as this will create a memory loop which is a fantastic memory reinforcer. It means that you can start anywhere in the circle, even if you forget the first one, and still be able to cover all the items.

My suggestion, which I will write as a story!

There is a field of carrots and there is one great big carrot in the middle. Walking out of a door in the carrot is a banana, one in pyjamas. Its coming out of the door with a couple of milk churns. But just as it comes out a giant mouse comes hopping over the hill and jumps on the banana thinking that it was a piece of cheese. The banana squishes and out flows a river of orange juice – reach out and taste it. The river grows and flows around you. Oh no its getting dangerous! Just as your feet lift of the orange juice river bed, slab of butter floats past. It's greasy but you just about manage to scramble on. As you float down river, you see bubbles ahead, at first it looks like rapids but then you see it is in actual fact washing up liquid, very strange! And on one bank there is a shoe, and there is an old woman polishing it. You make your way to the bank and to the old woman - she is using a duster. She sees that you are thirsty and offers you a drink of lemonade. It tastes really good. As you look around you see on the table a basket of fresh carrots, which came from the field just behind the shoe-house, in which there is a giant carrot

Just one thing to point out – the use of the old woman. You will probably know the rhyme of 'There was an old woman who lived in a shoe'. Whenever you are able to use existing information in an image scene then do so. This has two effects.

Firstly, you are using strong memories already which saves time in reconstructing images.

Secondly, and in some ways more importantly, it enables you to cross reference information from other areas of interest, and this as has already been mentioned is really how to think in the ways of a genius! Shopping lists are one thing, but there are

many more areas of life which will complement each other! Once you are aware of this fact, and put the techniques into practice, you will begin to see things around you that you had never noticed before.

System 6 Journey

If you take a regular journey to somewhere, using the same route over and over, the chances are that right now you will be able to sit down and recall each individual step along the way. Whether you are walking, driving or a passenger familiarity will mean that you have in your mind both sequence and unique images all ready to drop in your lists or other information that you want to store away.

Imagine a train journey that you might take to work, you ride past stations that you can identify not only by sight, without reference to a sign, but you know which station is before it and which station is after it.

All you need to do to memorise your information is place your key images on each station. Of course if you can identify other points in your journey – bridges, fields, office blocks and so forth – then you will have many more points of reference that will provide you with the building blocks and pegs for your memory system.

What's more, because of the flexibility of this system, and because it relies on nothing more than familiarity with the real world, it is very easy to drop in the other systems.

Earlier you learned how to create a system of 1000 images, but if you had a journey of 10 stations, you could use each station in combination thereby increasing to 10 thousand separate images! Believe me, this is not impossible and you can search the internet to find such record breakers!

System 7 Place

We now return to ancient Greece where the great memorizers first hung out! This was the very system, also known as the LOCI system, that they used.

They would walk around their city or town, getting a real feel for their environment. Sometimes they would explore buildings, or use statues. But they would repeat the same route over and over. Walking it. Similar in many ways to the journey system yet different in that they would be specific about the places that they would go to.

You can do the same, in a couple of different ways.

Start with your own house, each room in your house becomes a location place. Just now, in your imagination, see how powerful a mind you have and go into each room in turn and recall what is there, every item, every picture. Spend time making the impression you have as real as possible.

Now decide the order that you are going to walk around your house. Some people choose to walk around it in the order that they do as they get ready in the morning, or their bed time routine. Other people just prefer to work out their own way.

The next stage is one that you are familiar with – simply put each item you want to remember in each location in your house. Make it real.

I personally have found that you can use this really well with the story system. Put a key item in the room, and then remember how that key item fits into place in a story. Again, 10 locations in the house (you can include gardens, even the road outside the house in necessary), joined with 10 key items which each have a story containing 10 or more items. You are up to 100 with barely a breath.

But you can take this system further – use friends houses, other houses owned by the family How about museums Or even towns?

Next time you walk down the high street see if you can take note of some of the stores you walk past – the interesting ones at any rate. Bakers have a very strong smell of their own. An opticians always has interesting items you find no where else. Imagine each item in places that you can recall.

And finally , bringing it all together

Virtual mindmapping! Also known as

System 8 Mind Map Town!

I would recommend that you don't try this system until you have grown confidence using all the other systems, and that you are able to create strong images in your head in under 4 seconds. If you can't do that yet, don't worry. With only a couple of weeks practice you will be able to, and when you can, return and have a go at one of the most powerful uses of the memory system I can imagine. And it's fun too!

You need to have an awareness of what mind mapping is. If you haven't come across the term before, might I recommend you take a few moments to read it up on the internet. I would suggest the home page of the man who invented [Mindmapping – Tony Buzan](#).

Mind mapping creates colours and images on a piece of paper which which by their very nature are more memorable. They are also fantastic tools for being able to pull together information and cross reference it, without the restrictions of the linear page.

That said, if you have lots of information on a page – for instance if you were to create a mindmap of a whole book you were studying, you might miss something.

This is where virtual mind mapping comes in. But it relies heavily on your ability to be creative with your mind.

It brings together shapes and rhymes – for the purpose of keeping track of how many key words and branches there are; letters – for dates and specific number related information; story – which will allow groupings of key words and access to new branches; and journey/place as a way of creating the branches of the mind map with information on each branch.

And this is how it works.

You do not have a real world in which to work, though there is nothing wrong with using a real world place as reference.

