

Learn New Things

In order to learn something, our attention has to hold onto it long enough to process the new information and put it into long term memory. This working memory, as it is called, is similar to the RAM in a computer—when the RAM gets overloaded, programs start crashing and information gets lost. These techniques help you to make the most of your RAM.

- Use flash cards and repetition.
- Repeat someone else's actions rather than relying on remembering written instructions. This will be especially helpful if you learn better by doing than by hearing or reading.
- Reduce external distractions in order to make the relevant information stand out more. However, some people find that music or television can help to quiet internal distractions and keep them focused.
- Break the work into several shorter sessions based on mental sharpness or time the most intense learning for the parts of the day when you have the best alertness or medication coverage.
- Use active learning techniques: repeat the information either out loud or mentally; relate the new information to old; think about how the information will be retrieved later; and process the information further, thereby increasing the odds that the information will be remembered.