

REMEMBERING FOR EXAMS

Sometimes it's hard to remember:

Suggestions:

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Because there's no desire to remember, no interest in the material, and thus no clear reason to remember 	<p>Meditate to find a <i>reason</i> to remember. Talk with the instructor or with students who seem interested in the material to learn what motivates them. Write down your reason, once found, and keep it around for periodic pep talks with yourself.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Because the material to be remembered hasn't first been <i>understood</i> 	<p>Try to get a "bird's-eye view" of the whole system before attempting to remember details of each part. Read a simplified version or critique of the material before returning to the original. Ask for help early if you've tried and just can't understand. Caution: initial understanding should be complete well before the test so the last few days can be spent reviewing. Don't wait until the last minute to try to understand.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Because the initial reading and study wasn't done with the intent to remember, but rather with the idea of just underlining now and then really learning the material "later." 	<p>Read with the <i>intent</i> to remember; that is, read actively to identify and hold yourself responsible for information that needs to be remembered. Make the first reading count!</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Because most forgetting takes place rapidly, right after initial learning unless some effort is made to use the new information or to recall and "store" the information for later use. 	<p>Take a few extra moments at the time of initial reading to stop and <i>mentally test</i> yourself over what you've just read. Immediate recall of newly learned information is the essential first step to later memory of it.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Because most study time has been spent just passively rereading and "looking over" the material to be learned. 	<p>Spend more than 50 percent of study time recalling and testing to see how much of the material is still unlearned. Having once learned and immediately tested by trying to recall the information, <i>continue to test</i> yourself at periodic intervals. Expose as many senses as possible to the information: write it, speak it, hear it, and visualize it. Familiar, well-studied things assume identities of their own and are not likely to be confused with similar things.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Because the form of study was inappropriate to the use of the material required on an exam. 	<p>Practice <i>using</i> the information for a quiz: Predict essay questions and actually <i>write</i> the answers, <i>work</i> problems, etc. It's one thing to know material and another to be able to "use" it on exam questions.</p>