Begin with a blank space – I usually choose mine as white. It is infinite in all directions. I may drop in some sky for the fun of it.

You then need a town centre. One of the classic town squares is useful. You then add a central statue, the statue is of the title of the mind map. Make it big, make it colourful, make it funny.

This is where it get clever. Each road or even alley way that leads from the square corresponds to a branch of the mind map. This could obviously become confusing so there are a couple of extra tips that may help. At the entrance to the road or alleyway you place an item which will describe the contents of that road – almost like a signpost. In the town square you put a key object – I usually use the shape system – for how many roads there are that will leave the square. This number needs updating as you add more roads but it doesn't take that much effort.

At the end of each road you put your next group of information. Do this using the story system – use keywords. Sometimes the items may have further sub branches, in which case you should add a door by that item. You can use coloured doors, red, orange, yellow, green, blue, indigo, violet, black, white or grey. Go through that door and into a room. In the room you place your further key words as story. Once more further branches are represented by further doors leading out of the room, and variably into gardens or even other worlds or imaginary towns.

Sometimes you might have information that on a mindmap would be represented with words written along the branch. In this case you would put

key items along the roads or in shops that you would place on the road. If there are additional details form them into story circles.

Sometimes on a mindmap there are links from one branch item to another. In this case there are a few methods that I use. Bridges, tunnels, telephones (where each end of the receiver ends at the linked destination) and teleport devices. Sorry about the last one, too much 'Star Trek'! I make sure that there is a clear item that links to the other area of interest, often the same item as there was on the road that led from other branches or from the town square. It is important though that once the link is made that at the other end of the bridge, tunnel etc you 'look back' in your imagination so that you remember where you have just come from, and again place an item at the mouth of the tunnel to represent where you have come from, and logically where the tunnel could lead you to.

A couple of other tricks is to use logical types of building for holding specific information. For example, book references go in libraries; historical information goes into museums; I often put technical data into science labs; numbers that don't have a reference to other things (such as dates) go into banks. Get a habit of linking such information.

This does admittedly sound very complex, but once you get the hang of it and establish your own rules systems it is surprisingly flexible, and most of all FUN. Revision of the material goes away from pouring over books for hours on end wondering if in fact any of it has gone in, and instead wandering around your own town.

I find now I can listen to lectures or other information and form these virtual mind maps at the same time. As you listen make sure that you form the images in the right places and review at the right intervals afterwards. I

recommend that you don't try and DECODE whilst you review - that is spend time working out what each image in your head means. Instead the first couple of times through just remember the image alone, then later decode.

SUGGESTED USES FOR YOUR MEMORY

Lets start easy.

Forget where you put your keys? Right. From now on, what you need to do is when you put your keys down link them to where you are putting them. So, if you put them down on the sofa enlarge those keys to huge size, and imagine them changing into a person, who looks like a key. Give him a name. Next time you will know where they are. What happens if you put them down in lots of different places – how will you know where you are up to? Well the chances are that you will not have this confusion, its quite amazing. However, at least you will know the places where to look first.

What about directions?

For directions you need to make sure that you listen for key points on routes that people might be giving you. Use the basic number systems for instructions like '3rd on the left' but wherever possible ask for specific land marks. Left and right are often a problem too as they abstract ideas. However, attaching a real item in place of left and right is a solution. For example, instead of Left have Lion. Rabbit instead of Right. This means that for the example above you could have a tree being eaten by Lion. If there was a pub – the black horse – then a black horse could be introduced into the image. As you create the various directions as images, you link them together in story form.

Telephone numbers

Often a thing which is tricky to hold down. However using your memory systems should make it easier. Firstly, get a clear image of the person whose number it is fixed clearly in your head. Then look at the number. Which is the best system? Personally I find using the letters system the best, and break the number down into

pairs. Then I use the story system to link those pairs, although I make sure I do not make it a circular story!

Equally, you can attach address information in the same way. Picture what the name of the road would look like. I live in Bawns Lane, - Bawns sounds like Born, so I would have a baby being born in the middle of a lane. My house number is 32, which in the letters system is man. So a man is having a baby in the middle of a lane! Not a pretty thought but easy to remember.

Dates of history...

can be remembered in a similar way using the letters system. Break the number down into two groups of two, or else keep it as a 4 digit number (unless it is below 1000 of course!) Create your object from this to remember, and then link it to the key event in history. While I was at college we were called on to learn for an exam 30 dates. I have number dyslexia, also called dyscalculia. How could I remember such things, they were meaningless? For weeks before the exam all my friends had sticky notes all over their rooms with the dates and key events on. I knew from experience that such would not work for me.

It was two nights before the exam I finally sat down, and focussed on the information. An hour later I had the lot. It does seem at the time to take a long time, but if you were to compare the accumulative time that most people spend on rote learning, revision and checking, the systems are much faster - you also retain information for longer.

It is a useful point to make however that if you are needing to learn a lot of dates, then it is also wise to learn them as you would any other list and make sure that they are organised. Think of it like a shopping list where you also memorise the best-before date as well. This will enable you to revise your list accurately whether or not you are near your source material – in fact this is crucial for learning techniques I will discuss next.

Studying

When you have the right techniques, studying actually becomes fun. You need to be aware that memorising as you read seems to be a slower process than the traditional way of read, take notes, analyse, learn. But the ACCUMULATIVE time is far shorter, and this should be kept in mind. Following is the suggestion for more effective studying.

