



# Improving Your Memory

# Stages of Memory



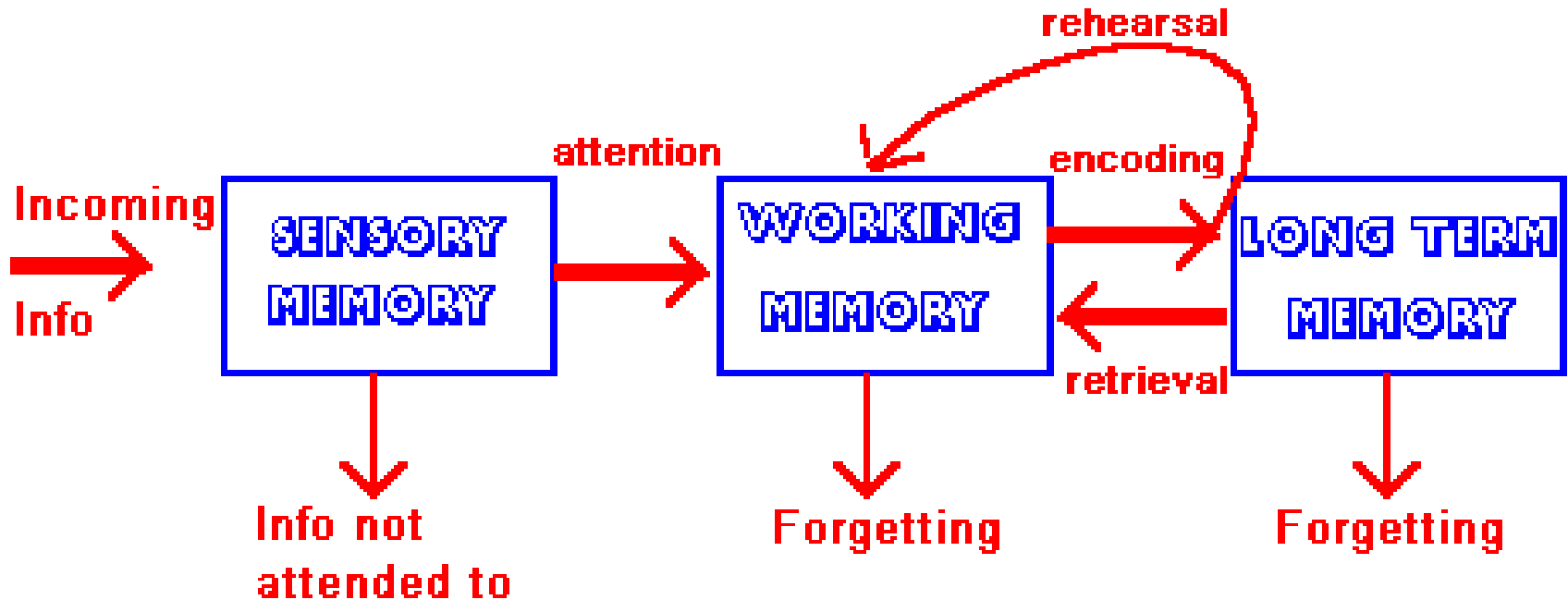
There are three stages of memory:

**Short-Term/Sensory Memory** – brief storage until working memory decides what to do with the information

**Working Memory** – the active part of your memory decides how to use what you just learned

**Long-Term Memory** – stores what we have learned but are not currently using.

# Your Memory at Work



This is what is happening when you learn information. If you pay **attention** to the horizontal arrows, **encode** new information (change it into your own voice for instance), **rehearse** it over and over then you will be able to **retrieve** it when you need it. If you don't, then you'll **forget** it.

# Improving Memory – Basics 1

- Be Intentional. Study in a place away from distractions
- Pay attention, concentrate and focus to learn new information.
- Figure out your preferred learning style and use it to your advantage.
- Involve all your senses. If you are a visual learner use visual aids to help you remember, if audio is your thing, record yourself reading material and listen to it.
- Connect new information to what you already know.



# Improving Memory – Basics 2

- Organize your learning in a thoughtful way.
- Take a 10 minute break when studying for two or more hours at a time.
- Abbreviate when possible, but be consistent so you'll know what you meant.
- Rehearse over and over. Over learn material so that it becomes part of your knowledge foundation.
- Be your own best motivator and find the best reason for you to learn this material (prereq for another interesting course, it will benefit you because X, or so you can move to the next level)



# Improving Memory–Intermediate 1

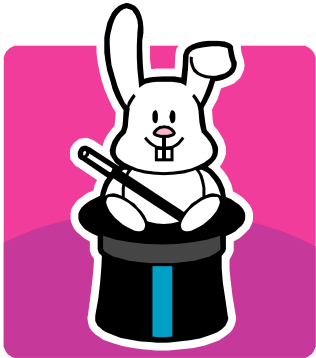
- Work to understand and interpret complex information.
- Ask questions, create a study group or do additional research on your own.
- Remember that each class may require different strategies and techniques; they are not all the same.
- Use a variety of techniques to learn material for each class.



