

What to do when your memory fails you

“Short term” memory (Memory for recent events, conversations, locations of belongings.)	
In the moment of trouble:	To strengthen the skill:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Rewind. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Mentally retrace your thoughts. ○ Retrace your steps. ● Go to the source. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ If the information is written down, look for it. ○ Forgot appointment details? Call the office back. ○ Family or friend tell you something you can't remember? Ask them or someone else who would know. ● Let it go. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Find a trusted person to help you. ○ Come back to it later, if it's important. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Make a “home” for important belongings. ● Take notes during phone calls or important conversations. ● Use WRAP strategies to remember information or where you are putting something. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Write it down. ○ Repet it. ○ Associate it. ○ Picture it. ● Study information you want to remember. ● Use a memory tool, such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Journal or log book. ○ Calendar. ○ Photographs. ○ Voice memo. ○ Virtual assistant.

Remembering to do something in the future (Prospective memory)	
In the moment of trouble:	To strengthen the skill:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Stop and take stock. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Look around for context clues. ○ Mentally retrace your steps. ○ Check yourself - are you hungry, thirsty, or in pain? ● Check in. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Check your calendar or phone. ○ Ask a trusted person for help. ● Come back to it later. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Getting up to do something? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Make a clear plan before you get up to move. ○ Repeat your plan as you move. ○ Carry a reminder with you, like a related object or a note. ● Planning a future task? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Use a memory tool, such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Calendar. ■ To-do list. ■ Alarms. ■ Pill box. ● Keep a success/failure log. What works?

Word retrieval and Tip of the Tongue

(You know what you want to say, but can't think of the word.)

In the moment of trouble:	To strengthen the skill:
<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Pause.● Describe it (category, appearance, purpose, location, associations, etc...).● Gesture - can you show what it is?● Point to it, or in the direction where it is.● Scan the alphabet for the first letter.● Use a similar word.● Draw it.● Put the "blank" at the end of a predictable sentence.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Study important words you use often:<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Make flashcards and review often.○ Study your word list using the WRAP memory strategies.● Try an evidence-based therapy such as Semantic Feature Analysis, Attentive Reading and Constrained Summarization, Verb Network Strengthening Treatment, or Anagram, Copy, and Recall Treatment for Writing.● Practice with word games.

Remembering names

In the moment of trouble:	To strengthen the skill:
<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Scan the alphabet for the first letter of the name.● If they're part of a couple, try to remember their partner's name.● Have you seen their name written down? Try to visualize it.● Wait for someone else to say their name.● Apologize and ask for their name.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Repeat the name.● Try to associate the name with the person's appearance, personality, occupation, or hobby.● Write it down with a few details about the person.● If you know someone else by the same name, try to link them in your mind.● Visualize their name attached to their body (like an imaginary name tag, tattoo, or sign).● Review your list of names with descriptions often, especially before going to a place where you're likely to see them.

Selected resources (see blog article for many more)

Exercises, tips, and tools for memory

- Here you can find printable exercises, apps, and games. <https://eatspeakthink.com/improve-short-term-memory/#memory-exercises>
- Improving working memory can improve short term memory, prospective memory, and word retrieval. <https://eatspeakthink.com/improve-working-memory-60-exercises/>
- I share two easy ways for organizing a memory notebook (not to be confused with a memory book). <https://eatspeakthink.com/make-a-memory-notebook/>

Word finding exercises

- ARCS is used to improve word finding, short term memory, topic maintenance, and other cognitive skills. <https://eatspeakthink.com/attentive-reading-constrained-summarization/>
- Free templates for ARCS. <https://eatspeakthink.com/improve-reading-comprehension-and-recall/>
- Semantic Feature Analysis. <https://tactustherapy.com/semantic-feature-analysis-sfa-anomia/#>