Overview: Take a moment to read the contents list. Give yourself time to form an opinion of what might be in the contents of those chapters. What questions do the titles raise? Next, read through all the subheadings and continue to form your thoughts. Also at this stage create links with any information that you are already aware of, even if it is a completely different subject or topic. This will give you links to areas that you are already familiar with. It is not memorising as such but you are creating a mental environment where you can build information bridges later.

The overview stage is very important. It is a little like when you are travelling some distance and would need a map to work from. You don't just set out but instead look where you are going, create reference points along the way and understand your route. Study is not like reading a novel in that novel writing is about unveiling a hidden plot for pleasure: an academic work is communicating a concept by careful explanation using preceding argument or explanation to get to a final point. To know the final point is therefore preferable.

From this overview stage you can now begin to build your virtual mindmap. Put in the key central area, and position in your virtual world areas of the town that you will need in which to store the information. It may take a couple of study sessions to get to this stage, but it is worth it.

Next is how you study the text itself and keep your interest at a maximum. An effective way is titling. As you create your images from the headings and subheadings, you need to connect in the text itself. To do this, for each paragraph

find a word or phrase from that paragraph that you feel best summarises the text around it. This is your key thought and you attach it in the correct place in your mindmap - . Create a mental picture. For example, say the phrase you were trying to remember was 'the medium is the message'; I would imagine 3 men stood before me, one is short, one is medium sized, one is tall, and the middle medium sized one is giving me a letter.

You will find that when you recall it later you will be able to bring forth the main thrust of the idea.

Timings. - how to review effectively

Right at the beginning of this book I talked about the mind being like a filing cabinet, and about short term and long term memory.

Short term memory is useful for those day to day tasks, such as getting ready in the morning. You need to remember those things that you have just done, such as cleaning your teeth, so that you don't keep going back to do them over and over again. Likewise, you wouldn't want to remember every time in your whole life that you have cleaned your teeth!

Unfortunately, you can't decide when something goes into your memory where it will go – into short term or into long term! In fact, it will ALWAYS go into short term memory first and it requires further work to get it into the long term memory area. Its like having a filing tray and a filing cabinet. You can store only so much in the filing tray and you need to get it into the cabinet. Rote learning appears to work because you are using familiarity, but in reality you are putting materials directly into your long term memory, and this is not how the mind was designed to work. It's the difference between building a guide path and then strengthening it into a path, road, carriageway and finally a motorway/freeway; and trying to build the freeway from scratch with no guide whatsoever. It is my belief that this, coupled with boredom (the brain doesn't like doing things over and over; it stagnates and STOPS learning) makes it very hard work and makes you tired. But there is more...

When you RECALL a memory there is a much more profound chemical change going on which establishes stronger memory links much quicker. Rote or familiarity based learning does not create the same strong chemical changes.

This being the case it stands to reason that you should form images, and then recall them once they are in your head so as to create the stronger memories.

But again, just doing it over and over isn't only boring but unhelpful (too much keeps it in short term memory) and will not give you space to learn more. The secret is the timings of when you study, and when you recall, and giving your mind the physical time to create the chemical bonds. The feeling is that you are recalling it just before you have forgotten it. This is how you do it.

Study for just 20 minutes, forming your images and image links as you go. Immediately at the end of the 20 minutes recall all the information. Then take a break for 5 minutes.

At the end of the 5 minutes, recall the information once more. You can now continue studying for another 20 minutes. Repeat with this block of information – recall immediately. Then after 5 minute break recall ALL the information so far.

Do this as many times as you like for new sections of information - it helps if before you sit down to study you decide what one section is, find your own balance. Leave half an hour at the end of your study period for rest. Do something else completely different, don't study or read. A manual hobby perhaps, listening to music etc.. You will find that the information in your head wants to be thought about. Try not to, as doing so will keep some of the information in the short term memory.

After half an hour recall as much information as possible. Walk around your virtual town. You will get a feeling if you miss anything. At this point you can very quickly read over your text to make sure you got everything – don't reread it in detail, perhaps just headings, as it will put the information back into short term. If you missed anything, use power memory boosting techniques to get it firmly established.

An hour later Recall the information one more time.

Next day recall again. Do not look anything up even to remind yourself before you recall it. If you can't remember something then come back to it. It is the act of recall which builds the bonds, and a struggled for memory will be made all the more firm.

If at any point you want a quick review, don't decode the information, keep it in picture format. Say waiting for a bus or the kettle to boil - its amazing how quickly you can flip through the images. This is a useful technique to practice just before falling asleep at night as your subconscious will continue to process the information.

Recall the information weekly for 3 more weeks, and then monthly after that.

As more information is tied into the original you will find that you will find recall is easier. If you are studying a book, each time you recall any information you should make sure that you also recall the basic structure that hasn't yet had further information attached to it. This will enable you to place newly learned information as part of a pattern for the whole rather than in isolation.

Build into your study pattern this time for recall, as it makes revision much easier, if not completely unrequired as the information becomes familiar.

Appendix

The following information, ideas and thoughts arrived too late to be included in the main body of this short course. Future updates will include this material. These ideas have been used as examples of how you can use your memory.

Nutrition

It might not be too surprising to note that there is a significant link with good nutrition and a powerful memory. After all, the building blocks of the brain are organic, the electrical signals are produced from the body. The results are that the better you eat the better you are able to perform.

