

When you lose your train of thought

Losing our train of thought can be embarrassing. Having a handy phrase or two ready to get us past that awkward moment can be a game-changer.

Pick and choose from these ideas, or come up with your own!

Acknowledge the problem

- I'm drawing a blank.
- I'm sorry, my mind wandered off for a minute.
- It just slipped my mind.
- I lost my train of thought there.
- That's on the tip of my tongue.

Ask for a repetition or a hint

- Can you repeat that?
- Could you say that again?
- What were we just talking about?
- What was the last thing I said?
- What was the question again?

Buy some time

- It'll come back to me in a minute.
- I'm thinking... hold on.
- Let me think about that for a second.
- I know this — just give me a moment.
- I'm working my way back to it.
- I'm organizing my thoughts.

Describe it (When you can't think of the exact word.)

- I can't think of the word, but it's the thing that...
- I don't recall the details, but the main idea is...
- I don't remember the exact date, but it was around...

Use humor to reduce tension

- Memory glitch. It'll come back to me.
- My brain just hit the pause button.
- My memory file didn't load yet.
- That thought just walked out the door.
- My memory is taking a short break.

Blame the environment

- Sorry, I couldn't hear you over the noise. Could you repeat that?

Be pro-active

- Sometimes I lose track of conversations, so feel free to remind me.
- Could we turn off the TV while we talk? The sound can be distracting.
- Sometimes I have trouble when people talk at the same time. Could we slow the conversation down?

Re-setting

- Can we back up a little?
- Let's go over that part again.
- Can you catch me up on where we are?
- I want to make sure I got the main points. I'll tell you what I heard, and you can fill in any gaps.