# Improving Memory–Intermediate 2

- Keep to a routine for studying.  
Consider it like you would a paying job.  
The payoff here benefits YOU.
- Use flash cards to help you remember (keep mixing them up).
- Brainstorm when you are having difficulty remembering something.
- Try to connect what you know to the information you need to recall.
- Be willing to try new strategies or study methods on for size and see if they work for you.





# Tricks of the Trade

Mnemonic devices - a hint to help you remember something or a group of somethings.

## Examples:

Acronyms - HOMES = the Great Lakes:

Huron, Ontario, Michigan, Erie, Superior

Or when learning piano use the sentence – Every Good Boy Deserves Favor = EGBDF – the notes on the line of the treble clef

Rhymes - The number of days in a month – “30 days hath September, April, June, and November, all the rest have 31 except February which has 28 and in leap year 29.”

Make up your own to help you learn.

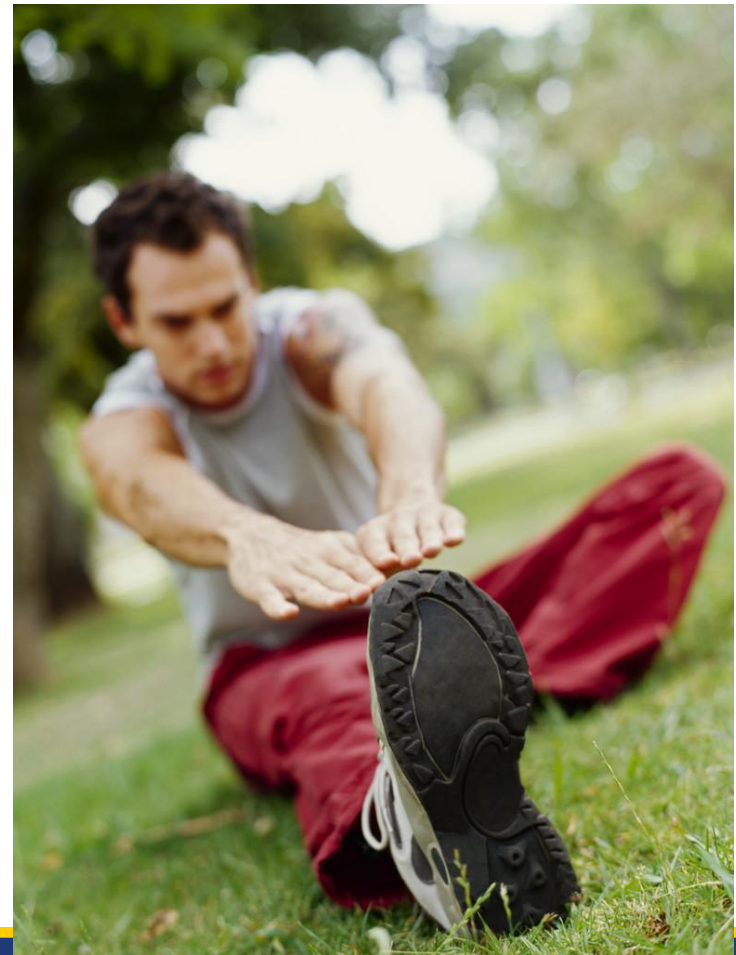
See the following link for more info:

[http://www.utexas.edu/student/utlc/learning\\_resources/memory/Principles\\_of\\_Memory.doc](http://www.utexas.edu/student/utlc/learning_resources/memory/Principles_of_Memory.doc)



# Life Skills to Improve Memory

- Get 7 – 9 hours of uninterrupted sleep each night
- Manage stress – get help when needed
- Get regular exercise
- Eat healthy
- Don't smoke, drink or take drugs that impair your memory





Remember your goals. If one of yours is to achieve a degree, then you're in the right place. Improving your memory skills can help you achieve your goals.

We can help. Just ask!

# Student Success Centers

For more information on being a successful college student contact  
the Student Success Center.

119 Payson Smith Hall, Portland

**780-4040**

119 Bailey Hall, Gorham

**780-5652**

119 Lewiston-Auburn College, Lewiston

**753-6500**

or e-mail: [studentsuccess@usm.maine.edu](mailto:studentsuccess@usm.maine.edu)

**Student Success Advisors are available to help you.**