This goes the same for water. Carla Hannaford, Ph.D., in *Smart Moves: Why Learning Is Not All In Your Head*; says that the brain is between 75% and 90% water! Which means that if you get dehydrated your memory and attention will suffer. And don't wait until you are thirsty - by that time it is too late! If you want to be at peak fitness, drink 6 pints minimum a day.

And that whole thing about coffee draining your water supplies when you drink it? Your body will get used to it so if you enjoy coffee, from a water point of view at any rate, its fine. I am not saying this is the case from every point of view and coffee does have other nasty effects.

*In a controlled study cowritten by Gordon Winocur, Ph.D., a senior scientist at the Rotman Research Institute in Toronto and a psychology and psychiatry professor at the University of Toronto, rats who were fed a diet consisting of 40% fat--similar to what many Americans eat--showed reduced cognitive function. "[The reduced ability] was widespread, and it ran the spectrum of cognitive functions--memory, spatial ability, rule-learning and so on," says Winocur, whose study was published recently in the journal *Neurobiology of Learning and Memory*. Rats that ate a diet high in saturated fat suffered more impairment than those who ate mainly unsaturated fat. (psychology today, July 2001)*

So lets produce a nutrition list.

Fruits Vegetables

- Blueberries
- Blackberries
- Cranberries
- Strawberries
- Raspberries

- Plums
- Avocados
- Oranges
- Red grapes
- Cherries
- Red apples - Kale
- Spinach
- Brussels sprouts
- Alfalfa sprouts
- Broccoli
- Beets
- Red bell peppers
- Onions

- Brewers or nutritional yeast
- Nuts and seeds
- Legumes
- Wheat germ
- Dairy products
- Lean meat and poultry
- Seafood
- Eggs
- Whole grains
- Spinach and leafy greens
- Carrots
- Asparagus
- Broccoli
- Salmon
- Sardines
- Bluefish
- Herring
- Mackerel
- Tuna

Source: MSNBC research

Having done some further research on the matter, the first appearance of using placement to secure memory items seems to have come by a Greek poet named Simonides in 477 BC. It was this poet who was the only survivor when a roof collapsed that killed all the guests at a large banquet he was attending. Location therefore became an important key to memory

Roman generals used the same techniques to remember the names of their soldiers and villagers - Cicero notably being one of them.

But don't think that memory is an easy thing. If you have bought this book in the hope of a quick fix, you may well be disappointed. Remembering the early numbers and lists is easy, however the greatest grand masters of memory on the earth spend hours a day, preparing and practicing. It isn't so much the recalling process which takes the time but rather it is the encoding and decoding of images, and in main competitions you need to do so VERY quickly. Check out the internet to find memory competitions - <http://www.worldmemorychampionship.com> is a good place to start.

They practice and train in the same way as an Olympic athlete would do and take it as seriously. However, at not much more than £3000 prize money, you wouldn't make a living from it. However you can make a living once you win and then secure a book deal!

The alternative is that you incorporate memory techniques into your everyday life, or even better in your stage performances. A little later are some ideas for performances.

LEARNING LANGUAGES

Obviously, it would be impractical to include here a full list of all the words that you might want to learn in any language, let alone all the languages in the world, so I am afraid you will have to buy your own vocab book! - I recommend one which breaks down vocab into groups.

So why vocab? Well vocabulary words are the building blocks of language. A lot of time is spent in schools teaching correct grammar, however it won't help you to know the structure of a foreign language if you don't know the words to use. And once you have the confidence to speak the words it is amazing how quickly grammar follows with a little practice.

Your brain before teenage years is very adaptive, especially towards language. During the teen years the neural pathways that are necessary for language and susceptible to new sounds in language have become established. The result is that it is hard after about the age of 18 to learn a foreign language without overlaying your own accent. It also suggests that it is harder to learn another language in later years - BUT NOT IMPOSSIBLE!

Most language is learnt as children, and it is learnt by repetition - one could say that language emerges from random sounds. For a child who is having difficulties language development techniques advise parents to repeat back to the child what he or she has said. However once language has developed then this is a very ineffective way of learning anything. As has already been mentioned, and will be discussed a little more later on, repetition and keeping the 'word on the lips' only reinforces the word in short term memory, and doesn't place it in long term memory where it belongs.

The normal techniques for language learning are based on repetition, they are ineffective, they are slow, and they don't deal with genders!!!!

So how many words can you hope to retain? Well the average human being has a vocabulary of around 12 thousand words, though there is no official figure for to get a proper answer you would need to interview all people from all cultures and find the average. For a foreign language you may be talking around 5000. You can hope to learn competently around 20 to 30 words a day. That means that to get to a language that you can consider yourself fluent in you will be looking at around 6 to 12 months of daily work. That seems an awful lot, and the scary thing is that what happens if you forget all the preceding work?

When I was younger trying to learn French that was often the problem - I would learn the vocab for the vocab test, and get full marks. But I would have forgotten it all by the time I got to the summer exam so flunked! That's because I didn't use a system but tried the repetition method. I was so good at repeating it that I found that I could recite it onto the test paper.

The first thing to do is to recognise that a foreign word, unlike the words of our native language, are similar to numbers in the fact that they are sounds that don't make a lot of sense to us. What we need to do is to turn those sounds into recognisable clues to the foreign word we are learning. This means finding substitutions. It sounds complicated and the instructions below may seem a little long winded, but your brain works at lightning speed and will get the hang of it soon enough.

Lets take the French word for window, fenetre. This is how you do it: break it down into its phonic (sound) parts Fan-ate-raw. Simply imagine a giant fan eating raw meat. Another french word - La tete - meaning head. Now I know that the tete is a gallery, so I put a head image, giant sized, in the tete gallery.

That's all well and good, but what about all these genders. That is where your location map comes in - and you should use a real town that is well known to you for this one or else develop a very strong virtual map. Divide your town up with clear areas, and choose one for feminine, one area for masculine, and (if needed) one area for neuter, and one area specially for verbs. Instead

of just imagining the key phrase you should place it in the area of your town. So La fenetre would appear in the feminine part of town.

Take for example my home town of Blackburn. There is the shopping centre, the cathedral area, a park, and an indoor market. The shopping centre is male, the cathedral female, the market neuter, and all the verbs are rooted (scuse the pun) in a very fine park.

What makes this system so effective is that for review purposes you can simply stroll around your town spotting all of your words that you have stored during the course of the learning session.

And once a week you can recall all the words you know so far.

Sometimes the word changes as it is conjugated or pluralised or whatever. Simply add a short story to your image.

And spelling? Oddly, this is how in school we are often taught to learn but for this we can go back to childhood. Spelling doesn't really get sorted out for 7 years or so - especially in English! There are so many rules you can be swamped. One thing at a time, learn the words. And then once you have them under your belt you can begin to understand their spellings. This is where it is useful to have a little knowledge, because many European words for example have the same origins, it is just that they are spelt differently as they have evolved in different countries. So the sounds are similar though spellings aren't the same.

Set yourself a target, get a vocab book and go for it - 20 words (start easy) a day for the next month.

This system though can also be used for medical or vet students who need to learn latin names for bones etc!

Remembering Names and faces.

This is the something which many people struggle with. Or rather think they have trouble with. How many times do you hear, or experience people saying 'I have forgotten their name'. Interesting - because people rarely forget a face! You know, perhaps years later after meeting a person just the once, that you have met them before.

Names, like foreign words and numbers have something of the intangible about them. So we use the substitution method again. But first, there is something that you can do even before you start to make changes to people's names.

Listen!

A name is perhaps the most precious thing that someone will give you. It permits you to stay in contact perhaps, or invokes a sense of formality or informality. They deserve you to listen to it. But how can you take that a stage further?

Spell the name. Focus on it. And spell it. Out loud. 'Let me get that right ... Gray - is that with an a or an e?' Chances are the person will not be offended because you are taking an interest in his or her name.

And it will help you to remember it.

Secondly, without sounding as though you have lost a marble or two, repeat their name. Use the doubling in time rule to recall their name. When you say goodbye, say 'goodbye Mr Gray' as one last reminder to yourself.

The next stage is for you to decide what to do with the name. Is it obvious to you, or do you need, like in a foreign language, to make a substitution. With my name, Gray, it is easy. Pretty monochrome. But for my wife - she is Flaxman (well was anyway). Flax is a cotton, a flaxman would gather the flax. So imagine someone gathering in the cotton.

Harder names - Dimpleby. Dim - bull- bee. A rather thick bull, who is being irritated by a bee perhaps. Again, use your own links and ideas.

A couple of tips. As you get used to using this system, don't worry about using the same image for the same name each time. When you come across a name which similar sounding don't worry about using a simple image - So Richard and Richards will have the same image, but you will find that because of the fact you have recalled just one bit of information the crucial differences will follow. If you have a name like Jameson, then use an image for James (A pair of pyjamas springs to mind!) and because it is the son of, have a smaller pair of trousers next to it! The more you practice, the better you will become.

The next step Attaching a face to the name.

Now that you have the key name worked out, you need to attach it to that face. What you need to do at this stage is to get used to looking at faces. Each face is recognisable because of the ways it is both proportioned, shaped aged and marked. Learn to observe those points.

So if someone has a cleft chin, take the picture of their name, and link it dramatically to that feature - perhaps have whatever your picture pouring out of their chin like water coming from a rock. Learn to spot the most noticeable feature and use that as a link. But that is only the start. As you get to know the person more they will reveal certain traits of their character. Add these to your image so if they are a person who laughs loudly, imagine your image perhaps shaking in laughter.

Or if they are a stormy tempered person, then your image should have a storm involved in it.

And if they reveal any other information about themselves, that too should be added to the image in a humorous way

If you get really good at this you could take it to the next level. Next time you have a meeting with 50 or more people, take time before the meeting starts to say hello to all of them. Then just as the meeting starts ask all of them to stand and then proceed to recall the names of all the people present.

A date trick

This is fun to do. Claim to your audience that you have memorized the whole of a years dates and the day of the week on which they fall. Ask people to call out any date of the year (make sure that you have provided a suitable calendar first) and month, and then tell them the day of the week.

This seemingly impossible task is not as hard as it sounds, and it takes just a little preparation on your own part.

Consider first that each week begins on a Sunday, and then proceed to list all the dates of the first Sunday in each month. Now, break this long number - 266315374264 will apply for the year 2005 - down into groups of 3 or 4 digits into the phonetic peg words that have been used, or even pairs.

To workout the day, you know the first Sunday dates of each month, so you can work out all the other sundays in that month just by adding 7's, and then counting forwards from that date.

Take for example 15th may. In the number sequence the first Sunday in may is the 1st, add 7, 8th, add another 7, 15th! So the 15th of may is a Sunday

You can twist this around again so that next time you are without a convenient diary and someone wants to know the date of the third Tuesday in September, for example, you can go through to your ninth digit - which is 4th, you know that the first wasn't a Tuesday ; Sunday to Tuesday is 2 days, so the first Tuesday is the 6th. Now add 2 weeks (14 days) to end up with the 20th September in 2005 as the 3rd Tuesday in September.

All you have to do is a quick bit of mental arithmetic and a ridiculous claim and people will be amazed.

Remembering playing cards

This is another neat trick, but is fairly simple in operation.

Cards are of course somewhat ambiguous (you will by now be getting used to the fact that this is true for much in our world being like that) and so you will have to give them some sort of solid imagery.

Thankfully the world of the mnemonist has come to our rescue here, and there is a well established system.

Because they are so simply and logically created you will find that you will be able to hold the information with around 30 minute of study.

The system combines the phonetic letter and number system together with the first letter of each of the suits to create a new word and therefore memorable object.

Just a word of note before I divulge this secret: the court cards.

The jacks are simply pictured as the card suit that they are. So the jack of hearts is a heart.

The queens Apart from the queen of hearts (which is simply a queen) the letter of the suit has been substituted for the first letter of the word queen, and then the closest rhyme used. Its clubsy but it works!

The kings Similar to the queens, the only anomaly is the king of clubs, which again is the word King. See over for the full details.

AC	-	cat	AH	-	Hat	AS	-	Suit	AD	-	date
2C	-	can	2H	-	hone	2S	-	sun	2D	-	dune
3C	-	comb	3H	-	hem	3S	-	sum	3D	-	dam
4C	-	cote	4H	-	hare	4S	-	sore	4D	-	door
5C	-	coal	5H	-	hail	5S	-	sail	5D	-	doll
6C	-	cash	6H	-	hash	6S	-	sash	6D	-	dash
7C	-	cock	7H	-	hog	7S	-	sock	7D	-	dock
8C	-	cuff	8H	-	hoof	8S	-	safe	8D	-	dive
9C	-	cap	9H	-	hub	9S	-	soap	9D	-	deb
10C	-	case	10H	-	hose	10S	-	suds	10D	-	dose
JC	-	club	JH	-	heart	JS	-	spade	JD	-	diamond
QC	-	cream	QH	-	queen	QS	-	steam	QD	-	dream
KC	-	king	KH	-	hinge	KS	-	Sing	KD	-	drink

As usual, decide for yourself as to your own imagery.

So here are a couple of fun things to do with this. First you can memorise whole lists of cards, but to really do well you must do this in under 5 mins, which is considered average, and under 3 minutes to stand any chance against the grand masters. But hey, 5 minutes is still good!

It is quite simple, go through your fave peg list, and associate each card in shuffled order with the peg word.

But how about card counting - that is remembering what cards have already been played in a game so that you are more readily able to calculate the odds of a certain hand being possible.

It is not as hard as remembering every card in play, instead a bit of reverse psychology is used. When a card is played you imagine it 'destroyed' in your mind. Now you can do this with imagery - for example run over it in a steam roller, burn it, eat it, tear it up, freeze it, feed it to a tiger, or stamp on it. Just so long as you distort the card each time. Now, if you are waiting for a certain card to appear instead of having to go through the whole deck or remember a long list of cards, just ask yourself if it has yet been destroyed. If your card is still clear of damage then you perhaps have a winning hand. If you play a number of hands, you may find that it would get confusing to use the same distortion method. So the recommendation is that you should use a

different distortion 'method' over the course of 7 hands, before returning to the first method. This way you will keep most information in your scratch memory.

A similar trick would be for the audience to remove 5 cards from a shuffled deck. Now go through the whole deck and mentally destroy the cards. Once done lay the cards to one side, and simply go through the deck in SORTED order in your head. Each time you come to a card that you have not mentally 'destroyed' you can shout it out. If however you can get this last stage to below 20 seconds (which is doable - the imagination can work quick and sift images rapidly) then it is possible to go through the cards, identify and place the unburned cards into a simple 5 place peg system, and then after 20 seconds reveal all cards at one time. In this way you could claim that your mind has organised the cards and then 'thrown out' the results in one go. Heighten the the tension with some suitable clock countdown music.

There are other various things you can do with this. For example if you use a stacked deck you can create your own individual stack, and no one would be the wiser.

Here is a nice trick. Work with a partner on the other side of a stage who knows the system, perhaps even blindfolded. Ask a volunteer to shuffle your deck. Then proceed to switch (using your fave method) the deck for your own stacked deck.

Have someone in the audience call out a number between one and 52. You could do this with a thrown ball, which bounces around a bit. Make out that this is so that it is a truly random selection and that you could have had no influence on the deck at all. The volunteer on stage then counts down the cards to that number. They are asked to look at the card, concentrate on it. You will not look at it so that you can not be seen to be cheating. On the other side of the stage your blindfold partner calls out (after the usual strain!) the card. They know the card of course because it was the number called out by the other volunteer from the audience.

Another First, use a fan or other method, cards face up, to show that all the cards are different, but personally you are memorising the 3 cards, and order, BENEATH the top card. Palm off by any lift technique these 4 cards and pass the deck to a volunteer for a good shuffle. Take the pack back replacing the cards on the top of the deck. Place the deck on the table and have the volunteer cut the deck into 2 smaller decks, then tell him that you will take one deck and ask that they touch one. If he touches the deck containing the top 4 cards thank him for choosing the deck and allow him to keep it. If he chooses the other deck then remove it from the table. However you do this, the volunteer must end up with the portion that contains the top 4 cards. Now ask your volunteer to remove the top card and place it in the middle of the pack of cards. Finally, ask that they carefully remove the next three cards and place them on the table. As you know these cards you can use them in another illusion, or else reveal them in whatever way you prefer.

And another ... Pre-order a packet of any 20 cards and memorize the order of the cards - in this case it is important to use a CIRCULAR STORY METHOD to memorize the order of the cards in that the last card image links back to the first. Now you are ready.

Place a pack of cards on the table and ask a spectator to cut the cards, but not to complete the cut. Next to remove the card they have cut to and place it to one side. Next, they should complete the cut. What this does is

to keep the order of the cards still in the story order, except for the one removed. Have the volunteer look at the card and remember it, and then without you touching the pack to place the card back anywhere in the pack. Because you memorized the pack in a circular story, it doesn't matter where the first cut is made because the order of the cards will, in a circular sense, remain the same. The removed card however should have fallen to the top of the pack in the story, but of course it will now be out of order. So, to identify the chosen card simply go through the memorized pack in order from the first card and see which card doesn't fit the story. The quick way of course is to realize that card, IMMEDIATELY BEFORE THE CARD NOW ON THE BOTTOM in the memorised sequence of the cut deck is the missing card. If you wish you can just glimpse the base card to name the missing card. Try this trick out with a simple deck of all the hearts in order backed onto all the clubs in order, and watch the movements of the missing card. So in this example if the bottom card is the 2 of hearts, you will know that the moved card is the ace.

AND YET ANOTHER Palm any 3 cards from a deck and place them in your pocket (though you can do this without the palm and simply place 3 cards in your pocket before the show starts). Ask a volunteer to shuffle the pack as much as they want to and then to deal 4 cards face up onto the table. Ask them to look with you at the cards on the table and to choose just one card, but not to touch it or to give the game away in any other way. As they are doing this take some time to explain that Derren Brown uses suggestion methods to make people choose the card he wants them to, or else is able to 'read' the choice of a person by their body language - they must do all they can not to move and you will not influence their choice of card at all. Secretly however during this time of 'drivel' you are memorising the order of the cards top to bottom. Once they have made their choice you should collect the cards IN THE ORDER IN WHICH YOU HAVE MEMORISED THEM and place them in your pocket ON TOP OF THE CARDS YOU SECRETLY PLACED THEIR EARLIER. Now ask the volunteer to concentrate on their card ... As they do so remove one of the originally placed cards in your pocket - one of the three - and look at it, then place it back in the centre of the pack saying, 'not that one'. Do the same for the next two cards. Everyone now thinks that you have just one card in your pocket whereas in reality you have the 4 cards dealt by the volunteer, and of course one of them is the choice of the volunteer. Now, with a mystical grin (or a knowing one if you can't do mystical!) ask the volunteer for their choice of card. As soon as they tell you count down to the correct choice in your pocket and reveal it with a flourish. 3 cards done like this is pretty good But how about trying 9 cards in the pocket and asking for 10 to be dealt! The hardest part is not the memory of the cards, but rather the counting of cards in your pocket. To aid counting, makes sure all the cards lie long edge upwards in your pocket, and each time you place your hand in your pocket pause, as if feeling for the right card. In reality you rotate the 3rd card of the volunteers choices in your pocket by 90 degrees (lie up wards) - on the second 'dip' count a further 3 from this rotated card and rotate the sixth card, and on the third time count 4 and rotate the 10th card. This makes identification of the spectators card smoother than counting through all 10 as you will be able to quickly identify your marker cards.

More information about how memory works

This will hopefully be of interest and will point you in the right directions for further development of your memory skills.

Researchers at Northwestern University in the states believe that we think with the same parts of the brain that we use to perceive objects, and that a vividly imagined scene or event can leave the same 'brain trace' as a real or experienced event. We all know just how easy it is to remember experienced events, and if we recall that event on an even vaguely regular basis the result is that we will remember it. But what exactly is going on with remembering?

Well certain memories are just that - real engrained chemically strong bonds that operate at a purely subconscious level. Driving a car would be good example - or even talking. Talking and reading are interesting because they use iconic memory, and iconic recognition. Its almost like the working memory of a car. Usable data is brought out of long term memory and into short term memory, and then used in whatever the task is required at the time. For example reading. Each word is recognised as a whole, and translated into data, then the word goes back into long term memory. This happens automatically but only because of years of practice. It has been found by researchers that children with speech difficulties also have memory problems, and this iconic memory may be the victim.

Researchers have also found that recognition is infinitely more powerful than simply recall alone. What we are doing with a memory 'system' is not recalling information in its truest sense of the word. What we are doing is attaching an easily recognisable systematic key to ambiguous lists and items. As soon as you come across a word, it enables a recognition attachment to another object. That information alone should help you in the development of your own systems.

Having a good memory though could in the end save you time. An experiment was conducted in America between two sets of first graders - American and Chinese. In a timed test the chinese children completed 3 times more problems than did the American children. It seems that the reason for this was that they repeat basic skills more often, which meant that they knew the answers to basic problems without needing to recalculate them each time. This frees up space in the brain for sorting through the other areas of the problem, which makes the brain overall more effective.

This principle is how a genius would think, as they would learn to apply solved problem from one area of life to another area with little thought. If you practice your memory, some mnemonists suggest, you will find that you are able to encode and decode almost at a subconscious level - all information you hear, see or read. I have yet to meet the person for whom this is true.

Oh, and those 1st graders? By the third grade they were so way behind that they never caught up!

Training in observation.

This technique may help you if you find that you have difficulties in being able form images or concentrate on material.

I have found that people tend to fall into one of two camps before they start to develop memory. Either they are people who concentrate very well on material but are unable to create imaginative links with material; or else they find their mind wandering at precisely those times when they would prefer to be concentrating.

Both of these situations is of course unacceptable and unwelcome!

As a youthworker I have often played a game called 'kims game' which will be familiar to you. A large number of objects are placed on a table or on a tray and the players are asked to remember as many of the objects as possible. Without a memory system this task is very difficult.

Before we go any further I would like you to play this game. Find a part of your house which has a large number of items - cluttered dressing table for example! - or if not find someone who can gather the objects for you - you need about 20. You could get your own, however if may influence this quick experiement.

Now, spend just two minutes trying to remember all these items. **DON'T USE ANY MEMORY SYSTEM! NOR SHOULD YOU TOUCH ANY ITEM. JUST USE YOUR EYES.**

Now, close your eyes and try to recall as an image in front of you all those items.

How did you do? Chances are you were only able to recall 25 to 50% of all the items. Of course by now if you were to use a memory system you would expect to be able to recall 100% of the items, but that is not the point of this little test. What we are looking for is the type of brain you have - do you concentrate or are you a dreamer.

Please realise however, that one is not preferable to the other. Infact you need a balance of both to succesfully memorise.

By way of explanation, lets take a look at the two different types of thinker.

if your mind wanders whilst trying to undertake study, then you will not be able to hold and study the information completely, distractions will always spoil your study time and memory formations. And your own imagination is your worst enemy! You dream your study time away, and possibly procrastination (putting it off) is the way it shows itself.

If you are able to concentrate you may find that you are able to have a very productive session of study and be able to accurately recall the information you have studied For a time at least. But this information has no solidity about it - as you have learned so far linguistic information is insufficient and to be retained you must create an image which is memorable and solid. Otherwise you will not be able to link it to other information.

So which are you? The previous experiment will have shown this.

As you tried to remember the objects did you find yourself able to concentrate, but then had difficulties recalling the information? If that is the case then you are a focused individual - but your creativity needs a boost.

If as you tried to remember the objects you found your mind flickering backwards and forwards from sounds, other thoughts, cares of the things going on in your life - even only short other images - you are a dreamer. Perhaps you got (or get) into trouble at school or work for being distracted. Perhaps you have been told you are a dreamer in a

negative way. This is a great asset however! Your creativity means that you are able to create memorable images, think in a way which is creative and great for solving problems. But your concentration needs a boost.

Please now repeat the experiment. You may use the same items. But this time work around the objects from one, moving in an orderly fashion to the next one. Concentrate on where the objects are, and this time touch them, tap them (do they make a sound). Also, what purpose do they have. Imagine yourself using the object. Don't be distracted by other thoughts if you can help it.

Now recall.

Your recall may still not be 100%, however it will now be much greater. Without using any memory systems you have improved your memory. Those who concentrate will have used creativity in being able to imagine using the items, picturing the items in their minds; those who are able to be creative but have problems concentrating, the actual act of picking it up WILL HELP YOU TO CONCENTRATE because you are engaging more of your senses.

There are some techniques that will help both sorts of people.

Firstly, take some time out a few times a day to really be! By that I mean to concentrate on the here and now, without focus shifting to other thoughts. This should start once a day with trying this for 5 minutes, although for the rest of the day this would probably be impractical and just a few moments will be sufficient.

Find a place where you can be comfortable. Do not permit yourself to think of anything else apart from the here and now. Notice the five sense working - smell, sight, sound, touch and taste. What can you sense around you. What are those sounds. Keep focusing, not judging or evaluating any of it. By that I mean not deciding if you like it, don't like it, or what it could be. Just recognise it. At first you may only be able to do this for a few seconds, this is not unusual, and with practice you will be able to increase this time. On the other occasions throughout the day try to repeat the procedure, but not for as long.

Secondly, take some time during the day, perhaps even with the same moments as noted above, to recognise that around you and the to be creative with it. Is that sound that you can hear a car, what kind of car is it? Would it be a car you would like to own ... What would it feel like to drive such a car! Where would you travel? This is the exact opposite of the concentration exercise. Partnering these two exercises will

1. Encourage you to be able to concentrate on your work at hand
2. Be creative with those images and form creative memorable links and ideas.

At the end of the day recall as many of these experiences as you can - hopefully you will be amazed.

When it comes to using your memory systems, whatever they are, they will benefit from your ability to imagine, and create memorable scenes and images, as well as being able to concentrate on the formation of those images without be distracted by other thoughts. This mind work out a few times a day will strengthen this ability.

